



Gladstone Regional Council

Council Policy

Title	SOCIAL MEDIA
Policy Number	P-2015/34
Responsible Directorate	CORPORATE & COMMUNITY SERVICES
Responsible Officer	COMMUNICATION & MARKETING COORDINATOR
Date of Adoption	17 NOVEMBER 2015
Resolution Number	G/15/2654
Date Review Due	17 NOVEMBER 2018

1.0 PURPOSE:

This policy is designed to:

- Define acceptable social media use in the workplace or when representing Council;
- Guide employees in the appropriate use of social media while conducting their work-related business, without prejudicing the social liberties of employees as individuals and protecting Council's confidential information;
- Ensure productivity in the workplace is not jeopardised by inappropriate, non-work-related use of social media in the workplace; and
- Enhance the protection of Council's trademarks, brand, corporate identity and reputation.

It provides guidance on the use of, and engagement with, all forms of online social media so that Council maintains credibility, integrity and customer confidence, and Council's corporate values and brand are reinforced.

2.0 SCOPE:

This policy applies to situations where Council officers or Councillors use online social media to communicate messages immediately and directly to customers or the community on Council's behalf or as a representative of Council.

Councillors are bound by this policy in relation to Council coordinated or administered social media communication or during instances when their social media communications

relate to their role as an elected member of Council. This policy does not restrict Councillors in their own personal social media communications.

Council's Media Attribution Protocol continues to apply and takes precedence over this policy for all media requests, including those received via social media channels.

3.0 RELATED LEGISLATION:

Local Government Act 2009
Queensland Privacy Act 2009

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Gladstone Regional Council Community Engagement Policy
- Gladstone Regional Council Computer and Telecommunication Policy
- Gladstone Regional Council Councillor Code of Conduct Policy
- Gladstone Regional Council Media Attribution Protocol Policy
- Gladstone Regional Council Code of Conduct Policy (for employees)
- Gladstone Regional Council Information Privacy Policy
- Gladstone Regional Council Social Media Guidelines Corporate Standard.

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

- **Authorised Employee** means an Employee who has made application to and been given permission in writing from the Communication and Marketing Unit to use or manage social media on behalf of their facility or section of the organisation.

- **Councillor** means an elected member of Gladstone Regional Council.

- **Council** means Gladstone Regional Council.

- **Customer** means a member of the community, ratepayer or other person engaged with, or who has reasonable potential to engage with the Council as a user of Council services or facilities.

- **Employee** means any person who is employed by Council to perform work for or on behalf of Council (whether part-time, temporary, casual or contract staff), contractors engaged by Council and volunteers engaged in undertaking tasks on Council's behalf.

- **Facility Pages** means Facebook pages or other social media channels relating to Council facilities or specific services in addition to Council's endorsed corporate Facebook page and other social media.

- **Social Media** means the range of technology tools that readily allow people to engage in communication and to share information and resources via the internet or peer to peer electronic services. Examples of social media include, but are not limited to:

- Podcasts
- Blogs
- Wikis
- Tagging
- Online photograph and video sharing
- Forums

- Message boards
- Answer services
- Presentation sharing
- Social bookmarking
- Social reviews
- Social networking sites (such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn)

- **Written Permission** means permission obtained via the submission of a Social Media Authorisation Form (available from the Communications & Marketing Section or from the Council intranet).

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT:

6.1 Familiarity with Guidelines

All Employees and Councillors must be familiar with and follow the spirit and content of this policy when using social media.

6.2 Use Social Media on Council's behalf restricted

Only Authorised Employees may establish, manage and use social media on behalf of Council for the purpose of marketing, communicating with and engaging the community.

Use of social media by Authorised Employees shall be:

- Restricted to the social media channels that relate directly to their section or directorate, of which they have sought and been granted written permission from the Communications & Marketing Section to operate.
- In accord with this policy; and
- In accord with any supplementary guidelines relating to the management, use and the monitoring of social media at their own site or facility.

Approved operators of social media channels may develop supplementary guidelines but, must submit these in advance to the Communication & Marketing Section for approval.

6.3 Social Media Protocols

In using social media:

- False or fake personas may not be used.
- Employees may not pretend to be impartial individuals on social media in order to promote or defend Council, its brand, products or services.
- Any personal social media communication on matters that relate to Council shall, where the employee is identifiable as a Council Employee, include a disclaimer

that the content is their personal view and does not represent the official view of Council.

- Councillors and Employees may not provide any confidential or proprietary Council information in social media statements made.
- No reference is to be made to Council Customers, work colleagues, suppliers or sub-contractors without their express prior approval and according to privacy legislative requirements.
- Social media postings that may be considered discriminatory or harassing, spam or junk type postings, profanity or pornography are strictly prohibited.
- Employees who become aware of any negative comment made about Council, its brand, products or services on any social media will not respond directly to such postings where their posting could be construed as having been made by them in their capacity as a Council Employee representing the view of the Council.
- No Employee shall use social media to damage Council's credibility, integrity, customer confidence, corporate values, brand or trademarks.

6.4 Access to Social Media

Employees are provided access to social media in the work environment on the understanding that, unless their job requirements warrant such usage in work time, the use of such access is limited to personal time and is subject to this policy and other applicable policies (such as Council's Code of Conduct Policy).

7.0 ATTACHMENTS:

Nil

8.0 REVIEW TRIGGER:

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related legislation/documents are amended or replaced.
2. Other circumstances as determined from time to time by a resolution of Council
3. Periodic Review - 3 years from date of adoption.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS		
Originally Adopted	19 November 2013	G/13/1798
Amendment 1	17 November 2015	G/15/2654
Amendment 2	<INSERT DATE COUNCIL MEETING>	<INSERT RESOLUTION NUMBER>
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STUART RANDLE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER