



## **POLICY NO. CP 5.4.44      USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

### **PURPOSE**

To determine the conditions under which the City uses social media to communicate with the public. This policy provides guidance on both corporate and personal use (at work and at home) of social media in order to protect:

- i. the employee and the City from the potential risks associated with using social media; and
- ii. the reputation and brand of the City.

### **DEFINITION**

For the purposes of this policy 'social media' is defined as any online services and tools used for publishing, sharing and discussing information. This may include (but is not limited to) social networking websites (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram), media content sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube, TikTok), live streaming platforms (e.g. Vimeo), forums, blogs, wikis, instant messaging apps, geo-spatial tagging (e.g. Snapchat) and any other websites or digital platforms that allow users to easily upload and share content.

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

#### **1. KEY PRINCIPLES**

The following key principles will apply to the City's use of social media:

- 1.1 Use of social media will always follow clear identification of objectives and the right tools to meet those objectives.
- 1.2 Information disseminated through social media will be accurate, appropriate to the target audience, apolitical, and aligned with City strategies, policies and decisions.
- 1.3 Private information will be protected and copyright, privacy and other applicable laws will be complied with when using social media.
- 1.4 There will be appropriate record keeping of information disseminated or collected through social media.
- 1.5 In developing, posting or responding to content, staff will act honestly and with integrity, courtesy and professionalism and will not be discriminatory, defamatory, harassing or encourage law breaking.
- 1.6 Unlawful use of social media will be referred to Police or relevant authorities.

#### **2. CORPORATE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**



- 2.1 The City may use social media to:
  - (a) disseminate general information in relation to the City's services, programs, events, facilities or plans;
  - (b) advise the community of opportunities to participate in the City's formal consultative processes;
  - (c) engage and interact with stakeholders; and
  - (d) provide information in relation to Council decisions or the City's statutory functions and obligations.
  
- 2.2 The City has systems and processes to ensure that:
  - (a) only authorised employees are able to post content on behalf of the City on the City's social media sites;
  - (b) employees developing, posting or responding to content on the City's social media sites receive appropriate training;
  - (c) the City's social media sites are monitored and posts by community members receive an appropriate response in a timely manner;
  - (d) the City maintains records of information created or posted on social media to provide evidence of the City's business activities in accordance with the *State Records Act 2000*;
  - (e) the City's use of social media complies with applicable laws, regulations and the terms of service of the relevant platform; and
  - (f) risks associated with the City's use of social media are considered and appropriate mitigation strategies are developed and implemented.
  
- 2.3 Use of social media sites is not intended to replicate information provided on the City's website. Social media posts will generally direct users to the City's website for more detailed information.

### **3. POSTING, MONITORING, MODERATING AND RESPONDING ON CITY ACCOUNTS**

- 3.1 In posting and responding to content on social media, employees will:
  - (a) act with courtesy, professionalism, objectivity and impartiality as outlined in the City's Code of Conduct;
  - (b) ensure that they comply with applicable legislation and the City's policies and procedures;
  - (c) avoid political bias;



- (d) take appropriate measures to avoid real, perceived or potential conflicts of interest; and
- (e) refrain from posting personal opinions.

3.2 The City will regularly monitor its social media sites and will remove content that is considered offensive or is critical of individual employees or Elected Members. Where content is removed, if appropriate the City will ensure that reasons for its removal are provided. Profane language or content will be removed.

#### 4. EMPLOYEE PERSONAL USE

The City acknowledges that employees may use social media in a personal capacity. While this may be in an employee’s own time, it may have implications for the City.

The City’s Code of Conduct - Employees applies to personal use of social media. when a person can be identified as a City employee.

#### 5. ELECTED MEMBER USE

The City’s Code of Conduct for Council Members, Committee Members and Candidates and the *Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021* applies to elected members use of social media.

#### GOVERNANCE REFERENCES

<b>Statutory Compliance</b>	State Records Act 2000 Local Government (Model Code of Conduct) Regulations 2021
<b>Industry Compliance</b>	Office of the Australian Privacy Commissioner – Australian Privacy Principles
<b>Organisational Compliance</b>	Council Policy – 5.4.33 Risk Management Policy – AP 4.3.30 Code of Conduct – Employees Council Policy – CP 5.4.38 City of Gosnells Crest, Corporate Branding and Logos
<b>Process Links</b>	N/A

#### POLICY ADMINISTRATION

<b>Directorate</b>		<b>Officer Title</b>		<b>Contact:</b>	
Community Engagement		Manager Marketing and Community Events		9397 3000	
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Medium	<b>Review Cycle</b>	Triennial	<b>Next Due:</b>	2024
<b>Version</b>	<b>Decision Reference</b>	<b>Synopsis</b>			
1.	OCM 103/25/03/2014	To guide and establish parameters regarding the City's use of social media			
2.	OCM 302/11/09/2018	Reviewed with amendments			
3.	OCM 16/08/02/2022	Reviewed with amendments			