



**POLICY NO. CP 5.4.47**

**POLICY STATEMENT: COMMUNICATIONS AND USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA BY ELECTED MEMBERS**

**PURPOSE:** To establish protocols for communications and the use of social media by Elected Members.

**POLICY**

**1. Scope**

This policy applies to Elected Members when making comments in either their role as a Councillor or in a personal capacity.

**2. Principles applying to the use of social media by Elected Members**

Communications by Elected Members via social media, whether undertaken in an official capacity or as personal communication, must not:

- a. bring the City into disrepute
- b. compromise the person's effectiveness in their role as a Councillor;
- c. imply the City's endorsement of personal views; or
- d. disclose, without authorisation, confidential information.

**3. Statements by Elected Members on City Matters**

3.1 The City's official communications will be consistent with relevant legislation, policies, standards and the position adopted by Council.

3.2 Elected Members may choose to make a personal statement on a matter related to the business of the City via social media.

3.3 Any public statement made by a Councillor, whether made in a personal capacity or in their capacity as a Councillor, must:

- a. Clearly state that the comment or content is a personal view only and does not necessarily represent the views of the City and/or Council;
- b. Be factually correct;
- c. Avoid damage to the reputation of the local government;
- d. Not reflect adversely on a decision of the Council;
- e. Not reflect adversely on the character or actions of another Councillor or Employee;
- f. Maintain a respectful and positive tone and not use offensive or objectionable expressions in reference to any Councillor, Employee or community member.

**4. Personal Communications**

Communications posted on personal social media accounts have the potential to be made public, whether it was intended to be made public or not.



Elected Members must ensure that their personal or private communications do not breach the requirements of this policy, the Code of Conduct and the *Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007*.

**5. Use of Images**

When posting images of other people on their social media pages, Councillors should ensure they have the consent, preferably in writing, of those people. In the case of minors, Councillors should ensure they have signed written consent from the child's parent or guardian prior to posting any images.

**6. Record Keeping**

Communications relating to matters affecting the City undertaken by Elected Members via social media accounts must be created and retained as local government records in accordance with the City's Record Keeping Plan and the *State Records Act 2000*. These records are also subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1992*.

**GOVERNANCE REFERENCES**

<b>Statutory Compliance</b>	Local Government Act 1995, s2.8, 2.9 and 2.10 State Records Act 2000 Local Government (Rules of Conduct) Regulations 2007
<b>Industry Compliance</b>	Office of the Australian Privacy Commissioner – Australian Privacy Principles
<b>Organisational Compliance</b>	Council Policy – 5.4.33 Risk Management Council Policy – CP 5.4.10 Code of Conduct – Councillors and 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>	
Business Services		Director Business Services		9397 3000	
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Low	<b>Review Cycle</b>	Triennial	<b>Next Due:</b>	2022
<b>Version</b>	<b>Decision Reference</b>	<b>Synopsis</b>			
1.	OCM 143/25/06/2019	New policy adopted			
2.					
3.					