OBERON COUNCIL

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

1. Intent of Policy
To enhance Council's public profile and encourage effective community engagement through the use of social media. To set operational guidelines to enhance the effectiveness of Council's social media activity; to encourage positive marketing and promotion of Council activities; and minimise the potential for negative impacts to Council's reputation.

2. Scope of Policy
This policy applies to the personal and professional use of social media by all Council staff. Elements of this policy apply to the community, their engagement and acceptable use of Council's official social media platforms.

3. Overview
A Council social media platform is intended to promote and expand the organisation's brand and activities, as well as provide a focal point for community engagement. Content (audio, video, photography and comments) posted via social media platforms are as public as content published via traditional media or at a public forum. Council employees are expected to maintain the same high standards of conduct and behaviour online as is expected elsewhere.
This includes:
- Being apolitical, impartial and professional
- Behaving with respect and courtesy
- Dealing appropriately with information
- Avoiding conflicts of interest
- Making proper use of Council resources
- Upholding Council's values and its good reputation.

4. Compliance
Depending on the circumstances, non-compliance with this Policy (and any other related policy) may constitute a breach of employment or contractual obligations, misconduct, harassment, discrimination or some other contravention of the Council's Code of Conduct and applicable laws. Those who fail to comply with this Policy may face disciplinary action and, in serious cases, termination of their employment or contract or potential criminal charges.

5. Definitions

Council: Oberon Council

Social Media:	Social media are online services and tools used for collaborating, publishing, sharing and discussing information. Social media services and tools can involve a combination of technology, telecommunications and social interaction. They can use a variety of different formats, including text, pictures, video and audio.

Social media may include (but is not limited to):
- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Yammer, Instagram);
- Video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Facebook, Google Hangouts, Flickr, Pinterest, Instagram, YouTube)
- Blogs (WordPress, Blogger, Tumblr) and micro-blogs (e.g. Twitter)
- Wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia)
- Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. LinkedIn groups)
- Podcasting
- Instant messaging (including SMS)
- Messaging Apps (e.g. WeChat, Viber)

This policy and other related policies outline how staff engage personally and professionally via social media. Council will continue to monitor developing social media platforms for potential future use.

Official Use:	Official use refers to when an authorised staff member: - Creates/comments on an official Oberon Council social media site as a representative of the Council. - Comment on a non-Council social media site as a representative of the Council.
Personal Use:	Personal use is when any Council employee comments in their personal capacity on either their own or another person's/company's social media platform. Individuals should be aware that their personal commentary via social media may have implications as a employee of Oberon Council.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Oberon Social Media Administrator:	Council employee responsible for the provision of access to authorised staff on all official Council social media platforms.
Approver:	The General Manager to approve the creation of new platforms to be uploaded as per the guidelines of Council's Community Engagement Policy.
Content Manager/Editor:	An OC employee responsible for producing content, moderating and reporting on a social media platform for either Council or one of its services and facilities, and monitoring visitor comments on social media platforms.

7. Use of Social Media at Oberon Council
Before engaging in social media as a representative of the council, you must first be authorised to do so.

To become authorised to create a Council/Council facility or services site, or comment in an official capacity, you must obtain permission from the General Manager.

Your role and responsibility as a Council employee relating to Council's social media presence must be defined and recorded with the General Manager or Director in the Oberon Council Social Media Register.

It is important to understand that you are personally responsible for the content of your social media posts and blogs, even though you are an approved representative of the Council. You can be held personally liable for any content deemed to be defamatory, obscene, offensive, proprietary or libellous. For these reasons, you must always exercise caution.

8. Authorised Council Representatives

As an Authorised Council representative you must:
- Be mindful you are representing the Council.
- Disclose you are an employee/contractor of the Council, and use only your own Council identity, or an approved official account.
- Disclose and comment only on information already within the public domain (unless you are specifically given permission to reveal confidential information).
- Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading.
- Cite and link to resources when you can.
- Comment only on your area of expertise and authority.
- Be responsive to questions and comments.
- Correct mistakes promptly.
- Ensure comments are respectful of the community with which you are interacting.
- Adopt a warm and approachable tone.
- Adhere to the Terms and Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment, other applicable laws, and all relevant Council policies.

As an Authorised Council representative you must not:
- Post material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, or is otherwise unlawful.
- Use or disclose any confidential or secure information (unless required to do so).
- Post photos, videos or other media without the consent of all participants (this includes tagging photos and names) the exception is at "public events" where image release approval is not required.
- Make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the Council's reputation or brig it into disrepute.
- Link the site/page with your personal social media sites/pages.

9. Establishing and Monitoring Social Media Platforms.
Before establishing a new Oberon Council social media site, approval must be sought from the General Manager.

To ensure a new site (as distinct from new pages off existing sites or accounts) is appropriate, the following requirements must be discussed and agreed to:
- Objectives
- Resourcing required (financial and people)
- Type of content to be posted and approval process
- Frequency of postings, including a target number of postings each day/week

- Performance & evaluation metrics/analytics
- Branding and style requirements
- Risk minimisation settings including profanity settings and a profanity list (where applicable)
- Expected 'life cycle' of the sites/pages
- Process for monitoring and updating sites/pages
- Process for managing negative comments
- Process for complying with record keeping requirements
- Accountabilities
- Training requirements

Planning should include discussion of material to be posted including factors such as:
- Making posts effective by making them interesting and engaging
- Use of and approvals to use photographs and video downloads
- Posting relevant links.

The creation and maintenance of social media sites for Council/Council facilities and services is dependent upon the respective internet sites being kept up to date.

Employees responsible for Oberon Council social media sites must have their role and accountabilities noted in their annual objectives, performance review and position description.

Under current Facebook operating rules, a personal Facebook profile is needed to establish a page, make posts and utilise the full features offered by Facebook. For this reason, Council employees will use their Council email address to establish a separate, personal Facebook profile which will only be used for managing the Facebook page on behalf of Council/Council Agency.

All user names and passwords for social media sites must be provided to the General Manager or delegated Oberon Council Media Administrator. This ensures that when a person moves to a different role or leaves the organisation, administration rights can be transferred to another employee.

External posts that require a request for information or action should be addressed promptly. In some cases an initial post to acknowledge the request should be made with a more detailed answer posted in due course.

Wherever possible, content posted to Council social media sites should contain links directing users back to Council's official websites for in-depth information, forms, documents or online services. Links should be shortened to maintain a clean look and ease for reading.

Any photos, videos or other media used in Council social media sites must have the written permission of all people in the photograph before it can be posted. The exception is at "public events" where image release approval is not required. This permission can be provided by email or a signed consent form.

Content Managers/Editors should exercise their judgement, or if necessary consult with their manager, to determine whether the topic of a posting is a valuable source of genuine discussion within the target group or, more rarely, if the posting has stepped over the line into an inappropriate topic or manner of discussion that should be deleted.

Comments may be removed from Council social media accounts if they:
- Contain obscene, indecent, or profane language
- Contain threats or defamatory statements
- Contain hate speech directed at race, colour, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity, age, religion, or disability
- Contain sensitive or personally identifiable information; and/or
- Promote or endorse specific commercial services or products

Council social media accounts can be promoted through Council:
- Websites
- Advertising
- Radio advertisements
- Publications
- On Hold recorded message
- Facebook sites
- Twitter feeds
- and other networks as deemed appropriate by the General Manager.

Content managers/editors must ensure any "likes" or endorsements made on social media sites are in line with existing supporter, sponsorship or partnership arrangements.

10. Record Keeping
Federal records management policies regarding social media are still evolving.

Content is subject to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) for retention, storage and publication. Online comments can be held to the same legal standards as traditional media communications.

A judgement must be made about the materials relevance to the Council's business and captured in Infoxpert, if necessary.

For example if the Council's Facebook account is the only way a new policy update is released to the public the posts should be exported by the author to Infoxpert. If unsure, administrators should seek guidance from their Director or General Manager.

11. Oberon Council Social Media Marketing Team

The Administrator will regularly discuss:
- Strategic alignment between all Council/Council facilities and services social media accounts and platforms
- Integrated communication policy and approach across all platforms
- Resolve common issues
- Utilise expertise to increase Oberon Council social media presence and followers
- Discuss the need for introducing additional social media resources including training and staff development.
- Review the Social Media Policy as required.

12. Privacy
Council/Council facilities and services social media sites should contain a link to the Council Privacy Statement.

13. Identifying Inappropriate Use

If you notice inappropriate or unlawful content in social media platforms which relates to the Council/Council facilities or services, or content that may have been published in breach of this Policy, you should report the circumstances to the Oberon Council General Manager or Directors.

Approving Authority	Oberon Council
Contact	General Manager
Approval	Ordinary Meeting September 2017: Item 13.06, Minute 20 210917
Revision Date	September 2018
Issue Date to Staff	October 2017