

# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

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# Section A

For all employees

## 1

## INTRODUCTION

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This social media guidance document provides information and offers practical advice on the use of social media and details protocols for all employees to follow whether using social media in Council work or by interacting on-line in a personal capacity as a Council employee.

Social media has become an increasingly common communication method for on-line social interactions and is used by the Council as an effective option for communicating information about the Council's services.

The Council's Corporate Communications Team and some Service Teams use social media, as an addition to other communication channels, to inform the public of our services and provide information on the latest news and events.

The key social media sites used by the Council are Twitter, Facebook, Flickr and YouTube. These sites provide the Council with opportunities to communicate directly and engage with online communities and new audiences.

## Section A

For all employees

## 2

## UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is a term used to refer to online technologies and practices for social interaction which encourage participation and engagement. Many of the social media 'tools' are free to set up, easy to use and connect people, businesses and organisations online instantly.

Social media 'tools' encompass social networking, blogging, podcasts, forums and wikis.

These guidelines focus on social networking, blogging, micro-blogging and media sharing technologies – Twitter, Facebook, Flickr, YouTube, LinkedIn, and Yammer; these tools have been identified for Council use on the basis of how widely they are used by the general public, and on the range of uses they provide.



**Twitter** is a micro-blogging site which lets users post short messages of up to 140 characters in length. Users 'follow' one another, which essentially mean they subscribe to a feed of their updates. All updates are visible in the Twitter public timeline, and it also has a direct message facility for private messages.



**Facebook** is a social networking site that allows users to create a profile and become 'friends' with one another, whilst businesses and organisations can create fan pages which users can 'like'. The site allows you to post photos and videos, create and join events and groups, write publicly on walls, and send private emails on the inbox system.



**Flickr** is an image hosting and video hosting website, web services suite and online community. Registered users can upload images for free, subject to a monthly limit, or pay for a premium service.



**YouTube** is a video-sharing website that allows people to discover, watch and share originally created videos. Anyone can view the videos but users have to be registered in order to upload clips.

LinkedIn, Yammer and the Improvement Service's Knowledge Hub are social media networks with a business focus. Users can set up a business profile; set up or join groups relating to their areas of interest; join discussions and share information and files online.

The guidelines will be reviewed on a regular basis and extended as and when the Council adopts the use of other tools and technologies.

## Section A

For all employees

## 3

## SOCIAL MEDIA PROTOCOL

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The following protocols apply to all council employees to ensure appropriate, legal and effective use of social media as a communication channel whilst maintaining a safe and professional environment.

They are related to and aligned with other Council guidance including the Corporate New Media Strategy, Employee Code of Conduct, the Information Security Policy and mobile technologies guidance.

The Employee Code of Conduct and Information Security Policy and standards must be followed in respect of the management, operation and use of social media sites. Any failure to adhere to these may be construed as gross misconduct in accordance with terms and conditions of employment.

### Applying the protocols

The protocols apply to:

- All employees of Perth & Kinross Council
- All third parties working with, or on behalf, of Perth & Kinross Council

The scope of these protocols is for:

- Council operated and managed social media sites
- Legitimate business use of social media sites
- Personal use of social media sites

### Protocols

- The Council will manage and operate social media sites to provide information to stakeholders as part of its communications and marketing activities.
- The use of social media will provide new opportunities for the Council to reach out and engage with its on-line communities and directly communicate with new audiences. Social media tools will be used to provide service and event information, issue news bulletins and potentially to gather feedback.

- Council managers will encourage employees to include social media in their consideration of which channels would provide the most effective communication and information about the Council to their stakeholders.
- It is important that the key purpose and focus of Council operated and managed social media is on the work of the council.
- The Council will also permit the use of other social media sites by employees, in a professional capacity, where there is a legitimate business interest in doing so.
- Employees should be aware of their responsibility to promote the council in a positive manner. There is also a need to be mindful of reputational risk and confidentiality and to use social media in a way which safeguards children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Social media falls under the requirement to follow the Council's Information Security standards. See [ISMS 7.1.3.2](#)
- Employees should follow the Council's '[Employee Code of Conduct](#)' and professional guidance in any use of Social Media. This includes participation in personal, family, or other sites which are not intended to support the activities of the Council.
- Employees must be careful of the need to maintain boundaries between personal and professional lives and should make themselves familiar with these guidelines.
- Employees working with third parties on behalf of Perth & Kinross Council should make those third parties aware of these guidelines.

## Section A

For all employees

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## USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR PERSONAL USE

The Employee Code of Conduct must be followed in respect of the management and operation of social media sites for personal use as well as business use.

Specifically:

- Employees must not engage in activities on the internet, including the use of social media sites, which may damage the reputation of the Council.
- Employees must not engage in activities on the internet, including the use of social media sites, which may breach relevant professional guidance or Employee Code of Conduct.
- Employees must not reveal information on any external communication channel which is confidential to the Council and should consult their Line Manager if uncertain.
- Whether or not an employee chooses to create or participate in an online social network or any other form of online publishing or discussion is his or her own business. The views and opinions you express are your own.
- As a Council employee it is important to be aware that posting information or views about the Council cannot be isolated from your working life. Any information published online can, if unprotected, be accessed for all to see.
- If you do talk about the work you do or a Council service you are associated with, you should make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Council. Use a disclaimer such as: "The views expressed here are my own and do not necessarily represent the views of Perth & Kinross Council".
- Remember you are personally responsible for any content you publish.
- Understand your online privacy settings – check your settings and understand who can view your personal information and the information you publish.

- Employees must not form personal relationships via social media outside of the workplace with people you provide services to. This can leave employees open to allegations regarding comments made online and may also breach your professional guidance. Boundaries must be maintained between personal and professional lives.
- Do not use your personal profile in any way for official business.
- Do not use your professional email or phone details within your personal profile.
- Ensure that you are familiar with, and regularly update the privacy settings within your personal social networking sites. Many people find it preferable to change the settings to “just friends” in order that personal details, comments and photographs can only be seen by invited friends.
- Think carefully before accepting friend requests on your personal social networking or messaging site from anyone that you provide a service to. If you have a duty of care to that customer, for example, if you are their teacher or social worker, do not accept such requests. Your professional association may also issue guidance on this.
- Be aware that there is a separate privacy setting for facebook groups and networks. You may have your profile set to private but be aware that when joining a group or network, everyone in that group is able to see your profile.
- Be aware of the privacy settings and photo tagging facilities within social networking sites. If you or a friend is tagged within a photograph then the whole album may be visible to their friends, your friends and anyone else tagged in the album. You do not need to be friends with someone to be tagged in their album. If you are tagged in a photograph you can remove the tag but not the photograph.
- Any difficulties encountered online relating to your professional or official role or involving service users whom you are currently, or have previously worked with, should be reported immediately to your line manager. Ensure that



screen shots are taken of any concerning material in order that evidence may be preserved.

- Employees should be aware of the pitfalls as well as the advantages of participation in on-line technology in any form and take these into account.

## Section A

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## SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE OR VULNERABLE ADULTS

With all emerging technologies there is also the potential for misuse. If you are, or intend to, communicate with children, young people or vulnerable adults using social media tools you must ensure that you are aware of the risks and that you have taken appropriate safeguarding measures.

The majority of young people and vulnerable adults use the internet in a positive manner, but could potentially put themselves or others at risk through both online and offline behaviours that extend from one social media tool to another.

The Byron Review, a report delivered on the 27 March 2008 to the UK Department for Children, Schools and Families, focuses on the use of video games and the Internet (particularly social networking websites) by children, and discusses the use of classification and the role of parenting in policing these. [“Safer Children in a Digital World: the Report of the Byron Review”](#).

The Byron Review sets out the risks to children posed by the Internet.

	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Aggressive</b>	<b>Sexual</b>	<b>Values</b>
Content (child as recipient)	Adverts Spam Sponsorship Personal Info	Violent/hateful content	Pornographic or unwelcome sexual content	Bias Racist Misleading info
Contact (child as participant)	Tracking Harvesting personal info	Being bullied, harassed or stalked	Meeting strangers Being groomed	Self-harm Unwelcome persuasions
Conduct (child as actor)	Illegal downloading Hacking Gambling Financial scams Terrorism	Being bullied, harassed or stalked		Providing misleading info/advice

There are a number of factors to consider when using social media as a means of communication with children, young people and vulnerable adults.

## Promoting E-safety

- Social media should not be used as a means of targeting children or young people who are likely to be under the minimum age to access the service.
- Do not accept “friend” requests from children not known to you or who you suspect to be under the minimum age (usually 13).
- Do not ask users to disclose any personal details that might help to locate a child, young person or vulnerable adult, eg mobile phone number or email address.
- Avoid including photographs or videos of children, young people or vulnerable adults on council social media sites. This is due to the potential for:
  - tagging individuals and identifying them at particular locations.
  - copying or morphing of images.
  - personal intimidation by the posting of derogatory, abusive or threatening comments.
  - cyberbullying.
- Photos that can be used are those where written permission has been granted, where individuals cannot be identified or those purchased from a legitimate stock photography site.
- Report any concerns about the safety of a child, young person or vulnerable adult to the child or adult protection team to ensure that council child protection procedures are initiated if necessary.

## Personal Safeguarding

- Avoid using personal accounts for communication with children, young people or vulnerable adults. Any interaction should take place within a professional profile that is used solely for that purpose.
- Avoid, whenever possible, making personal contact with children, young people or vulnerable adults through online media (including mobile phones).
- Do not take digital images of service users on your personal camera, phone or any other form of mobile technology.

- Think carefully before accepting friend requests on your personal social networking or messaging site from anyone that you provide a service to. Do not accept requests from clients to whom you have a duty of care. This includes children, young people, their parents and / or other family members. Also be aware, if considering accepting former clients as friends, that they may have others within their own contact lists that are still receiving a service from you. Ensure that your personal sites are not open to view by these individuals.
- Follow any guidelines set out by your professional association.
- If you have younger family members or friends within your profile who are friends with service users that you work with, exercise caution and be aware that posts that you write on your friends' wall will be visible to all of their friends also.

The guidance above is designed to protect your privacy, protect you from allegations and also to safeguard vulnerable service users.

## Section B

Employees considering  
using social media

1

## USING SOCIAL MEDIA AS PART OF A SERVICES COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING ACTIVITY

Social media offers an effective channel of communication as part of the Council's communications and marketing strategy giving additional opportunities to communicate and engage with customers.

### Corporate Twitter site

The Council's Corporate Twitter site provides general news and information on Council services. The site is managed by the Corporate Communications Team with input, where appropriate, by key publishers from other Services.

Employees who require Council and/or Service messages to be communicated via Twitter can email the Corporate Communication Team at [media@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:media@pkc.gov.uk). In Twitter communications there should always be a link back to the Council website to support the message.

Please note the Council's Corporate Twitter site policy is not to engage directly on-line with Twitter users but to direct all relevant enquiries to the Customer Service Centre. Given the range and volume of information potentially intended for issue on the Twitter site, it would not be sustainable to provide an effective response service via Twitter. However, where there are repeated questions from many followers about a particular issue, it may be appropriate to post information which answers these questions.

### Example Council Twitter feeds



The image shows a screenshot of the Perth & Kinross Council Twitter feed. The feed displays several tweets from the account @PerthandKinross. The tweets are as follows:

- Tweet 1:** New book group at Auchterarder Library: Are you interested in reading, and want to chat to other readers about books? <http://bit.ly/qQn2NK> 11 Aug
- Tweet 2:** With pupils back to school today, here's a link to contact details and other useful information on our schools: [bit.ly/pc1lc3](http://bit.ly/pc1lc3) 16 Aug
- Tweet 3:** Are you a cyclist? There are several cycle routes around Perth for commuting to work or school, or just for fun. [bit.ly/nuPhNB](http://bit.ly/nuPhNB) 18 Aug

The screenshot also shows the Twitter interface elements, including the search bar, the Council's profile information, and the 'Follow' button.

## Service run Social Media sites

Social media sites operated by Services can only be created if a clear business need is proven. Social media must be integrated with your Services or Team communications and marketing plan.

If you consider social media will add value to your communications plan then you should consult your Line Manager in the first instance.

Before formally submitting a request to use social media, please consider the following:

- How does social media fit with the Service's overall communications and marketing strategy?
- Who are your intended audience? What are the numbers of people you will be communicating with?
- Your objectives – What do you want to gain from social media interaction with customers?
- Benefits – What will be the benefits from interacting using social media?
- What other communication channels are also appropriate for your intended audience?
- What information do you intend to publish?
- What are the potential risks of using social media and what steps would you take to address these risks?
- Are you able to commit time to monitoring, moderating and, where appropriate, responding to any comments?
- Will there be a time limit to your site? (see Exit Strategy)

## Submitting a request

If you think social media is the right communication route for the Service, complete the social media evaluation form (**Appendix i**). The purpose of the form is to advise your Head of Service of your intentions to use social media and help the Social Media Group to evaluate your request.

## Steps to take

- 1 The above considerations should be discussed with your team / line manager;
- 2 Complete the social media evaluation form (Appendix i) which will ask you to provide information about:
  - **Aims and objectives**
  - **Channels of communication** – meets communication and marketing strategy and plan objectives through the use of the most effective channels
  - **Risks** – identify and address key risks of using social media
  - **Sites and audience** – clearly define the target/potential audience
  - **Resources** – detail the resources available
- 3 Submit the form to your Head of Service for approval;
- 4 When approved send the approved evaluation form to the Corporate Communications Manager, Ruth Fry, [rfry@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:rfry@pkc.gov.uk)

## Evaluating your request

The evaluation form will be reviewed by the Social Media Group. There is no ‘one-size-fits-all’ social media and the most appropriate communications strategy will be discussed based on the information you have provided.

The creation of new sites will be controlled to ensure the Council does not have more sites than is necessary, sustainable, and beneficial; the need to target specific small audiences with individual followings will be balanced against the benefits of building up accumulated larger followings.

The group may recommend the creation of another social media channel or that the requestor contributes towards an existing channel which serves the same or similar audience eg Corporate Twitter site. Recommendations will be made and approval for the request will be finalised by the Corporate Communications Manager.

## Exit strategy

Some social media activity may be event specific and have a natural shelf-life. You should take care not to give users the impression that the Council is setting up a fully interactive resource, profile or page if that page is then to be abandoned after it has achieved a one-off short-term purpose.

An online resource belonging to Perth & Kinross Council must not be abandoned as this may impact the Council's reputation and undermine the use of our social media by the public.

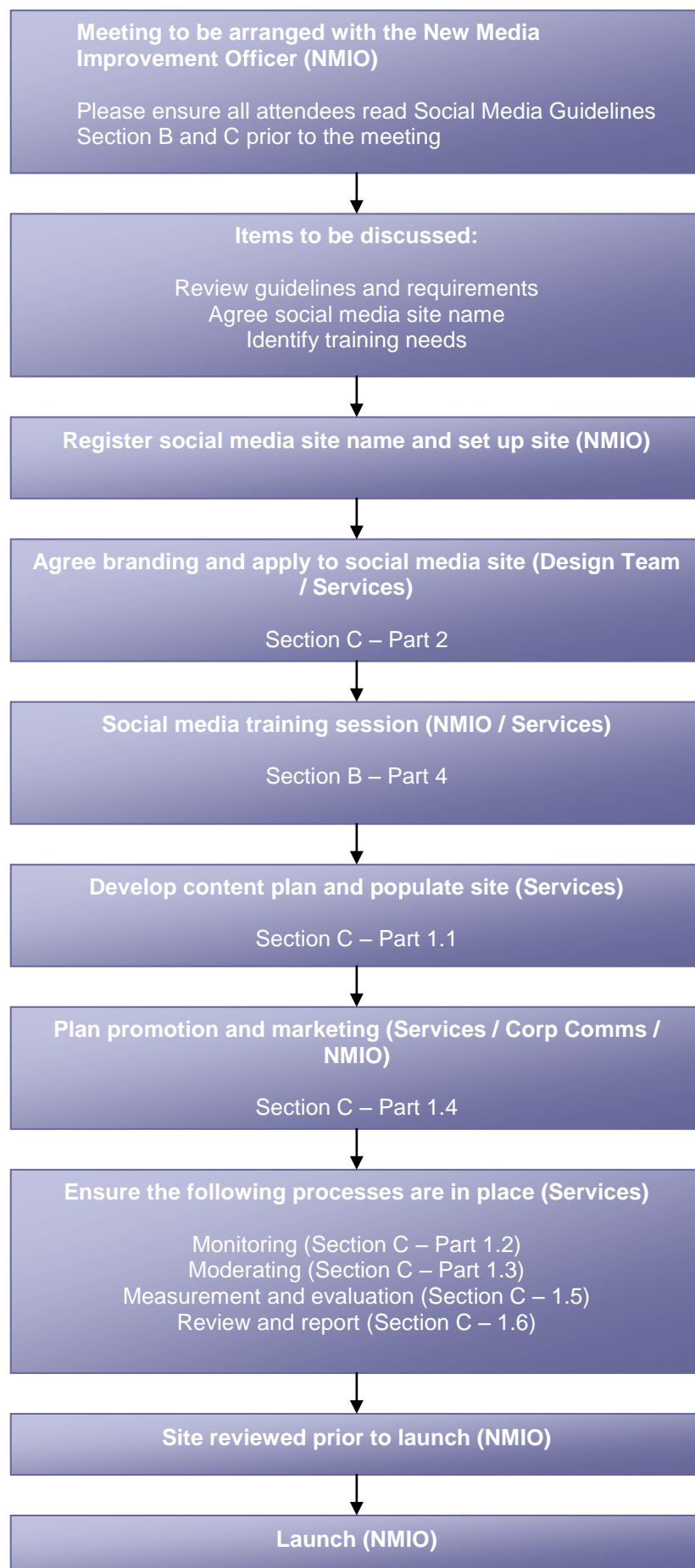
## Social Media group – roles and responsibilities

The main roles and responsibilities of the social media group are to:

- Develop the social media guidelines;
- Review and extend the guidelines based on feedback and the introduction of new tools and technologies;
- Maintain the register of social media sites;
- Evaluate social media requests and make recommendations for final approval;
- Consider quarterly reviews of social media sites and assess for appropriateness and effectiveness.



## Process for creation of **approved** new sites



## Section B

Employees using  
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## 2

## PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES

This section details professional responsibilities for employees who are running Council social media sites, and/or making comments on Council or non-Council run social media sites related to Council business.

Social media is about the social connections and conversations made with customers, peers and friends. To ensure the maximum value and foster relationships from social media interactions resource and time commitment is required.

There are general considerations to recognise when using social media in a professional capacity.

### **Professional and Personal Responsibility**

- Always remember that you are an ambassador for the Council. Use professional language for all interactions and always disclose your position as a representative of the Council, your Service or team.
- Social media interactions should aim to add value to the Council or Service communications and marketing plans, by provide valuable and up to date information.
- You are personally responsible for any content you publish. Be aware that published content is in the public domain and on record for a long time. Also, as in all publishing, you should be aware of the potential issues which may arise under libel, defamation and slander legislation.
- Make sure you always act in an honest, accurate, fair and responsible way.
- Respect your target audience. Think about their specific needs and be aware of any language, cultural or other sensitivities you may need to take account of.

- The Council's corporate brand is best represented by its people and what you publish will reflect on the wider organisation.

### **Adherence to Council Policies/Legislation**

- Always follow the Council's Information Security and Data Protection policies and the Financial Regulations. Never share confidential or sensitive information.
- Seek the appropriate permission/s to publish any information, report or conversation that is not already in the public domain.
- Do not cite or reference customers, partners or suppliers without their approval.
- Copyright law applies when linking to images or other on-line material. Seek advice from the Information Compliance Manager, as appropriate.

### **In addition - running a Council social media site**

If you are involved in publishing information to a Council social media site on behalf of the Council, there are responsibilities, standards of behaviour and other organisational considerations which apply.

Remember, you are the public face of the Council and should participate, responsibly, in the same way as you would with other media, public meetings or forums.

Participation in social media will result in your comments being permanently available and open to being republished in other media.

You should also be aware that the information you post may attract media interest in yourself or the organisation. It's important to consider and to make clear to others whether you are participating in a business or a personal capacity. If you have any doubts, take advice from your line manager and/or the Corporate Communications Team.

## Section B

Employees using  
social media

### 3

## TRAINING AND AWARENESS

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Once your request for a new social media site has been approved, you'll receive training. The training will cover:

- **Hands-on training.** If required, you'll receive hands-on training to help you understand how to get the maximum benefit from your social media tool and how the tool can be used to achieve your goals.
- **The social media guidelines.** This training activity will ensure understanding of the objectives, how they will be measured, who your target audiences are, what content you will be sharing and everything else in-between.

## Section C

Employees using  
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### 1

## MANAGING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

Proper management of social media channels is vital to their success and there are a number of different aspects to consider.

You must have a clear plan of what you want to achieve and the resources and time to dedicate to achieving it as social media is an on-going activity that needs commitment.

Sufficient resources must be in place in order to:



### Types and sources of content

Without content there is no social media, so it is important to think about how you will populate your pages for the lifespan of your site.

Consider where your content will come from before you start – it may be useful to put together a weekly or monthly plan to avoid the possibility of the content ‘drying up’.

Content should comprise a mixture of ‘business as usual’ communications adapted for social media and content produced exclusively for social media.

Leveraging existing content	Adding value with exclusive content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Press releases</li> <li>▪ Content updates on website</li> <li>▪ Consultations</li> <li>▪ Publications</li> <li>▪ Marketing campaign messages</li> <li>▪ Photographs and video footage</li> <li>▪ RSS feeds</li> <li>▪ Information from partner organisations or other relevant bodies</li> <li>▪ Requests for feedback or comments on particular issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Live coverage of events such as election results</li> <li>▪ Pre-announcement and promotion of forthcoming events</li> <li>▪ Replies and responses to questions and comments (see <b>Appendix ii</b> for a flow chart about responding to comments)</li> </ul>

## Content principles

As well as thinking about where your content should come from, it is also important to think about the principles behind what your content should be:

<b>Varied</b>	Using a wide range of different content sources is the most successful option – use as many types as you can to keep things interesting.
<b>Frequent</b>	<p>It is important that channels like Twitter and Facebook are updated frequently and not left to become out of date.</p> <p>You don't have to post every day to create an effective presence with your social media. Find the frequency that makes sense for the purpose of your social media presence. Tools like MediaFunnel can be used to set up tweets to go out at specific times.</p> <p>If you can't maintain the quality level of your content at the rate you're trying for, reduce the frequency until you can.</p>
<b>Short</b>	Twitter has a character limit of 140 characters so you have no choice but to keep it short. However other sites should all stick to this 'to-the-point- rule', and if it is something that does require detail then a link back to a website is the best option.
<b>Relevant</b>	Social media content must be relevant to the user when they are viewing it, whether this is a current news item or an issue happening at the time, or whether this is about events or opportunities that are coming soon.
<b>Human</b>	Whilst automated feeds are useful for ensuring frequency, do not solely rely on this source.
<b>Credible</b>	Updates should always be about something related to services provided by the Council but may occasionally be light-hearted. Links back to the corporate website should be used as much as possible to corroborate comments.
<b>Corporate</b>	Always remember that you are using social media as another form of official Council communication, rather like an extension of the website.
<b>Accurate</b>	Any information posted in social media channels needs to be accurate. All spelling and grammar should be correct; avoid 'text speak' and always check the facts first.
<b>Tone</b>	Whilst communications do need to remain professional, social media channels generally have a more relaxed and informal feel about them. It is important that messages don't sound too corporate or stand-offish but can still be seen as conversational. This is particularly true when replying to messages and questions.

## Section C

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### 1.2

## MONITOR YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

The golden rule with social media is that you can't just set up your channels and forget about them – sites need monitoring regularly to check for comments and questions as well as anything else that may need addressing.

If a member of the public posts a question or comment, they have the right to expect a reply unless you clearly state otherwise.

- Ensure that someone checks social media at least once a day.
- Respond to any comments or questions directed at you as soon as you can. This doesn't necessarily have to be with the final answer – if you have to get more information let them know you are working on it. See appendix ii for a flow chart that helps you decide how to react to comments.
- It must be remembered that on a Council-run site you are not responding as yourself but on behalf of the Council; responses should therefore not be made on the basis of personal opinions, but on the basis of the Council's position.
- Try to acknowledge positive feedback, even if it is simply by 'liking' a comment.

### Freedom of Information (FOI) requests

While social media, particularly the 140 character restrictions of Twitter, aren't the most effective channel for submitting (or responding to) FOI requests, they can still be valid therefore it is important you check your social media channel daily.

Those submitting FOI applications through social media should also comply in having their real name and links to their actual contact details available for the FOI request to be valid.

All FOI requests must be forwarded to the FOI team who will respond to requests on the basis outlined below.

**Requester's name**



The request must state the name of the applicant. A social media profile name may not be the requester's real name, but the real name may be shown in their linked profile. If the requester does not give their real name, it is technically not a valid freedom of information request. Whilst the Council may still choose to respond, the requester will be made aware that the Information Commissioner will not be able to deal with any subsequent complaint.

### **Requester's address**

The request must state an address 'for FOI correspondence'. The Council could ask the requester for an email address in order to provide a full response. Alternatively, it could publish the requested information, or a refusal notice, on its website and tweet a link to that.

### **@mentions**

An FOI request in a tweet that only refers to an authority in an @mention, for example @PerthandKinross, is directed to and received by that authority. As Twitter allows the Council to check for @mentions of itself, it has in effect received that request, even though it was not sent directly to the Council.

These requests should be treated as a formal FOI request and forwarded to the FOI team.

## Section C

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### 1.3 MODERATING

One of the main worries that people have about using social media is not being able to control what is said about them. Aside from keeping channels private, which defeats the purpose of using social media, there is very little that can actually be done to stop people writing things that you may not want them to. This is another reason for regular monitoring. It is not a reason to avoid using social media altogether: customers will be commenting on Council services using these channels whether we see it or not. It is preferable to have a channel to put Council views across rather than ignoring what is said online completely.

There are times when it may be necessary to remove inappropriate material, though do be careful not to be overly cautious and end up discouraging people from engaging with you. It is better to apologise or to refute a negative comment about Council services than to simply delete it: deleting it will seem defensive and look as though you have something to hide. Also, whilst it is important to acknowledge people's comments do not feel that you must reply to them all. It may mean you being drawn into an unnecessary and petty argument.

If in any doubt on the above, please refer to your Line Manager or the Corporate Communications Team who will advise on the best course of action.

### **Get the page right**

Make sure your pages are fully set-up and populated with interesting content before you start pushing people towards them, otherwise they won't stay when they do get there.

### **Organisational awareness**

Liaise with the Corporate Communications Team who will help make employees aware of the new pages through *eric*. Promote through the plasma screens or through any other corporately circulated documents. Encourage employees to spread the word to their family, friends and neighbours, and anyone else in the local area. Social media links also make a useful addition to employees' email signatures.

### **Integrate**

It is important to remember that social media is not an independent communication method, it should be integrated with any other channel you are using. Place links in the appropriate places on the website, including the main social media page. Don't forget about print media either – put your social media address on any materials you send out eg magazines, newsletters, flyers, posters and letters.

### **Cross promotion**

Just as social media should not be viewed as separate from other forms of communication, the individual tools within social media should not be viewed as separate from each other either.

Whatever tools you decide to use, they should all be linked to one another even if it is done simply by putting a link to your Twitter feed on your Flickr page for example.

### **Be proactive**

You can also be proactive in increasing your awareness amongst the social media channels themselves. Search for existing groups and pages that relate to your local area, and make yourself known to them. This may be by writing on their wall, sharing your photos and videos with them, or by commenting on their content.

Essentially there isn't a way to physically increase the number of followers or fans you have by yourself. Instead you have to rely on users finding your pages and choosing to subscribe to your information. The only way to impact on this is to increase awareness to ensure people know that they can find you on social media channels, and to make sure that the information they find there is relevant or interesting enough to get them hooked. Using the single corporate presence on each major social media channel is another way to gain instant followers, rather than setting up a separate account and starting from scratch.

## Section C

Employees using  
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## 1.5

## MEASUREMENT AND EVALUATION

### What to measure

The most important thing to remember is that you can measure as many different things as you want, but they are only meaningful if you can relate them back to why you wanted to start using social media in the first place.

There are four main measurement types:

<b>Awareness</b> <i>Knowledge of social media platforms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Number of 'likes' on the Facebook page</li><li>▪ Number of Twitter followers</li><li>▪ Number of views on Flickr</li></ul>
<b>Appreciation</b> <i>Engagement with your social media platforms</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Number of 'likes' for Facebook content such as wall posts and photos</li><li>▪ Number of comments, wall posts and direct messages</li></ul>
<b>Action</b> <i>A response or behaviour that social media platforms have influenced</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Referrals to main website from social media sources</li><li>▪ Using searches and dashboards to monitor mentions – potentially monitoring positive and negative mentions and how that changes and tracks over time as we put out more campaigns</li><li>▪ Look at web site traffic specifically around the subjects being touched on in social media campaigns, for example the impact of tweeting from the election results – how many people clicked on the bit.ly links, how many hits from the individual pages, etc.</li><li>▪ Increase attendance at events publicised on social media sites</li><li>▪ Reduced calls to Customer Service Centre related to information provision</li></ul>
<b>Advocacy</b> <i>Creating word of mouth and information sharing</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Number of retweets on Twitter</li></ul>

## How to measure

If you have established what exactly it is you want to measure, the next point to consider is how you will go about measuring it. Some points are easier to cover than others, for example both Twitter and Facebook both constantly display how many followers / likes you have, and YouTube automatically counts video views.

Other items such as the number of online comments, and their sentiment and tone, can be much harder to quantify. Much of it can be exploring/searching the facts and figures, though there are a number of different tools and options available to help.

## Measurement tools

- **Web analytics** – If one of your evaluation terms is the number of internet users being directed back to the Corporate Website then the Council's web analytics software can provide you with this information. Not only does the software break down the sources down into direct traffic, search engines, and referring sites, but is also lists individual sites and individual pages within those sites, letting you see exactly how your social media presence is reaching your audience.

If you don't have access to web analytics, contact your web team moderator or Tina Ho, New Media Improvement Officer on [tho@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:tho@pkc.gov.uk).

## Monitoring tools

- **Social mention** – Social mention is a real-time search engine that gathers content from over 80 social media channels. Type in a specific phrase and it brings up all the mentions it can find, together with a brief analysis covering strength, reach, sentiment and passion, and it also lets you set up alerts.

## Built-in monitoring tools

### Search functions

All the key social media sites have their own built-in search functions, making it very easy to find out what people are saying.

- **Twitter** – Type any term into the Twitter search box and the engine will find everything that relates to it, breaking it up into four different tabs – tweets, tweets with links, tweets near you and people. It also lets you save searches that you use most often, and has an advanced search which lets you put in more specific terms, including whether a mention is positive or negative.
- **Facebook** – Facebook has a useful search function too, which lets you find people, pages, groups, events and comments which relate to whatever term you put in. The results brought up under the 'posts by everyone' tab are particularly useful for reputation monitoring, showing any comments that contain your search term.
- **Facebook insights** – Insights are automatically made available on every page, though it does take about a week to gather any meaningful information after you first set it up. The data is broken up into two categories, 'users' and 'interactions', and the level of detail that it goes into within those categories is very impressive.

### Users

- New likes, lifetime likes and un-likes
- Number of daily, weekly and monthly active users
- How active users have interacted with your page ie viewed, posted, liked or commented
- User demographics including age, gender, country, town/city, language.
- Total tab views
- External referrers
- Media consumption

### Interactions

- Post views
- Post feedback
- Page activity

## Section C

Employees using  
social media

## 1.6 REVIEW AND REPORT

Maintaining an effective social media site requires an on-going investment of time and effort.

In order to ensure this investment is sustainable and valuable in terms of achieving the intended objectives, employees will be required to present the Social Media Group with evaluation information on a quarterly basis, on the performance of the social media site.

The performance information can be gathered easily by using on-line tools (see Measurement and Evaluation section) and this will be explained to you by the Social Media Group when your site is approved.

The role of the Social Media Group is to support you where required in improving the performance of your site, or if appropriate to recommend the closure of the site.

Any such recommendation would be discussed with you before going to the Corporate Communications Manager and Corporate Change Manager for approval.

Where a site is closed, the Corporate Communications Team will be available to support you in identifying alternative communication channels to help achieve your communication objectives.



### Security

It is vital to ensure the security of Council run social media sites and it is the responsibility of anyone involved in these sites to act responsibly and take steps to ensure security is not breached.

#### **Access**

It is important to keep administrator access to social media sites restricted. Whilst it is a good idea to have more than one person with access, if not just in case of absence, you should make sure that any people who do have access are the right people. As well as having the necessary skills and knowledge to manage channels, social media administrators also need to remain in close contact with one another to know what each other are doing and who they may have responded to, to avoid any overlap or omissions. Passwords should be changed on a fairly regular basis to avoid any unauthorised access.

#### **Phishing**

Phishing is a scam where attempts are made to acquire sensitive information such as passwords and credit card details.

Always log in using the official social media site. If you are promoted to login in through any third party link on the site or from another site, close down and login in the normal way.

## Section C

Employees using  
social media

## 2

## BRANDING IDENTITY

Consistent and appropriate branding of Social Media Sites is essential to ensure all such sites adhere to Perth & Kinross Council's Corporate Identity.

For guidance on the Council's branding and design of Social Media Sites employees must contact the Corporate Communications Design Team in the first instance.

Examples of the Council's branding on Facebook and Twitter are shown below/overleaf.

### *Archives Twitter profile design*



### *Corporate Twitter profile design*

Example of Facebook branding:



All images must be appropriate for Council use and all copyright and/or permissions must be adhered to and up to date.

For guidance contact the Design Team  
design@pkc.gov.uk or tel 01738 475050

# Appendix

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## SOCIAL MEDIA EVALUATION FORM

The purpose of this form is to identify whether social media is suitable for your communication needs and to record the request from a Service to create a social media site. The form will require to be signed off by your Head of Service.

### Contact details

Name

Service

Date of request

Date signed off by HoS

### Aims and objectives

**Outline why you consider social media as a key communication element for your Service. Please include details of information you intend to publish.**

**What are your key objectives in requesting to use social media?**

### Channels of communication

**Which other channels will be used to communicate the information mentioned above to your audience?**

Social media only

Telephone

Face to face (eg meeting, focus group)

Text messaging

Written (eg email/newsletter)

Website

If not [www.pkc.gov.uk](http://www.pkc.gov.uk), please specify

Other channels (please specify)

In your Services overall communications and marketing plan, please indicate what value social media will add to that mix.

### Audience

Who are the intended audience you will be communicating with through the social media route?

What will be the benefits to your Service from interacting online with your audience using social media?

Do you have a preference as to which social media tool you would like to use?

Yes ☐ No ☐

If yes, please specify:

Facebook ☐ Twitter ☐ Flickr ☐

YouTube ☐ Wordpress (blogs) ☐

Other (please specify)

Will the social media site for long or short term use?

Long ☐ Short ☐

If short, please specify estimated end date:

Please estimate:

Number of people in your audience  Expected uptake for your social media channel in 6 months (followers, likes, etc)

As an example, the Corporate Twitter site has received 450 followers in the first three months.

**How will the success of the social media site be measured?**

### Risks

**What are the potential risks for the Council and Service in using social media for the purpose specified?**

**How do you propose you address these risks?**

### Resources

**Have you identified suitable individuals to act as the moderators for the proposed site(s)?**

They will be required to make regular contributions and commit time to publish, monitor, moderate and respond to comments.

Yes  No

**If yes, please list the nominated moderator(s)**

**Please indicate how much time in hours per week moderators will be required to ensure the site is up to date and relevant for the audience.**

hrs

**Please submit the completed form to your Head of Service for approval.**

The form (with Head of Service approval) should then be emailed to your Service contact as below:

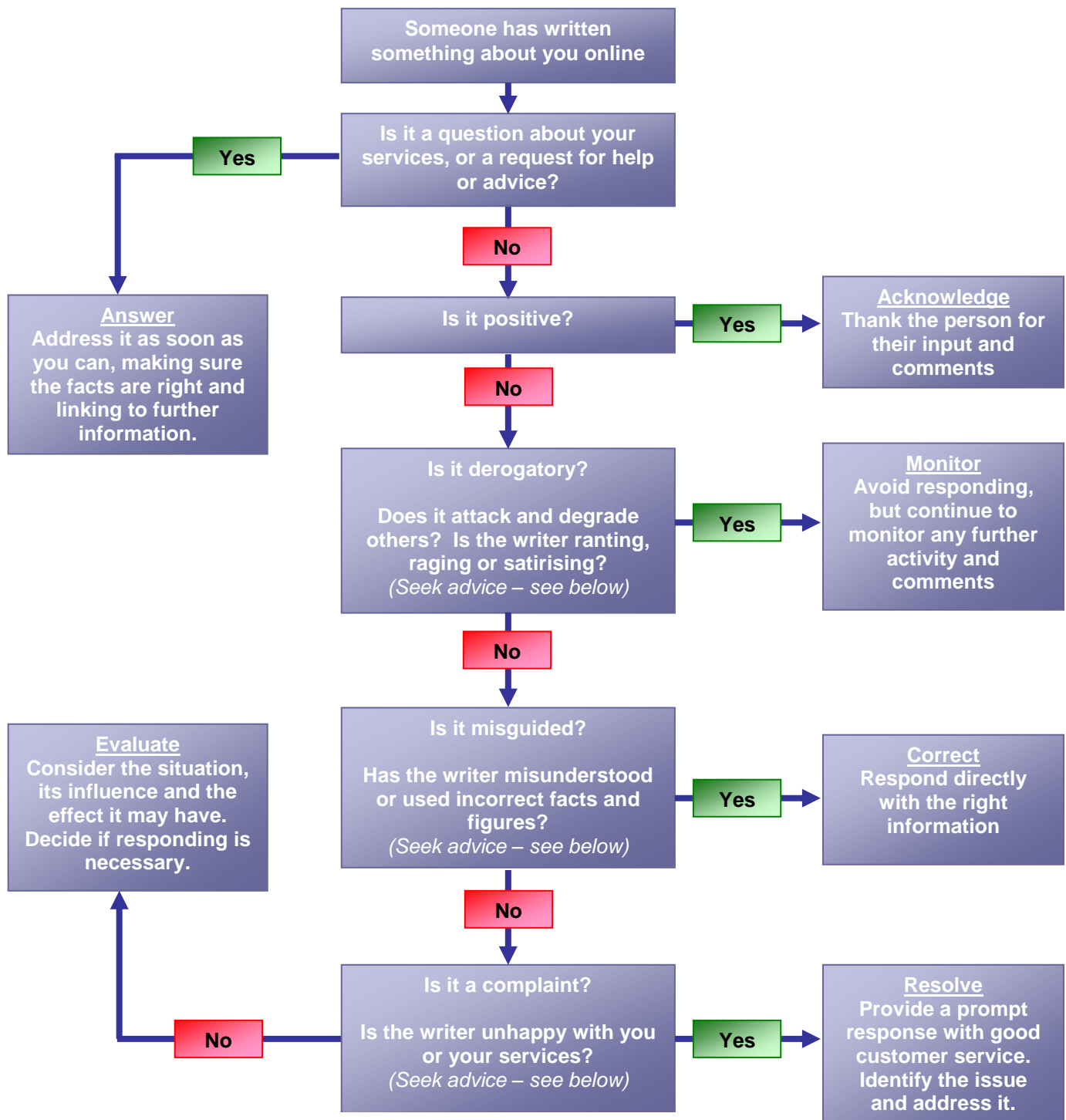
- Education and Children's Services – [ECSCommunications@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:ECSCommunications@pkc.gov.uk)
- The Environment Service – [TESCommunicationsTeam@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:TESCommunicationsTeam@pkc.gov.uk)
- Housing and Community Care – [ScottWatson@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:ScottWatson@pkc.gov.uk)
- Corporate and Democratic Services – [Communications@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:Communications@pkc.gov.uk)

Once your form has been considered, your Service representative will contact you with feedback/final approval.

# Appendix

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## FLOWCHART FOR RESPONDING TO COMMENTS



Before you respond ...

- **Seek advice** – Contact your Service’s Communications or Complaints Team for advice.
- **Don’t rush** – Think about what you want to say and take your time to say it right.
- **Use references** – Be clear about where your information is from, and link to more details where necessary.
- **Get the tone right** – Make the tone appropriate to the issue but to the comment as well.
- **Be transparent** – Be as open and honest as you can about the issue and your involvement.



The Council has a number of Social Media outlets which we invite the public to follow us on. The intention is to create an environment where people are able to contribute their views without fear of abuse, harassment or exposure to offensive or otherwise inappropriate content.

The Council reserves the right to remove any comments or contributions that break the rules or guidelines of our social media outlets.

When contributing your views please ensure that you:

- Are civil, tasteful and relevant.
- Protect your personal privacy and that of others by not including personal information in your public posts (such as email addresses, private addresses or phone numbers).
- Do not post messages that are unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive.
- Do not use insulting, offensive or hateful language.
- Do not post content copied from elsewhere, for which you do not own the copyright.
- Do not post the same message, or very similar messages, more than once (also called "spamming").
- Do not publicise your, or anyone else's, personal information, such as contact details.
- Do not promote commercial interests in your posts.
- Represent your own views and not impersonate or falsely represent any other person.

### **Libel**

Please take care not to make defamatory statements. In law this means a statement that lowers the reputation of a person or organisation in the eyes of a reasonable person. By publishing such a statement we can both get into serious trouble. The Council will therefore remove any statement that could be deemed to be defamatory.