

SWINESHEAD PARISH COUNCIL



Parish Council Office

1 & 2 North End | Swineshead | PE20 3LR

Chairman | Councillor Carl Gibbard

Clerk | Victoria Clark

Swineshead Parish Council Social Media Policy

Adopted: Tuesday, 17 June 2025

Next Review Date: Election year or as and when changes are needed

1. Introduction

Swineshead Parish Council recognises the value of social media in engaging with the public, promoting community initiatives, and sharing Council updates. However, use of social media must be responsible, respectful, and in line with the Council's values, policies, and legal obligations.

This policy applies to:

- Parish Council staff
- Council Members
- Volunteers acting on behalf of the Council
- Any group or organisation receiving Council funding or acting under the Council's name

2. Objectives

- To ensure that social media use by or on behalf of Swineshead Parish Council reflects the Council's views and values.
 - To protect individuals from inappropriate, offensive, or unlawful content or conduct online.
 - To safeguard the Council's reputation.
 - To provide clear guidance for all relevant parties.

3. Official Council Social Media

- The Council may operate official accounts on platforms such as Facebook, X (Twitter), and Instagram.
- Only staff or Councillors authorised by the Clerk or the Council may post on official Council channels.
- All posts must be factual, unbiased, and apolitical.
- Sensitive or confidential matters should never be discussed or hinted at on social media.

4. Use by Councillors

- Councillors are free to use personal or professional social media accounts, but:
 - When commenting on Council matters, it must be clear whether they are expressing a personal opinion or representing the Council.
 - Councillors must abide by the Code of Conduct at all times, including online.
 - Councillors must not disclose confidential Council information or misrepresent decisions.



- Offensive, harassing, or defamatory comments (about other Members, staff, or the public) are prohibited.

5. Use by Staff

- Staff must not use personal accounts to engage in Council business unless authorised.
- All Council-related communication on social media must go through official channels or be approved by the Clerk.
- Staff should never post negative or critical comments about Councillors, colleagues, contractors, or residents.

6. Use by Associated and Funded Groups

- Groups receiving Council funding or working in partnership with the Council must not:
 - Misrepresent the Parish Council's views or decisions.
 - Post anything that might bring the Council into disrepute.
 - Engage in political, offensive, or discriminatory content when claiming association with the Council.
- The Council may request that content be removed if it violates this policy.

7. Unacceptable Use

Any use of social media under the Council's name or relating to Council business must not:

- Contain material that is abusive, obscene, libellous, or discriminatory.
- Involve personal attacks or harassment.
- Incite violence or hatred.
- Mislead the public about Council activities or decisions.
- Breach data protection laws or confidentiality agreements.

8. Moderation and Content Management

- Comments on Council-managed platforms may be moderated. Offensive or inappropriate content will be removed.
- The Clerk, designated staff and councillors are responsible for monitoring official accounts.
- Repeated abuse of the Council's social media spaces by users may result in accounts being blocked or reported.

9. Breaches of this Policy

Breaches by:

- Councillors may result in referral to the Monitoring Officer.
- Staff may result in disciplinary action.
- Associated groups may lead to withdrawal of support or funding.

10. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required by changes in legislation or Council needs.