

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Introduction

Social media is a blanket term applied to a range of online multimedia tools that are used for creating content and two-way communication. They can be accessed via your smartphone, PC, laptop, tablet or smart TV. All social media accounts are free of charge and can be set up quickly and easily from an Internet page.

The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables the Council to interact in a way that improves the communications, both within the Council, and between the Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves.

Llangors Community Council does operate a website which is not regarded as a Social Media site.

Llangors Community Council operates a Facebook page under the name: Llangors Community Council.

There are no other Social Media sites operated by Llangors Community Council.

It is also noted here for information that the Standing Orders of the Council prohibit digital recordings of any meeting of Llangors Community Council.

Social Media is a way to further introduce Councillors to their community and demonstrate some of the work undertaken by LCC and its Councillors within the local area. It is not a means to replace communication methods already established. Any specific communication requests (including but not limited to comments and messages) regarding particular matters or complaints, should be directed to an appropriate page on the website relating to the matter.

Please refer to Annex 1 for Social Media Guidelines.

1. Policy statement

- 1.1. This policy is intended to help employees and elected members make appropriate decisions about the use of social media such as social networking websites, forums, message boards, blogs or comments on web-articles, such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.
- 1.2. This policy outlines the standards the Council requires employees and elected members to observe when using social media, the circumstances in which your use of social media will be monitored and the action that will be taken in respect of breaches of this policy.

2. The scope of the policy

- 2.1. All employees and elected members are expected to comply with this policy at all times to protect the privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the Council.
- 2.2. Breach of this policy by employees may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.
- 2.3. Breach of this policy by elected members will be dealt with under the Code of Conduct.

3. Responsibility for implementation of the policy

- 3.1. The Council has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.
- 3.2. The Clerk along with the Chair is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for changes to minimise risks to our work.
- 3.3. All employees and elected members should ensure that they take the time to read and understand this policy. Any breach of this policy should be reported to the Clerk or Chair of the Council.
- 3.4. Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Clerk.

4. Using social media sites in the name of the council

- 4.1. The Clerk and elected members are permitted to post material on a social media website in the name of the Council and on its behalf in accordance with the rules and scope of this policy. The Press and Media Policy of the Council should be considered before disclosing any information.
- 4.2. If you are not sure if your comments are appropriate do not post them until you have checked with the Clerk/Chair.

5. Using social media

- 5.1. The Council recognises the importance of the internet in shaping public thinking about the Council and the support and services it provides to the community. It also recognises the importance of our employees and elected members joining in and helping shape community conversation and direction through interaction in social media.
 - a) Before using social media on any matter which might affect the interests of the Council you must have read and understood this policy and
 - b) Employees must have gained prior written approval to do so from the Clerk.

6. Rules for use of social media

Whenever you are permitted to use social media in accordance with this policy, you must adhere to the following general rules:

- 6.1. Do not upload, post or forward a link to any abusive, obscene, discriminatory, harassing, derogatory or defamatory content.
- 6.2. Any employee/elected member who feel that they have been harassed or bullied, or are offended by material posted or uploaded by a colleague onto a social media website should inform the Clerk/Chair.
- 6.3. Never disclose commercially sensitive, personal private or confidential information. If you are unsure whether the information you wish to share falls within one of these categories, you should discuss this with the Clerk/Chair.
- 6.4. Do not up load, post or forward any content belonging to a third party unless you have that third party's consent.
- 6.5. Before you include a link to a third-party website, check that any terms and conditions of that website permit you to link to it.
- 6.6. When making use of any social media platform, you must read and comply with its terms of use.
- 6.7. Be honest and open, but be mindful of the impact your contribution might make to people's perceptions of the Council.
- 6.8. You are personally responsible for content you publish into social media tools.
- 6.9. Don't escalate heated discussions, try to be conciliatory, respectful and quote facts to lower the temperature and correct misrepresentations.
- 6.10. Don't discuss colleagues without their prior approval.
- 6.11. Always consider others' privacy and avoid discussing topics that may be inflammatory e.g. politics and religion. Remember that although it is acceptable to make political points or canvass votes via your own social media accounts this will not be permissible if you are commenting on behalf of the Council.
- 6.12. Avoid publishing your contact details where they can be accessed and used widely by people you did not intend to see them, and never publish anyone else's contact details.

7. Monitoring use of social media websites

- 7.1. Employees and elected members should be aware that exceptionally, when there is good reason to do so, any use of social media websites (whether or not accessed for Council purposes) may be monitored and, where

breaches of this policy are found, action may be taken against employees under our Disciplinary Procedure and councillors under the Code of Conduct.

- 7.2. Misuse of social media websites can, in certain circumstances, constitute a criminal offence or otherwise give rise to legal liability against you and the Council.
- 7.3. In particular a serious case of uploading, posting forwarding or posting a link to any of the following types of material on a social media website, whether in a professional or personal capacity, will probably amount to gross misconduct/breach of the Code of Conduct (this list is not exhaustive):
 - a) pornographic material (that is, writing, pictures, films and video clips of a sexually explicit or arousing nature);
 - b) a false and defamatory statement about any person or organisation;
 - c) material which is offensive, obscene, criminal, discriminatory, derogatory or may cause embarrassment to the Council our councillors or our employees;
 - d) confidential information about the council or anyone else
 - e) any other statement which is likely to create any liability (whether criminal or civil, whether for you or the organisation); or
 - f) material in breach of copyright or other intellectual property rights, or which invades the privacy of any person.

Any such action will be addressed under the Disciplinary Procedure/Code of Conduct.

- 7.4. Where evidence of misuse is found the Council may undertake a more detailed investigation involving the examination and disclosure of monitoring records to those nominated to undertake the investigation and any witnesses or managers involved in the investigation. If necessary, such information may be handed to the police in connection with a criminal investigation.
- 7.5. If you notice any use of social media by other employees/elected members in breach of this policy please report it to the Clerk/Chair.

8. Monitoring and review of this policy

- 8.1. The Council shall be responsible for reviewing this policy annually to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.

Further information for elected members, published by the Welsh Local Government Association, on the use of social media can be viewed on the One Voice Wales website.

ANNEX 1: SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Social Media Site(s) used by LCC:	Facebook
Page Operating Name:	Llangors Community Council
Moderator:	Clerk
Additional Moderators:	Clr H Quarrell, Clr S Bailey

- **Posts from LCC**

The moderator on behalf of LCC aims to post once per week, or as deemed necessary. The topic of posts will be discussed at monthly meetings to allow opportunity for suggestions to be raised. Topics must remain relevant to the work of Llangors Community Council and of interest to the local community it serves. Any posts will also be available on the website blog section, where suitable.

- **Reviewing**

The LCC Facebook page is to be reviewed at a minimum of every 48 hours Monday – Friday. During periods of Annual Leave/absence of the Clerk, reviewing will be the responsibility of one or more of the additional moderators.

The page is to be reviewed for comments, post requests, and any other notifications.

- **Posts from other individuals and organisations**

Posts from any other individuals and organisations (other than LCC) are to be subject to a review from a moderator before publication. Posts must be in line with LCC noticeboards throughout the community, registered charities, CIC's, local Churches and Chapels and constituted not-for-profit local groups are permitted to request their posts to be shared. Business advertising is not permitted. Third party notices displayed are independent of Llangors Community Council, who reserve the right to remove them if they are deemed not suitable.

Posts must not be in violation of any rules (6.) set out in the Social Media Policy.

- **Comments**

Comments are allowed on all posts and notices on LCC Facebook page, without a prior-to-publication review process. These will also be subject to review within the aforementioned 48-hour period.

Comments in violation of any rules set out in the Social Media Policy will be removed immediately upon discovery.

Moderators, upon discovery of any violations, must record evidence of the violation and share with the Clerk via clerk@llangors.org.uk to be recorded in case of complaints.

- **Metrics**

Metrics are to be reported back to Councillors by the Clerk, bi-monthly at Council monthly meetings.

TEMPLATE RESPONSES

This outlines suggested template responses to specific enquiries raised on Social Media and should be considered in line with the full guidelines and Social Media Policy.

With all template responses, appropriate modification is permitted in order to handle each specific enquiry.

Contact request

- Any posts, messages, comments or any other, requesting a way to get in touch with any/specific Councillor
- Any issues or feedback that should ideally be passed onto the Council

Thank you for getting in touch with LCC and for your comment/message. Contact details of all Councillors can be found at: <https://llangors.org.uk/community-council/whos-who/> and you are welcomed to reach out [to specific Councillor] for the Council to consider your comments. We look forward to hearing from you!

Specific topics

- Any posts, messages, comments or any other, expressing requests for further information

Thank you for getting in touch with LCC and for your comment/message. Community Councillors are trying to actively encourage engagement from local residents on matters that effect residents. The website includes minutes and agendas relating to recent meetings (including those relating to planning applications) where you can read more about LCC current plans and ongoing work. Alternatively, you can contact a Community Councillor directly, details can be found at: <https://llangors.org.uk/community-council/whos-who/> We look forward to hearing from you!

Complaints

- Any posts, messages, comments or any other, with negative connotation or criticism of the work and/or conduct of LCC and its members
- Any posts, messages, comments or any other, wishing to place a formal complaint

Thank you for getting in touch with LCC and for your comment/message. Your views and feedback are important to all members of LCC. You can get in touch with the Clerk and/or Community Councillor here at: <https://llangors.org.uk/community-council/whos-who/> LCC complaints policy can be viewed online at: <https://llangors.org.uk/community-council/policies/> which are received by the Clerk.

Comments in violation of any rules set out in the Social Media Policy will be removed immediately upon discovery. Moderators, upon discovery of any violations, must record evidence of the violation and share with the Clerk via clerk@llangors.org.uk to be recorded in case of complaints.

The Clerk and all members of the Community Council are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy.

Reviewed and approved at the meeting of Llangors Community Council on:

Signed by Chairperson:

Print Name:
