



Kingsteignton Town Council

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social media is a collective term used to describe easy ways to create and publish on the internet. People generally use the term to describe how organisations and individuals share content -text, video and pictures – and create conversations

The use of social media and electronic communications enables the Town Council to interact in a way that improves communications between within the Council and between the Council and its residents, businesses and agencies it works with and services.

Kingsteignton Town Council has a website, Facebook page and uses emails to communicate. The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications. The Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses to improve and expand the services it delivers. When changes are made this Policy will be updated accordingly.

Communications from the Town Council should:

- Be civil, tasteful and relevant
- Content should not be knowingly unlawful, libellous, defamatory, abusive, threatening, obscene, harmful, harassing or racially offensive
- Not contain copied information for which they do not own the copyright
- Contain no personal information
- If it is official Council business it will be moderated by the Town Clerk
- Social Media will not be used for any political advertising

In order that all discussions on the Council page are productive and respectful they should meet the Council' aims, objectives and guidelines:

- Be considerate and respectful of others
- Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged, but personal attacks on anyone, including Council staff are not allowed
- Share freely and be generous with official Council posts, but be aware of copyright, be accurate and give credit where applicable
- Remain on topic
- Refrain from using the Council's Facebook page for advertising and commercial purposes

The Facebook site is not monitored 24/7 and the Council will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. We will however, endeavour to pass comments on to the relevant people or authorities. Personal/private information should not be included in posts.

Messages received via messages/post on Facebook will not be considered as contacting the Council officially and the Council are not obliged to monitor or respond to requests received through these channels. Direct contact should be made with the Town Clerk or Members of the Council by sending an email or telephone.

The Town Council retains the right to remove comments from the site that include:

- Obscene/racist content
- Personal attacks, insults or threatening language
- Libellous statements
- Private, personal information which is published without consent
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Alleges a breach of the Council's policy or law

Information received including the above will be either ignored, removed and the sender sent a copy of our policy.

Town Council Website

If necessary we will direct anyone contacting us to our website to see the required information, or we may pass the question to one of our Councillors for consideration and response. We will try to respond to comments received, but this may not always be possible.

The Council reserves the right to remove any or all of a local group's information from our Website if we do not feel that the content meets the Council's rules and expectation for its website.

Town Council Email

All officers have their own email address:

Town Clerk – clerk@kingteignton.gov.uk

Deputy Clerk – deputyclerk@kingsteignton.gov.uk

Finance Officer – finance@kingsteignton.gov.uk

Communications Officer – communicationsofficer@kingteignton.gov.uk

Admin Assistant – admin@kingteignton.gov.uk

Email accounts are monitored during office hours only Monday to Friday and we aim to reply to all questions sent as soon as we can.

Each Officer is responsible for dealing with emails received to their own email address and passing any relevant mail to other members staff or agencies for information or action. *All new emails requiring data to be passed on, will be followed up with a Data consent form for completion before action is taken with that correspondence*

Individual councillors will be provided with their own specific Town Council email address. Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with parishioners in relation to their own



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personal views and if appropriate, copy to the Clerk. **Note: any emails copied to the Clerk or council staff become official and will be subject to the Freedom of Information Act.**

This ensures that a complete and proper record of correspondence is kept. Do not forward personal information on to other people or groups outside of the council; this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

Texting (SMS)

Members and Officers may use SMS as a convenient way to communicate at times if necessary. All are reminded that this policy also applies to such messages.

The Town Council is always looking at ways to improve its working and the use of social media and electronic communications is a major factor in delivering improvement.

Councillors are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and the Data Protection Act in all of their work on behalf of the Town Council

It is important that all information is treated sensitively and securely. Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not share confidential information with anyone. Members should be careful to only “cc” essential recipients on emails and avoid the use of “Reply to All”