

Marks Tey Parish Council



Social Media Policy

1. Parish Council use of Social Media – Principles

To use social media and electronic communication to enable Marks Tey Parish Council to interact in a way that improves the communications both within the Parish Council and between the Parish Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves.

Marks Tey Parish Council Facebook page intends to provide information and updates regarding activities and opportunities within Marks Tey Parish and promote our community positively.

Anyone with concerns regarding content placed on social media sites that denigrate parish councillors, council staff or residents should report them to the Clerk of the Council.

Misuse of social media content that is contrary to this and other policies could result in action being taken.

2. Approved Parish Council Social Media

The Parish Council has approved the use of Facebook and the Parish Council's website to promote the work of the Parish Council and to communicate approved messages by the Chairman/ Vice Chair.

Our Facebook page can be found at www.facebook.com/MarksTeyParishCouncil

Our website can be found at www.essexinfo.net/marksteyparish/

Over time the Parish Council may add to the channels of communication that it uses as it seeks to improve and expand the services it delivers. When these changes occur, this Policy will be updated to reflect the new arrangements.

3. Users of Parish Council Social Media

In accordance with the Councils adopted communications Policy, the Clerk is the councils nominated Press Officer with the authority to issue official press releases once they have been approved by the Chairman or Vice Chairman, these can be placed on social media in addition to traditional communication methods.

The Parish Council has a Communications Working Party of dedicated Councillors to post messages and community news in the interest of Marks Tey Parish. Receiving a message/post via Facebook would not be considered as contacting the Council for official purposes.

4. Guidance for Parish Councillors on the use of Parish Council Social Media

Marks Tey Parish Council Social Media Policy: Adopted at Full Council meeting 9 August 2017
Minute ref 2017/198

Agreed for 12 months Full council meeting 05/11/2018 Minute Ref 2018/256

Amended and approved full council 25 nov min ref 2019 265

Approved Full Council 9th November 2020 Minute Ref 2020 205

In order to ensure that all interactions on the Marks Tey Parish Council social media pages are productive, respectful and consistent with the Council's aims and objectives the following guidance should be used in conjunction with our set terms of use for each Social media:

- Information that is published should be factual, fair, thorough and transparent.
- Everyone must be mindful that information published in this way may stay in the public domain indefinitely, without the opportunity for retrieval/deletion
- Councillors and Officers should be familiar with the terms of use on third party websites – e.g Facebook- and adhere to these at all times.
- Copyright laws must be respected, share relevant articles/ posts , but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due.
- Conversations or reports that are meant to be private or internal must not be published without permission.
- Other organisations should not be referenced without their approval – when referencing, link back to the original source wherever possible.
- Do not publish anything that would be regarded in the workplace as unacceptable.
- Officers and Councillors must remember that they will be seen as ambassadors for the Parish Council, and should always act in a responsible and socially aware manner.
- Marks Tey Parish Council's Social Media Pages are not to be used for commercial purposes or to advertise market or sell products
- Must not contain any personal information, other than necessary basic contact details

5. Third Party Social Media and Individual Councillor Usage

Councillors and Officers need to think about whether they are acting in a private capacity, or whether any impression might be conveyed that they are acting for and on behalf of Marks Tey Parish council.

The council has adopted a code of conduct (see www.essexinfo.net/marksteyparish/assets/documents/code-of-conduct-2) which is binding to all members. If you use Social media in your official capacity as a Councillor or Officer, you should always be mindful of the Code, and the seven Nolan principles applicable to holding public office- Selflessness, Integrity, Objectivity, Accountability, Openness, Honesty and Leadership.

Do:

- Set appropriate privacy setting for any blog or networking site,
- Watch out for defamatory or obscene posts from others on any blog or page and remove them as soon as possible to avoid any perception that you condone such views
- Be aware that the higher your profile as a Councillor, the more likely it is that you may be seen as acting in an official capacity when you blog or network.
- Avoid publishing information that you could only have accessed in your position as a Councillor or Officer
- Be careful if making 'political' points, and avoid being specific or personal about individuals

Don't:

- Blog in haste
- Post comments that you would not be prepared to make in writing or face to face contact,
- Use the Parish Council facilities for personal or political purposes

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