

Hermitage Parish Council
Social Media Policy – March 2026
Last review date: April 2026
Next review date: April 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish guidelines for the use of social media by the employees and representatives of Hermitage Parish Council. This policy is intended to ensure that all content posted on social media is accurate, appropriate, and consistent with the values and mission of the Council.

Guidelines for Use

- All employees and councillors of Hermitage Parish Council are required to abide by this policy when using social media for official business.
- Employees and councillors must not use social media to defame, harass, threaten, or discriminate against any individual or group.
- Employees and councillors must not use social media to post confidential or proprietary information, including but not limited to personal information about the Council or its employees/councillors.
- Employees and councillors must not use social media to post or share content that is in violation of any laws or regulations or that would reflect poorly on the Council or its employees/councillors.
- Employees and councillors must not use social media to post or share content that would be considered offensive, vulgar, or inflammatory.
- Employees and councillors must make it clear when they are posting in a personal capacity.
- Councillors must not use personal social media accounts to conduct council business.
- Official Parish Council accounts must only be used by authorised individuals.

GDPR and Data Protection Responsibilities

- No posting of personal data without explicit consent.
- No discussing individual cases, complaints or staff matters.

Record-keeping and Freedom of Information (FIO)

Any social media communication relating to Council business may constitute an official record and must be retained in accordance with the Council's retention schedule. Deleting posts that form part of a decision-making process is prohibited.

Monitoring and Enforcement

- The Council reserves the right to monitor the use of social media by its employees and representatives.
- Employees and councillors found to be in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment/role.

Guidance for managing the Hermitage Parish Council Account

- The Clerk and people nominated by Hermitage Parish Council are authorised post.
- The tone of posts must be neutral, factual and non-political.
- Response times will be limited to 5 working days.
- The Council will not engage with any posts or comments deemed inappropriate.
- Abusive comments on any Parish Council posts will be deleted.

Disclaimer

Posts on social media sites by employees and representatives of Hermitage Parish Council are their own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Council. Councillors remain subject to the Council's Code of Conduct when acting, or appearing to act, in their official capacity.

Complaints

Any concerns about inappropriate social media use should be reported to the Chair of the Council for investigation.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about this policy, please contact
clerk@hermitageparishcouncil.gov.uk

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as necessary to reflect the changing nature of social media and technology.