

FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL

The Pump House, 5 Market Place FARINGDON, Oxfordshire, SN7 7HL
Telephone 01367 240281
www.faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk
Clerk: Sally Thurston



SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

For the purpose of these guidelines, social media is defined as a type of interactive social media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data on a public forum. This includes, email, online social forums such as Facebook and Twitter, blogs, video and image sharing websites.

An employee's behaviour on any social networking or other internet site must be consistent with the behaviour required of employees generally. Where it is possible for users of a social media site to ascertain who you work for, then you should take particular care not to behave in a way which reflects badly on the Town Council. Inappropriate or disparaging comments about the Town Council, colleagues, clients or partners will be treated as misconduct. Because social media interactions can be copied and widely disseminated in a way that you may not be able to control, the Town Council will take a particularly serious view of any misconduct that occurs through the use of social media.

Council Equipment

Faringdon Town council recognises the benefits of social media and, where appropriate, encourage employees to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media as part of their work. It is recognised social media is an important part of how the Town council communicates with its audience and many positive outcomes can come from the correct and safe use.

Employees must be aware at all times that, while contributing to the social media activities, they are representing the Town Council and whilst using social media as part of their job must adhere to the following safeguards:

- Employees are prohibited from using social networking website such as Facebook or instant messaging services on Council computers at any time, other than for business purposes and must not log in with personal accounts.
- Use of the internet (especially chat rooms and community sites such as Facebook) slows the system and encourages accidental downloading of viruses. Employees must take extra care to ensure the sites they visit are safe and do not lead to viruses.
- Employees are prohibited from downloading or saving music or videos on the Council's computer systems.
- Employees must not operate a social media account or profile that purports to be operated on or on behalf of the Town Council without express permission to do so from the Town Clerk.
- Employees must obtain permission from their line manager before embarking on a public campaign using social media.
- Employees must not give away personal information about an individual (such as a colleague or yourself) or confidential information about the Town Council or partner organisations.
- Any communication on social media must be positive. Employees must not post anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual.
- Employees must not respond to negative comments or enter into any dialogue without the permission of their line manager.

Your business email address must not be used:

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- to register an account on any website being used for personal reasons, or to receive communications from such websites e.g. Social networking sites such as Facebook and eBay or similar sites, message boards or any blog sites;
- to receive communications relating to any personal businesses or income generating ventures, such as property letting.
- to subscribe to regular update emails for social activities such as cinema or theatre listings or other non-business purposes.

Personal Equipment & Personal Accounts

If you use social networking sites at home or outside of work any comments you make may still have an impact on your work and your colleagues. Please note that you may still be subject to the Council's Disciplinary Procedures if you make any defamatory, inappropriate and/or offensive comments about the Council, its clients or your colleagues when on line.

Please ensure therefore that you do not use systems like Facebook or Twitter to:

- gossip about colleagues in relation to work issues
- gossip or complain about management or management policies
- give out any information in relation to your workplace
- directly communicate with or harass a colleague in relation to an issue of dispute

Such comments can amount to gross misconduct and may therefore result in the termination of your employment.

- Employees must not access personal accounts from Council equipment hours at any time.