


# LODDON SHIRE COUNCIL

## SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY



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Signed by Chief Executive Officer

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

References used:

1. Shire of Campaspe, *Social Media Strategy 2011-2012*
2. Howard, A, 2012, *Connecting with Communities: How Local Government is Using Social Media to Engage with Citizens*, ANZSOG Institute for Governance at the University of Canberra and Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government
3. Local Government Association Tasmania, Model Social Media Policy
4. City of Greater Bendigo, Social Media Policy

## 1 PURPOSE

The Loddon Shire Council Social Media Strategy recommends an approach to implementing the use of social media for Council communications.

## 2 BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

Most social media platforms are free to join. Costs to Council will be in the form of staff resources required for Council to maintain an effective presence, such as posting information and keeping it up to date on the sites, and responding to public enquiries in a timely manner. It is proposed that this work will be undertaken by existing staff.

In establishing a social media presence, other costs to Council would include staff training for administration of the site, development of policies and procedures, measurement of success and revision of approaches where improvements are needed.

## 3 RISK ANALYSIS

### 3.1 Identified risks of using social media

The following risks and barriers to using social media have been identified:

- Potential for negative comments from people
- Losing control of communication message
- IT security and information management protocols
- Staff divulging confidential information
- Fears of litigation
- Lack of expertise and staff skills in using social media effectively and professionally
- Pressure on resourcing and workloads of staff
- Raising community expectations to a level Council cannot meet

Many of these risks can be managed by establishing policies and procedures, training staff on behaviour and legal responsibilities, and ensuring adequate resources are in place. It is also important to gain an understanding of community expectations prior to implementing social media solutions.

### 3.2 Positive influence on risks

There are a number of risks for the organisation that the use of social media may help to address:

Risk factor	Social media may help by:
Poor customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Getting to know customers, demonstrating accessibility, listening and responding to what is being said about Council</li></ul>
Council appears to be disengaged from the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Networking and improving current relationships through more frequent and better quality contact</li><li>• Providing a tool for community consultation that doesn't require physical attendance and travel</li></ul>
Lack of credibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing information that is important and desirable to the public</li><li>• Building trust through prompt, open and authentic communications</li></ul>
Unfavourable media articles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Immediate correction of misunderstandings or misrepresentation in the media or "grapevine"</li></ul>
Inability to reach all stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing an instant and interactive alternative for community members who may not use print media or website</li><li>• Potentially reaching a broader audience than traditional post bulletins.</li></ul>

## 4 BACKGROUND

During Council's community consultation sessions for the development of its Council Plan, concerns about the effectiveness and efficiency of Council's communication with the community were raised. Discussions indicated that some parts of the community were keen to communicate with Council via social media, and advocated social media, particularly Facebook, as a means to provide immediate and responsive information to interested members of the public.

Council's current methods of communication are via newspapers (mainly Loddon Times and Bendigo Advertiser), a quarterly Loddon Bulletin mailed to all residents of the Shire, and information posted on the Loddon Shire Council website. Anecdotally, many residents do not regularly buy the local newspapers, and the timing, printing and distribution of the Loddon Bulletin is not effective in providing current information when it is most relevant. Although the website can be kept up to date, it is not considered as flexible as social media in responding to specific questions or enquiries from the public, and does not have the less formal tone of social media that can better engage the public.

## 5 DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Objective

Council's use of social media will aim to:

- complement and link back to the Loddon Shire Council website
- engage with the community, particularly a younger audience
- promote Council's services, Shire events and attractions
- provide immediate answers to questions and correct misinformation
- communicate key decisions and rationale
- seek feedback and input about plans, strategies and other key documents
- quickly and simply convey vital information in times of emergency
- advocate on important issues.

### 5.2 Alignment with the Council Plan

In local government, it is important that social media strategies align with Council's strategic objectives and its needs and capabilities. In many ways, social media can help with delivery of key projects in the Council Plan, such as seeking comment during development or obtaining feedback on draft proposals.






In the 2013 – 2017 Council Plan, the defined core business of Council is reliant on communication and engagement with the community, and including social media as part of Council's communication tools will strengthen the strategic enabler of 'Transparent communication'. Specifically, Council's 'Strategic Platform 1 – Build a network of strong communities' contains 'Priority 1.4 Leverage social media to better communicate with our residents'. The action for this priority is to develop a social media strategy and implement actions.

### 5.3 What is social media?

Social media means digital communication sites where people may comment, contribute, create, post, upload and share content, including:

- Blogs and micro blogging sites (e.g. Twitter)
- Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace)
- Instant messaging facilities
- Video and photo sharing sites (e.g. YouTube)
- Forums and discussion boards.

Some of the more commonly used platforms are explained in the following table:

<p><b>Facebook</b> (<a href="http://www.facebook.com">www.facebook.com</a>)</p> 	<p>A social networking site where users can add friends, send messages and build their own profiles.</p> <p>Facebook has more than 1.15 billion active users. Users may create a personal profile, add other users as friends, and exchange messages, including automatic notifications when they update their profile. Facebook users (who must declare they are over 13) must register before using the site. Additionally, users may join common-interest user groups, organised by workplace, school or university, or other characteristics.</p>
<p><b>Twitter</b> (<a href="http://www.twitter.com">www.twitter.com</a>)</p> 	<p>A microblogging website that enables users to send and read messages called 'tweets'. It is sometimes described as the "SMS of the Internet".</p> <p>Tweets are text based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the user's profile page. Twitter is estimated to have 200 million users, generating some 65 million tweets a day and handling over 800,000 search queries per day.</p>
<p><b>Pinterest</b> (<a href="http://www.pinterest.com">www.pinterest.com</a>)</p> 	<p>Pinterest is a pinboard-style photo-sharing website that allows users to create and manage theme-based image collections such as events, interests, and hobbies. Users can browse other pinboards for images, "re-pin" images to their own pinboards, or "like" photos.</p> <p>Pinterest also allows businesses to create pages aimed at promoting their businesses online.<a href="http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinterest">http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinterest</a> - cite note-40 Such pages can serve as a "virtual storefront". Studies have continued to show Pinterest is more effective at driving sales than other forms of social media. Business pages can include prices of products, ratings of movies or ingredients for recipes.</p>
<p><b>YouTube</b> (<a href="http://www.youtube.com">www.youtube.com</a>)</p> 	<p>A video sharing website where users can share, view and upload new videos.</p> <p>Most of the content has been uploaded by individuals although media corporations and other organisations offer some of their material via the site. Unregistered users may watch videos, and registered users may upload an unlimited number of videos.</p> <p>Exceeds 2 billion views a day worldwide and has hundreds of millions of users. Councils, brands, businesses or groups can have their own 'channel', which users can subscribe to.</p>
<p><b>Flickr</b> (<a href="http://www.flickr.com">www.flickr.com</a>)</p> 	<p>Share pictures with anyone, anywhere, anytime</p> <p>Flickr is an image hosting and video hosting website, web services suite and online community. In addition to being a popular website for users to share and embed personal photographs, the service is widely used by bloggers to host images that they embed in blogs and social media. In September 2010, it reported that it was hosting more than 5 billion images. For mobile users, Flickr has an official app for iPhone and Blackberry and for Windows Phone 7, but not for other mobile devices.</p> <p>Users can choose who can see images and invite people to look at them. The user has the ability to control access to pictures at will. The service is largely free for the average user. Many existing sites have all images on them linked to a Flickr site, for ease of browsing.</p>

## 5.4 Benefits

For the public, social media can be cheaper and easier than writing a letter, making a phone call or attending an office personally. A complaint posted on a public forum is more likely to get a quick and satisfactory response from an organisation that wishes to avoid bad publicity or criticism. This presents challenges for the organisation around managing its complaints system, protecting its reputation, and maintaining satisfactory levels of service to respond to posted messages.

Council can use social media to get messages out to a broader audience in an immediate and informal way. This can be useful for the various community services and communications that Council provides. Uses can include promotion of services, events, reminders about payments due, or messages to the community in times of



emergency. The potential for more interactive communications can also demonstrate that Council cares about the views of its customers.

At present, there are various e-newsletter communications from different Council departments, such as Tourism, Freeza and Environmental Health. Instead of maintaining email address lists, a social media site could direct interested people to the Council website for news within these areas, e.g. “follow this link for the latest in Loddon Tourism news”. This could funnel all Council communications of this type through a single contact point, avoiding the need for individuals throughout the organisation to send group emails, and enabling consistent authorisation of Council messages. By allowing customers to choose which newsletters they receive, Council cannot be criticised for “pushing” repeated communications from different staff to the same community members.

It should also be recognised that, where Council uses paper-based communications, a section of the public will still expect and rely on that format for some time into the future, e.g. Loddon Bulletins.

See Appendix 1 for more detailed examples of how social media can assist councils.

## **5.5 Target audience**

Social media is particularly helpful in involving and engaging younger people that may not access newspapers, radio, or even the Internet. It is also used increasingly by a much broader section of the community.

Council must decide if a site will be interactive or only for disseminating information. Users of social media will expect interaction and responsiveness from a council site, so expectations must be managed by clearly stating Council’s intentions for monitoring and responding to comments or questions posted by the public.

## **5.6 Links with Council’s Communications Policy**

It is important that social media is integrated into Council’s Communications Policy and strategies, as it should be used as a tool to support and complement other communications activities. The Communications Policy will be reviewed in light of any adoption of social media.

## **5.7 Social Media Policy**

An Organisational Policy for social media was adopted in December 2012, setting out principles for staff using social media on behalf of Loddon Shire Council. It states:

*Loddon Shire Council is committed to using social media to promote its services and events, update the community on current issues such as unplanned interruptions to service or emergency response.*

*Use of social media is encouraged in order to identify opportunities to increase our community’s awareness of Council’s services and events.*

Appendix 3 contains the current Social Media Policy. This policy will be updated to reflect the requirements in this strategy if adopted.

# **6 CONSULTATION**

Internal consultation occurred with representatives from the following council areas:

- |                        |                    |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| • Tourism              | • Agribusiness     | • Media            |
| • Recreation and Youth | • Event management | • Customer service |
| • Community Wellbeing  | • Infrastructure   | • Records          |
| • Emergency Management | • IT security      |                    |

The community was asked to provide comment on what it would expect from a Council social media presence, and provide suggestions about engagement and communication through such a medium. No responses were received.

## 7 PROPOSAL

### 7.1 Preferred platform

A single Facebook page for all of Loddon Shire's social media interactions is proposed as an initial step. This will enable Council to assess and adapt the resource and skills needs, effectiveness, and community take-up of one platform before considering any others. People who "Like" the Facebook page will receive any updates from the page in their Facebook news feed.



If other sites or platforms specific to a department, project or program are established in future, the proponents must follow all requirements under this proposal and implement the site according to Council's social media policy, including the development of a supporting strategy and plan.

Loddon Shire Council would adopt an Official Page as the most suitable Facebook option for the organisation (as opposed to a Profile, more commonly used by individuals). Examples of other councils' Facebook sites are included at Appendix 2.

### 7.2 Account management

The Social Media Policy requires that staff must be authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to maintain and contribute to social media sites on behalf of Loddon Shire Council. To become authorised, a strategy and plan for the use of social media must be prepared.

An administrator will manage the Facebook page, possibly chosen from (or closely liaising with) the team who provide content for the website. The administrator may appoint other users, whether Council employees or external providers, as co-administrators. Council must have the site staffed five days per week.

An administrator can edit the page from their personal Facebook account and can manage all the editing options on the page. However, care must be taken to respond corporately, on behalf of the page and not from the administrator's Profile.

Staff must undergo social media training before making posts or comments on the social media site on behalf of Council. They will be expected to be able to write clearly and accurately, use a friendly but professional tone, and understand the policies, procedures, professional and legal requirements for writing on behalf of the organisation.

An email address will be set up for all social media content and correspondence (e.g. [socialmedia@loddon.vic.gov.au](mailto:socialmedia@loddon.vic.gov.au)).

The Social Media Policy requires that any passwords and logins associated with social media sites used by Council must be registered and accessible only by staff with the appropriate authority.

## 7.3 Content management

### 7.3.1 Who can write content

Ultimately, it is recommended that the administrator and Likers will be enabled to write on the wall, as enabling people to have 'their say' is Facebook's reason for being. Likers would be able to comment on posts by Council once they click the Like button. Therefore, close attention must be paid to any comments when new information is published, because Facebook does not send e-mail alerts on page comments.

However, in the initial stages (e.g. 2-3 months), the page will be established with "no comments" allowed, enabling only Council to make any comments or additions to the page, as a first step. This would provide administrators time to familiarise themselves with the processes for posting information and for other staff to get into the habit of forwarding information for the Facebook page, before having to respond to enquiries, or deal with threats or potentially negative comments about Council (see example below). Protocols need to be developed for staff to manage these situations.



An internal process would be established to funnel information about milestones, initiatives and events to the administrator for use in social media. All staff should be aware of the objectives of the social media site and invited to contribute relevant information.

Content owned by a third party (photos, documents, videos, etc.) must not be uploaded unless written permission has been obtained. Photos must have had release forms signed by the subjects. These permissions and releases must be saved on InfoVision.

### 7.3.2 Site setup and branding

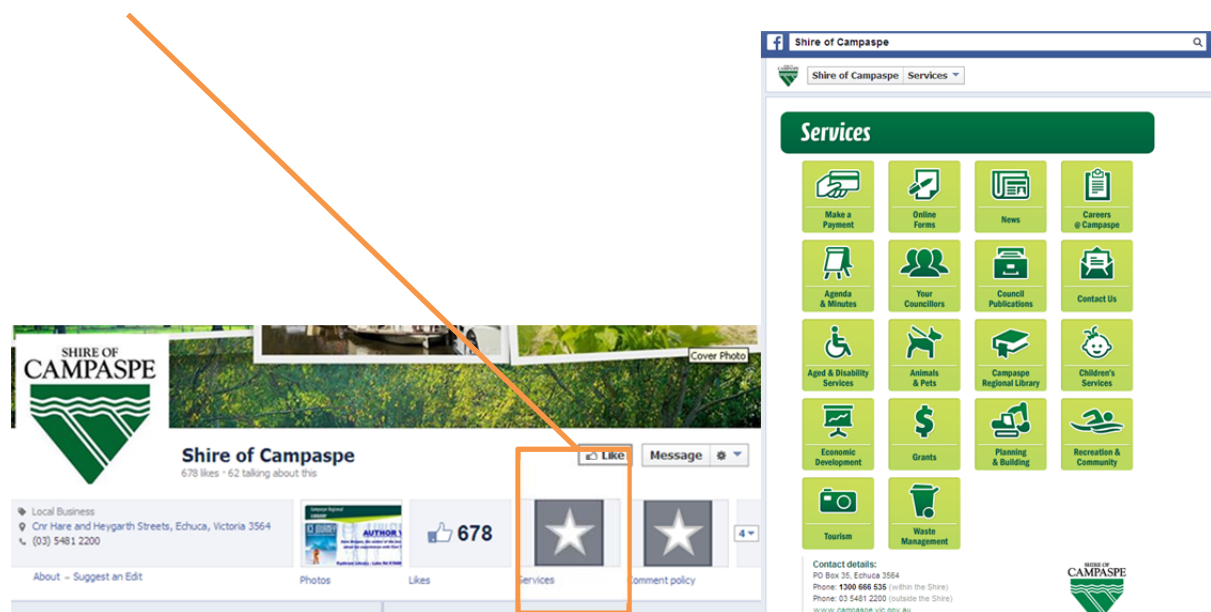
The Council logo must be prominently placed on any social media site.

Disclaimers and a message detailing response times will also be displayed (refer to 7.3.4 and 7.3.5).

The Facebook page should primarily contain links directly to existing pages of Council's website, which can function as a service desk for people who use Facebook as their primary information source. These can be pointed to when people have questions or queries on the Facebook Wall, e.g. "Click on the link to..."

Some councils have separate sections on their Facebook page that simply contain links to their website, e.g. Services, Events, so that visitors to the page can click directly to the webpage that they are interested in. This provides another "portal" to the website for Facebook users, and taking them direct to the right place on the

website reduces time searching and “clicking” in the website. This may be helpful for quick links to emergency response information on the website, and could also be where links to e-newsletters from different Council departments (such as tourism, community planning or environmental health) are found.



It is not proposed to use the Facebook site as a general network for ongoing discussions about topics or lengthy questions and answers (refer 7.3.7 How much information).

### 7.3.3 Content

Council’s Facebook presence should be used like any other communication channel; to provide useful and relevant information to ratepayers about Council news and developments.

Procedures should be developed to provide guidance and consistency about the form that content should take, including style, amount of detail, whether detail should reside on the Facebook page or be linked to the website, etc.

The procedures should also set out when or if an approval process should apply to the content that is added to the Facebook page. Approval complexity should be appropriate for the content level (e.g. “one-liners” pointing to a website link may not need approval if the website page is already approved and uploaded, but a statement of Council’s direction or seeking comment on a matter may need higher approval).

Time-specific content should be posted at the relevant time, such as:

- Australia Day celebrations
- key dates related to payments of rates, animals registrations, kindergarten enrolments, grants programs
- public health announcements such as immunisation dates, maternal and child health information
- public holidays and relevant opening hours of service centres
- dates related to key Council documents, such as Budget, Council Plan
- seasonal announcements, such as pool opening hours
- cross-promotion of the Loddon Bulletin or Mayoral Column.

Ad-hoc content will be posted whenever appropriate, and there will be a focus on responding to any comments or posts on the Page. The chance for real and meaningful engagement on a range of topics is one of the biggest benefits and distinctions of social media.

Ad-hoc content could include:

- links to positive stories about Council in the media
- links to the website when media releases are issued, or when any new documents/forms become available online
- relevant severe weather warnings from the Bureau of Meteorology
- awards/industry recognition for Council or individuals
- new key staff or job openings at Council

- advice about traffic hazards, road works, etc
- reminders about Council services, such as recycling and hard waste
- promotion of competitions/events being run by Council-supported groups
- links to helpful resources such as disaster relief funds
- local business success stories assisted by economic development
- promotion of local arts and youth events
- updates on advocacy work.

#### 7.3.4 Comment policy

Comments must be addressed as soon as possible, including thanking the user for participating and any additional content that may be needed.

If the comment is inappropriate or irrelevant, Council would respond in a polite fashion, linking information or redirecting the user to other websites which may provide an adequate response, if necessary. A standard template response would be prepared to respond to users making inappropriate comments.

All posts and comments by Loddon Shire Council should link back to its website, where relevant, for accurate and more detailed information.

A disclaimer and acceptable use statement must be clearly stated on the social media site, such as:

##### **Disclaimer**

<Name of the social media site> is operated and managed by Loddon Shire Council. The contents of the reply posts do not represent Loddon Shire Council's official views and no liability is accepted for the content. For clarification on any content please email <email address of social media site e.g. socialmedia@loddon.vic.gov.au>

##### **Acceptable Use Statement**

Loddon Shire Council reserves the right to remove content that violates our Social Media Policy or any associated policy. Materials authored or posted are subject to public disclosure. Please read our Social Media Acceptable Use statement.

The introduction must include a link to a full Acceptable Use Statement available on Council's website: (e.g. [www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Social\\_Media\\_Acceptable\\_Use](http://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/Social_Media_Acceptable_Use))

When committing your views to the Loddon Shire Council social media site please ensure that you:

- post material which relates to the topic of the site or discussion
- post material which is not deliberately misleading
- present your own views and do not impersonate or falsely represent any other person
- protect your personal and others privacy by not disclosing personal information such as names, email addresses, phone numbers or private addresses
- are not abusive, discriminatory, harassing or threatening to others
- do not use obscene, offensive, provocative or defamatory language or concepts
- do not violate any copyright laws. Copyrighted materials can only be used if you have written permission from the owner
- obtain written permission from any person identifiable in any imagery prior to posting it
- do not use your post to promote any commercial business or corporation
- do not post comments which promote or encourage illegal activity.

Loddon Shire Council reserves the right to remove any content which violates this Acceptable Use Statement, the Loddon Shire Council Social Media Policy or any associated policy.

#### 7.3.5 Response times

The social media site should be actively monitored 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday, and all comments should be responded to within 24 hours.

Council should post on Facebook a maximum of 2 - 3 times at regular intervals throughout the day. This will keep information relevant and avoid overwhelming Likers. However, there should be staff available each day during working hours that are able to post material on the site, in case of urgent ad hoc communications needs.

In the case of an emergency, such as a flood or fire, posts should be put up as often as required. In these circumstances, people will be looking for as much information as possible, as soon as it is available. Specific procedures would be prepared to deal with approvals and posting in times of emergencies.

#### 7.3.6 Style

It is important to adopt a conversational and friendly tone when using social media, as a less formal approach 'humanises' Council and develops a rapport with readers.

#### 7.3.7 How much information

Generic responses to Likers' questions can be made on the Facebook site, e.g. tip times –with a reference to the website link for details.

More specific or complex enquiries should be handled offsite. The administrator should send an email to the relevant department for action and respond to the enquirer that their question has been forwarded to council staff for a direct response.

#### 7.3.8 Content removal

Loddon Shire Council reserves the right to remove inappropriate content, and block the user from the social media site.

The following content is not permitted and will be removed from Loddon Shire Council social media sites:

- profane language or content
- sexual content or links to sexual content excluding material relating to sexual health
- content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation
- commercial solicitations or transactions – this does not apply to the business-to-business activities of Council
- copyright or ownership protected materials
- content not relating to the subject matter of the social media site
- material designed to encourage or conduct illegal activities
- material which could compromise the safety of Council, its employees or its technical systems
- spam (the distribution of unsolicited bulk electronic messages)

The staff member responsible for the social media site must monitor the posts and comments posted on the social media sites, and remove anything which breaches this policy. If content is removed the following details about the post must be recorded and stored in Council's record management system:

- post content
- author's name
- date and time
- name of the social media site
- web address of the social media page
- screen print of the comment

#### 7.3.9 Key messages

The Communications Policy would be revised to reflect key messages that all Council communications should carry, including internet and social media sites.

Key themes will be communicated through all social media engagement:

- promoting benefits to citizens and businesses through improvement
- efficient, customer-focused, market competitive services
- efficient and effective use of ratepayers funds
- encouraging consultation, inviting the community to participate in some way.

#### 7.3.10 Emergencies

The value of social media in an emergency and disaster recovery was highlighted during the 2011 Queensland floods. The Brisbane City Council website was overloaded and offline for quite a few days. One of their solutions was to use their Facebook and Twitter accounts, as both are an excellent way to communicate with people using smartphones and computers.

In emergencies, many people would not visit a Council website, but might find the organisation on Facebook or Twitter, which provides the capability to contact a whole new audience in a time of crisis.

Once Council has a Facebook page, the use of social media for emergency situations can be considered in reviewing Council's emergency management processes.

#### **7.3.11 Link with website**

Information provided through social media will be replicated on the Council's website.

#### **7.3.12 Advertising the social media site**

Loddon Shire Council's social media site should be promoted on the website, brochures and media releases where appropriate.

### **7.4 Resourcing**

Once a structure is agreed, the page will need to be established by the administrator.

Training resources will need to be identified and costed.

The expected time commitment for the administrator is expected to be less than an hour a day, depending on the current topics and levels of engagement from Likers. The administrator should keep a record of the time spent managing the page to inform future staffing requirements.

### **7.5 Monitoring**

Council may also be mentioned on other people's social media sites, and it must decide whether to monitor these occurrences and respond to comments. This will require extra time and resources in addition to maintaining its own site, however, it would provide other avenues for engaging and communicating with the public.

External organisations and other tools (Google Alerts, Social Mention Trackur) can be used to continually monitor third party social media sites, which reduces the time by council staff for this task.

Appendix 4 contains an example of guidance for when to respond to posts on other sites that relate to Council.

### **7.6 Building a following**

Pages get their own URL (i.e. [www.facebook.com/loddon](http://www.facebook.com/loddon)) once they reach 25 members, which can be achieved by:

- encouraging council staff to Like the Page
- adding a prominent Facebook button to Council's website
- pointing to the Facebook presence in Messages on Hold, Loddon Bulletins, press releases and Mayoral Columns and encouraging readers/ratepayers to Like
- adding the Facebook logo and address to corporate publications, email signatures and business cards

### **7.7 Training**

A training package must be developed for staff, including procedures, legal requirements, approvals processes, etc. Neighbouring councils with a social media presence could be approached for assistance or guidance on staff training.

Training will be carried out for staff who will be administering the Facebook page initially, and ongoing training will be required for any new administrators, or when knowledge, technology or skills require updating.

## 7.8 Measurement

In Facebook, page administrators have access to the Insights dashboard, which provides metrics around content to help understand and analyse trends within user growth and demographics, consumption of content, and creation of content. This information can be used to improve an organisation's social media communications.

<b>Facebook Insights</b>	
User Insights	Total Page Likes, or a number of Likers, daily active users, new Likes/Unlikes, Like sources, demographics, page views and unique page views, tab views, external referrers, media consumption
Interactions Insights	Daily story feedback (post Likes, post comments, per post impressions), daily page activity (mentions, discussions, reviews, wall posts, video posts)

<b>Useful measurements for Council to review</b>	
Monthly fan size growth	Record the number of Likers on the first of every month to see what the growth looks like. Anything from 10 to 13% monthly growth is extremely good. It is important to watch for the spikes in fan growth and try to identify what contributes to those spikes.
The average number of Likes or comments	The key engagement measures. Knowing the average number of times fans interacted with the Page for every single post means Council can identify which discussions are of more interest to Likers. It is important to watch for unusual spikes or drops. Simply put, this information will help Council increase the number of posts about topics Likers are more engaged with and decrease the number of posts about topics they are not interested in.
Unlikes and attrition rate	Unlikes are to be expected, as it's not possible to add value or be relevant to every Liker, but it is important to watch for spikes in the Unlike numbers. It may be possible to correlate them with the activity on the Page and understand why people are leaving. This in itself can be a way to 'take the public's temperature' without meaning to.
Demographics	Demographics data is always useful: the gender of Likers, their ages and where they are from can be tracked.
Mentions	This records the number of times Facebook users tag Council in their own posts, to their friends. This is important because it is the easiest way for the friends of Council Likers to click through to the Facebook page. Every time another user tags Council, the name of Council's page appears as a link. It is much easier for someone to click on that link and learn more than to search for the Page manually.
Tab views	This section will explain which tab on the Page gets what percentage of traffic.

All communication activity has intangible impacts - even if the Facebook page has a slow growth in numbers initially, Council will be engaging with a new group of people. It is expected that, managed properly, the move into social media will support Council's mission to "deliver services that enhance the sustainability and liveability of our communities".



## 7.9 Record keeping

The Public Records Office Victoria has record keeping requirements for social media posts that relate to business.

Council will only need to keep the types of social media posts that are considered to be business records under its existing record keeping policies and procedures. These policies and procedures will be reviewed in light of adoption of social media by Council, and in accordance with the requirements of the Public Records Office Victoria.

The administrators will be responsible for the record keeping requirements associated with maintaining the Facebook page.

## 7.10 Implementation

**Table 1: Actions to implement the Social Media Strategy**

Action	Responsibility	Estimated time
Review Communications Policy (including e-newsletters, links to website, timing of posting information, emergency response, recovery and relief)	Executive	4 weeks (concurrent)
Review IT Use and Security Policy, Record Keeping Policy (including risk minimisation for specific social media risks)	Corporate Services	4 weeks (concurrent)
Review Social Media Policy (including disclaimers, removal of content, staff usage for monitoring Council site)	Executive	4 weeks (concurrent)
Develop or source training package for staff	Corporate Services	4 weeks (concurrent)
Assign and train responsible staff	Executive/ Corporate Services	1 week
Develop procedures (including templates) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Account management</li><li>Content management, including approvals processes – general and emergencies, template responses</li><li>Monitoring and measurement</li></ul>	Executive and administrators	8 weeks
Implement measurement and evaluation framework	Executive and administrators	2 weeks
Set up Facebook page and populate structure	Administrators	Up to 4 weeks
Advertise and educate public – “build a following”	Executive	ongoing

# APPENDIX 1: SOCIAL MEDIA FOR COUNCILS

Extract from Howard, A, 2012, *Connecting with Communities: How Local Government is Using Social Media to Engage with Citizens*, ANZSOG Institute for Governance at the University of Canberra and Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, pp 24-25

**Table 6: Examples of how social media supports and extends communication of a council**

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS ACTIVITY	SOCIAL MEDIA APPLICATIONS AND CONTEXT	BENEFITS
Corporate image	Social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Flickr, Website, blogs) to enhance the council's image and reputation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can reinforce and enhance council's image and increase its visibility in the community when integrated</li> <li>Enables council to show the community that it is listening</li> <li>Allows council's corporate image to be developed through personal interaction and experience</li> <li>Enables the community to contribute to enhancing council's reputation</li> <li>Permits council to quickly correct misinformation</li> <li>Can be used to 'humanise' council's profile when developed in a conversational, friendly tone</li> </ul>
Promotion, direct marketing	Social media (eg Facebook, Twitter, QR codes, mobile apps, blogs, video and audio, Google ads) to promote events, arts shows, market days, and other activities of a council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can form an important component of council's integrated promotion and marketing strategy</li> <li>Allows council to target individuals directly who may be interested in the event</li> <li>Enables council to reach people on their mobile devices and drive traffic to the website</li> <li>Can allow for council to apply QR codes that are linked to events or activities</li> <li>Cost-effective and efficient communication for council</li> <li>Can save on print and distribution costs for council</li> </ul>
Brochures and booklets Posters and flyers	All social media (whether it is Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, blogs and other community forums) to link information and content (text, pictures, audio, video) that can reinforce, clarify and enhance messages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhances traditional one-way forms of communication for council</li> <li>Enables fast updating by council</li> <li>Can allow council to tailor language, set, props and messages to suit individual target audiences</li> <li>Allows for interaction and audience(s) to ask questions and receive fast answers from council</li> <li>Facilitates target audience sharing of information with others and can assist with distribution of messages</li> <li>Provides opportunities for council to save on printing costs</li> </ul>
Video and audio-visual	Social media tools such as Vimeo, YouTube, Slideshare to embed videos and audio-visual presentations on a council website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables council to tailor messages specifically for target audiences needs</li> <li>Allows council to better engage, entertain and get messages across to the community</li> <li>Can be used by council to facilitate the community's sharing videos with friends and others who may be interested</li> <li>Provides options for production to be undertaken in house by council</li> </ul>
Newsletters and bulletins	Websites with web 2.0 technologies using RSS feeds to deliver eNewsletters directly to interested citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows council to make cost savings on printing and distribution</li> <li>Enables council to update and deliver information quickly</li> <li>Allows audiences in the community to share information with others</li> <li>Can enable council to stimulate discussion in the community</li> <li>Encourages council to keep messages relevant and timely</li> </ul>
Internal communications	Enterprise social networking tools such as Yammer and wikis to increase interaction, collaboration and communication between staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitates the fostering of greater understanding, collaboration and sharing of knowledge across council</li> <li>Enables the breaking down of barriers and silos between council's functional areas or different departments</li> <li>Can be used in project management by council</li> </ul>
Events	Social media (eg Facebook, Twitter, QR codes, mobile apps, YouTube, community boards) to promote events and organise staff and volunteers for such activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows council to add other communication channels to the mix</li> <li>Enables council to apply cost-effective ways of getting the message out directly to target audiences for events</li> <li>Can facilitate follow up by mainstream media and generate additional interest for events</li> <li>Allows council's target audience to easily forward on messages to friends and others who may be interested</li> </ul>
Community consultation and engagement	Social media tools (eg Facebook, Twitter, mobile apps, Google ads) to expand the potential participation of community in consultation and engagement activities and generate greater interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can allow council to drive traffic to its website which, in turn, can provide an online format for consultation and engagement</li> <li>Enables council to support online discussion forums for specific issues and so attract feedback</li> <li>Can allow people to use downloaded apps to interact and provide feedback at a time that suits them</li> <li>Facilitates the linking of peoples' ideas and opinions of others</li> <li>Allows for council to accommodate different trends with agree/disagree options and for facilitation of discussion</li> <li>Can help council to build a community of interest around specific issues, programs or events</li> <li>Enables council to incorporate geo-spatial attributes</li> <li>Allows options for people to interact and engage with council at a time that suits them (24/7 if they wish)</li> <li>Online ads can be used by council to focus on particular demographic and geographic areas</li> </ul>
Community relations	Social media as an important community relations tool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitates council's interaction with citizens and building relationships</li> <li>Enables opportunities for council to clarify misinformation in the community</li> <li>Allows council to develop relationships with 'hard-to-reach' groups in the community</li> <li>Can assist council with presenting a human face and an image that 'real' people work in a council</li> <li>Demonstrates how a council is working for the community</li> </ul>
Sponsorships	Social media tools (eg Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, photo sharing and video sharing sites) as part of an integrated communication strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establishes inexpensive and effective ways for council to be involved</li> <li>Enables council to collaborate with sponsors</li> <li>Can allow council to sponsor community activities such as sustainability initiatives, and positively promote such involvement</li> </ul>
Customer service	Social media as part of customer service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables council to recognise issues raised by members of the community</li> <li>Allows citizens to contact a council directly and publicly</li> <li>Facilitates rapid response by council and direction of queries to the appropriate area of the organisation</li> </ul>
Human resources	Social media tools such as LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter used to find new staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can enable council's HR department to gain insights into potential new staff</li> <li>Provides council with an inexpensive and often fast way of recruiting</li> </ul>
Issues management	Social media to allow for monitoring of issues in the community that are of concern to residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be effective and inexpensive to use and assist council to lead discussion, as well as monitor conversations and respond accordingly</li> <li>Allows council to facilitate the building of a 'community of interest' around specific issues</li> </ul>
Emergency and crisis management	Social media as a highly effective way to communicate during times of crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows for efficient and effective interaction and information flow between council and the community</li> <li>Can be accessed by people almost anywhere and at any time (24/7)</li> <li>Enables quick dissemination of urgent information by council</li> <li>Allows council to answer questions quickly, ensuring accurate information is made available</li> <li>Provides mainstream media, that follows local government social media sites, with information to broadcast</li> <li>Can enable citizens to pass on information from council to their followers, which helps to disseminate messages more quickly</li> <li>Enables council to broadcast valuable information to the community, such as weather warnings, road disruptions, beach closures</li> <li>Provides inexpensive communications channel, once a social media strategy or program is set up by council</li> </ul>

Source: Howard Partners in association with ACELG and ANZSOG Institute for Governance 2012



## APPENDIX 2: OTHER COUNCILS' FACEBOOK SITES

(3) Shire of Campaspe - Microsoft Internet Explorer provided by Loddon Shire Council

https://www.facebook.com/ShireOfCampaspe

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help X Convert Select

Shire of Campaspe

Shire of Campaspe

678 likes · 62 talking about this

Local Business  
Chr Hare and Heygarth Streets, Echuca, Victoria 3564  
(03) 5481 2200

About · Suggest an Edit

Photos Likes Services Comment policy

Post

Write something...

Invite Your Friends to Like This Page

Type a friend's name...

See All

Invite

Create Page

Recent

2013

2012

2011

Founded

Sponsored

Ancestry.com.au

ancestry.com.au

Start researching your Family Tree online now! Try today with 14 days free access.

ASOS Sale 50% off

asos.com

ASOS PETITE Exclusive Backless Cami In Print \$45.30

# 1) New Message

A Message

(3) Shire of Campaspe

Shire of Campaspe

Like · Comment · Share

Write a comment...

Shire of Campaspe Apologies Frizzle your post has been missed. The conditions for the photo comp haven't changed. Last year we received hundreds of pics and have again this year. If you want to think about over weekend, your entry will be accepted on Monday if you decide to enter.

Like · Reply · September 27 at 5:38pm

Fri Zzle No thank you. I like to retain rights of my work. Thank you for your response

Like · Reply · September 27 at 6:35pm via mobile

Fri Zzle we raised the issue a few previous posts but received no answers

Like · Reply · September 27 at 1:21pm

Fri Zzle has council decided if they will allow photographers to keep rights to their own photos yet? If so it would be nice to know so that some of us can put entries in, thank you

Like · Reply · September 27 at 1:21pm

Write a comment...

Shire of Campaspe

September 26 near Echuca, Victoria

COMMUNITY GRANTS - Now open!

Round two of this year's Community Grants program is now open. Applications can be made in these categories:

- Assistance - max \$4,000
- Events - community \$1,000, minor \$3,000, major \$5,000
- Environment - max \$2,000
- Recreation - max \$8,000
- Heritage & Culture - max \$1,000

Applications close Friday, 11 October.

Guidelines and application form available on the Shire of Campaspe website.

Chat (3)

https://www.facebook.com/ShireOfCampaspe/timeline/2012



facebook
Search for people, places and things
Lynne Habner
Find Friends



**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box**
27 likes
Like Message

Community/Government
PO Box 733, Bendigo, Victoria 3552
(03) 5434 6000

About Suggest an Edit


**Help Improve this Page**  
Suggest an edit if you see missing or wrong information.

Post
Suggest Edits Close

Write something...


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box** shared a link.  
June 13, 2012

Hi guys! wanna be part of the next exhibition at Hudson's Hub? take a look at this...  
  
[http://www.hudsonshub.com.au/munny\\_exhibition/default.html](http://www.hudsonshub.com.au/munny_exhibition/default.html)



**Untitled Document**  
[www.hudsonshub.com.au](http://www.hudsonshub.com.au)  
  
We here at Hudson's Hub want to bring the Designer Toy out of the subculture and have it slap the conservative mainstream culture of central Victoria in

Like · Comment · Share

Recent Posts by Others on Bendigo Council Suggestion Box
See All


**Jeffrie Trika**  
Well Done Cr Helen Leach, thank you for standing up for...  
March 7 at 12:52am


**JoHo Holmberg**  
How about your stop putting permit only on parking meters I...  
10 · March 6 at 2:09pm


**Fiona Hamilton**  
I have 2 little issues I'd like to draw to your attention.. I live...  
February 20 at 6:49pm


**Julie Andrews**  
Have you seen the 380 'Like' to sign our online petition to Cl...  
February 6 at 7:14am

More Posts


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box**  
May 23, 2012 via mobile

facebook
Search for people, places and things
Lynne Habner
Find Friends


**Bendigo Council Suggestion...**
Timeline Now
Like


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box**  
July 29, 2011 via mobile

The road work guys are ruining our street!!!  
  
Like · Comment · Share


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box** asked a question.  
April 12, 2011

Should the Mall have more police presence?

☐ Yes, the area is attracting too many rough nuts +6
☐ There should be more police presence in Bendigo, not just the mall +4
☐ No, I think its fine +2
☐ Dont know
Add an answer...

Like · Comment · Share


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box**  
April 11, 2011

I would love to see the council DELAY morning road works by a half hour or so, so I can get to work on time!!!  
  
Like · Comment · Share


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box**  
April 24, 2011 via mobile

service road in kangaroo flat BEFORE they trashed the joint!  
  
Like · Comment · Share


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box**  
April 24, 2011 via mobile

Waiting 2 hours in Bendigo emergency, not good enough!! Stop spending money on stupid things and get real Bendigo Council!!  
  
Like · Comment · Share


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box** asked a question.  
April 11, 2011

Do you think the Bendigo council spends too much money on sports?

☐ Yes +7
☐ Don't Know +3
☐ No
Add an answer...

Like · Comment · Share


**Bendigo Council Suggestion Box**  
April 10, 2011

Hi guys, want something changed in the City of Bendigo? post your beef here  
  
Like · Comment · Share

facebook
Search for people, places and things
Lynne Habner Find Friends Home

**Knox City Council**
635 likes · 47 talking about this · 82 were here

Add A Category
511 Burwood Highway, Wantirna South, VIC.
(03) 9298 8000

About · Suggest an Edit
Photos
Likes
Notes
Events

Post
Write something...

**Knox City Council**
10 minutes ago

A young owl has been sent to study with an old master, Mr Tawny. He's angry and misses his family. He's impatient, he throws tantrums, he sulks. He just wants to go home, but the only way home is by gaining 'wisdom'. The young owl is

Recent Posts by Others on Knox City Council
See All

**Kathy Milne**
Stop destroying our neighbourhood by cutting down native...
Monday at 9:09am

**Deb Capon**
Stop destroying neighbourhood character & native streetscap...
1 · March 21 at 5:24pm

**Kathy Milne**
I would like to know why all the trees are being removed in E...
1 · March 21 at 4:44pm

Sponsored
Study Criminology
Want to Study Crimi...

CARPET - BEST PRICES!

facebook
Search for people, places and things
Lynne Habner Find Friends

**Knox City Council**
Timeline Now

**Knox City Council**
11 minutes ago

A young owl has been sent to study with an old master, Mr Tawny. He's angry and misses his family. He's impatient, he throws tantrums, he sulks. He just wants to go home, but the only way home is by gaining 'wisdom'. The young owl is

**Knox City Council**
35 minutes ago

How bizarre! Talking about hot weather still! Well, maybe for the last time this season, here goes - some handy info:  
http://goo.gl/TyP10

**Deb Capon**
Stop destroying neighbourhood character & native streetscap...
1 · March 21 at 5:24pm

**Kathy Milne**
I would like to know why all the trees are being removed in E...
1 · March 21 at 4:44pm

**Dianne Wynne**
I walk my daughters to and from school most days and use t...
5 · March 21 at 11:30am

Recommendations
See All

Write a recommendation...

**Rhianon Hart**
Removal of gum trees from the unfortunate homes in Rowvill...
about 3 months ago

**Rhianon Hart**
New hockey pitches for Knox.
7 · about 3 months ago

Activity
Recent

**Eastern Regional Pet Expo**
Knox City Council created Eastern Regional Pet Expo.

**Knox City Council**
shared Lost Animals in Knox's photo.
Yesterday

Have you got a crazy cat at home? She might win you a prize! Check it out...

facebook
Search for people, places and things
Lynne Habner Find Friends

Knox City Council Timeline Now
Like

Knox City Council

Like · Comment · Share

Knox City Council shared a link via CFA (Country Fire Authority). March 22

Always love seeing a big thanks - especially when it comes to being fire ready. Thanks CFA :)

**CFA - WIN a Melbourne Renegade bat**  
 I just entered the CFA Fire Ready Facebook competition. Share your story too for your chance to WIN a signed Melbourne Renegades cricket bat worth \$500!

Like · Comment · Share

Knox City Council shared a link. March 21

Take care on the roads this arvo - that rain they told us about is headed in <http://goo.gl/YH9N>

**128 km Melbourne Radar Loop**  
[goo.gl](http://goo.gl)  
 Provides access to meteorological images of the Australian weather watch radar of rainfall and wind. Also details how to interpret the radar images and information on subscribing to further enhanced radar information

Like · Comment · Share

Knox City Council This arvo's warning is out from BOM: <http://goo.gl/61W8L>

Check out the Pet Expo webpage at

Like · Comment · Share

4 people like this.

Write a comment...

Knox City Council shared a link via Ride2School. March 22

Congrats to everyone who got on board with National Ride2SchoolDay... Just as well it was today rather than during storms of Thursday.

**National Ride2School Day 2013**  
[www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)  
 A record number of students from across Australia rode, scooted, skated and walked to school for National Ride2School Day today

Like · Comment · Share

4 people like this.

Write a comment...

facebook
Search for people, places and things
Lynne Habner Find Friends

Knox City Council Timeline Now
Like

Knox City Council

Like · Comment · Share

Knox City Council

Latest update from the Fire Commissioner now online: <http://goo.gl/Q94UE>

**Fire Commissioner update 12 Mar 2013**  
 Update on current fire conditions by Victoria's Fire Services Commissioner Craig Lapsley. 12 March 2013.

Like · Comment · Share

Knox City Council

Our Customer Service centres won't be open over the long weekend but our online services will be functioning 24/7. Have a nice one: <http://goo.gl/uouJA>

Like · Comment · Share

Knox City Council

Okay, special present for the long weekend - by popular demand this week, we've got another 'Blast From the Past' shot of Knox in 1968. (North is up the top for this pic.)

Feel free to just enjoy looking back on history... or for the histo... See More

Like · Comment · Share

6 people like this.

View 11 more comments

Benjamin King old-school, keep them coming



**Mildura Rural City Council**

facebook Search for people, places and things Lynne Habner Find Friends

## Mildura Rural City Council

321 likes · 59 talking about this · 2 were here

**Like Message**

**Government Organization**  
Keep up to date with what's happening and Council and all the community services and facilities we provide.

About · Suggest an Edit

**Help Improve this Page**  
Suggest an edit if you see missing or wrong information.

Suggest Edits Close

**Photos Likes Map**

The fabulous \$2.2 million Merbein Community Hub was officially opened this morning. What a magnificent new facility for the whole community to enjoy! Pop in to the new library and see for yourself.

**Recommendations** See All

Write a recommendation...

- Zach Fleming**  
I'd like to recommend that the rubbish bins in merbein get pic...  
on Friday
- Arts Mildura**  
The Big Screen Film Festival is coming to Sunraysia! Held at...  
👍 1 · about a month ago
- Ryan Bowman**  
Please make a gymnasium in Mildura :(<3  
about a month ago
- Arts Mildura**  
Make sure you get down to the River Party on Saturday, 2n...  
about a month ago

See More ▾

**Likes** See All

**Mildura City - close to the river, close to the Heart**  
Other Like

tp://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=652521108107285&set=a.401931576499574.116194.171121062913961&type=1

Lynne Habner
Find Friends

---

**Mildura Rural City Council**
Timeline ▾
Now ▾
Like

---

**Toni Mottram** Love these posts  
March 22 at 12:03pm · Like

Write a comment...

---

**Mildura Rural City Council** shared a link.  
March 20

We'll be removing the Maccas kiosk and canopy behind it after Easter before installing more shade shelters and seating in Langtree Mall <http://bit.ly/11bUqH3>

**Mildura Rural City Council - More shade and seating for Langtree Mall**  
[bit.ly](#)

More shade shelters, trees and seating will be installed in Langtree Mall once a vacant kiosk is removed from the Eighth Street end of the Mildura precinct.

Like · Comment · Share 2

**Carmel Therese Davies** likes this.

Write a comment...

---

**Mildura Rural City Council** shared a link.  
March 18

A study into youth services and support programs has recommended Council establish a multipurpose youth facility in Mildura's CBD. View the report and tell us what you think! [http://www.mildura.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page\\_Id=4157](http://www.mildura.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?Page_Id=4157)

**Mildura Rural City Council - Review recommends 'one-stop' youth services hub in Mildura CBD**  
[www.mildura.vic.gov.au](http://www.mildura.vic.gov.au)

---

**Sunraysia Animal Rehousing Group**  
Non-Profit Organization

Like

---

**Mildura Rural City Council** shared a link.  
March 20

Bring your children to Mildura's Park for Play from 10am - 12noon today for fun, free activities and the chance to meet Dora the Explorer! <http://bit.ly/WEljvJ>

**Mildura Rural City Council - Discover playgroup during National Playgroup Week**  
[bit.ly](#)

Families across the country will be celebrating National Playgroup Week this month and locals can join in the fun with a special event planned for Mildura to mark the occasion.

Like · Comment · Share

---

**Mildura Rural City Council** shared a link.  
March 19

We're celebrating National Playgroup Week with a special event at Mildura's Park for Play tomorrow from 10am - 12noon. Bring your children down for fun, free activities and to meet Dora the Explorer! [http://www.mildura.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?page\\_Id=4148&h=0](http://www.mildura.vic.gov.au/Page/Page.aspx?page_Id=4148&h=0)

**Mildura Rural City Council - Discover playgroup during National Playgroup Week**  
[www.mildura.vic.gov.au](http://www.mildura.vic.gov.au)

Families across the country will be celebrating National Playgroup Week this month and locals can join in the fun with a special event planned for Mildura to mark the occasion.




## APPENDIX 3: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY



### SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

DOCUMENT TYPE:	Organisational policy
DOCUMENT STATUS:	Approved
POLICY OWNER POSITION:	Chief Executive Officer
INTERNAL COMMITTEE ENDORSEMENT:	Not applicable
APPROVED BY:	Management Executive Group
DATE ADOPTED:	4/12/2012
VERSION NUMBER:	1
REVIEW DATE:	3/12/2014
DATE RESCINDED:	Click here to enter a date.
RELATED STRATEGIC DOCUMENTS, POLICIES OR PROCEDURES: RELATED LEGISLATION:	Staff and Contractor's Code of Conduct Information Technology Policy
EVIDENCE OF APPROVAL:	

  
Signed by Chief Executive Officer

FILE LOCATION:	K:\EXECUTIV\policies and procedures 2012 forward\Policies - adopted PDF and Word\SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY v1.docx
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**Policy documents are amended from time to time, therefore you should not rely on a printed copy being the current version. Please consult the Policy and Procedure Register on the Loddon Shire Intranet to ensure that the version you are using is up to date.**

**This document is available in alternative formats (e.g. larger font) if requested.**



# SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

## 1 PURPOSE

This policy provides the principles for the use of social media on behalf of Loddon Shire Council.

## 2 SCOPE

This policy applies to staff managing and using social media sites for Loddon Shire Council, and those staff authorised to contribute to other social media sites on behalf of Loddon Shire Council.

## 3 POLICY

Loddon Shire Council is committed to using social media to promote its services and events, update the community on current issues such as unplanned interruptions to service or emergency response.

Use of social media is encouraged in order to identify opportunities to increase our community's awareness of Council's services and events.

### 3.1 Authorisation

Staff must be authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to maintain and contribute to social media sites on behalf of Loddon Shire Council. To become authorised, a strategy and plan for the use of social media must be provided:

- demonstrating how it will support the achievement of an action in Council's business plan
- identifying how Loddon Shire Council branding will be used
- demonstrating how the obligations in this policy, other relevant policies, and the Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct will be met.

### 3.2 Obligations

When using social media on behalf of Council, staff:

- are responsible for maintaining, updating and responding to items instigated by them personally
- must not make political comment or contribute to political and social debate
- must abide by the general responsibilities of staff in Council's Staff and Contractors Code of Conduct
- must understand and comply with relevant legislation, e.g. privacy, defamation, anti-discrimination, copyright and trade mark laws
- must reinforce the integrity, reputation and values of Loddon Shire Council

Use of personal social media during working hours is not allowed. This is addressed in Council's Information Technology Policy.

### 3.3 Record keeping

All content published or communicated on behalf of Loddon Shire Council using social media must be recorded, along with author's name, date, time and media site location.

Any passwords and logins associated with social media sites used by Council must be registered and accessible by staff with the appropriate authority.

## 4 DEFINITIONS OF TERMS OR ABBREVIATIONS USED

Term	Definition
Social media	<p>Digital communication sites where people may comment, contribute, create, post, upload and share content, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blogs and micro blogging sites (e.g. Twitter)</li> <li>• Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, MySpace)</li> <li>• Instant messaging facilities</li> <li>• Video and photo sharing sites (e.g. YouTube)</li> <li>• Forums and discussion boards</li> </ul>

## 5 HUMAN RIGHTS STATEMENT

It is considered that this policy does not impact negatively on any rights identified in the Charter of Human Rights Act (2007). Loddon Shire Council is committed to consultation and cooperation between management and employees. The Council will formally involve elected employee Health and Safety Representatives in any workplace change that may affect the health and safety of any of its employees.

## 6 REVIEW

The Chief Executive Officer will review this policy for any necessary amendments no later than 2 years after adoption of this current version.

## APPENDIX 4: EXAMPLE RESPONSE DECISION TREE

