KEMPSEY SHIRE COUNCIL

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES   **Procedure 2.3.5**

Policy No. and title	2.3	Media and Community Awareness and Engagement Policy
Procedure	2.3.5	Social Media Guidelines
Version	1	
Date Adopted	15 March 2011	

OBJECTIVES

- Extend reach of existing corporate messages online by building relationships with relevant audiences

- Provide an informal, 'human' voice of the organisation to promote our corporate messages

- Provide an additional, low-barrier method for audiences to interact with the Council to provide feedback, seek help and suggest ideas

- Monitor social media activity as it relates to Kempsey Shire Council

- Provide coverage of events.

STATEMENT

Council recognises the benefits of using social media as a means for marketing, promotion and disseminating time-sensitive information to the widest possible audience. It is acknowledged that certain risks are associated with social media tools. This procedure has been developed to assist staff to administrate social media in a responsible manner.

DEFINITION

1   In this Procedure the term "social media" includes (not limited to):

- Social networking sites e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Friendster
- Video and photo sharing websites e.g. Flickr, YouTube
- Micro-blogging sites e.g. Twitter
- Weblogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by traditional media publications
- Forums and discussion boards such as Whirlpool, Yahoo! Groups or Google Groups
- Online encyclopaedias such as Wikipedia
- Any other web sites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools.

2   In this Procedure the term "post" means broadcasting information in a public forum.

GUIDELINES

1 SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

1.1 Personal Online Activities *(Speaking "about" Kempsey Shire Council)*

1.1.1 Be conscious about mixing your personal and business lives. There is no separation for others between your personal and your business profiles within social media. Council respects the free speech rights of all our employees, but remember that community members, customers and competitors as well as colleagues may have access to the online content you post. Publishing information online that has been intended just for a small group can be forwarded on.

1.1.2 Be responsible for your actions. Any online activity that brings damage to Council's reputation will ultimately be your responsibility. Use common sense and take the same caution with social media as with all other forms of communication.

1.1.3 Follow the Kempsey Shire Council Code of Conduct as well as all other Council Policies, Procedures and Guidelines when using social media. Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures.

1.1.4 Mind the global audience. While your message may be accurate in some parts of the world, it could be inaccurate or violate regulations in others. Keep a "world view" in mind when you are participating in online conversations.

1.1.5 If talking about Kempsey Shire Council only share publicly available information. Engage only in discussions where you are comfortable and knowledgeable about the topic. If you are unsure if information is publically available or is otherwise inappropriate to post, contact Community Relations before posting any such information.

1.2 Professional Online Activities *(Speaking "on behalf of" Kempsey Shire Council)*

1.2.1 Follow Kempsey Shire Council Code of Conduct as well as all other Council Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. Be respectful of all individuals, races, religions and cultures when using social media. All interaction should be in the spirit of our corporate values and principles, tailored to each respective audience.

1.2.2 Approval processes exist for all publications and communication on behalf of Council. Refer to the approval process for each social media tool included in this policy.

1.2.3 Mind copyrights and give credit to the owners. Always make sure to give credit to the original authors of any content that you are publishing (text, images, trademarks, video etc.) from a Third party, and that Council has the copyright or written approval for using said material.

1.2.4 If you are communicating on behalf of Council identify yourself as a representative. Provide your full name and position in which you are communicating. Clearly state your social media role and refer to the specific guidelines for the social media tool you are using.

1.2.5 Monitor your relevant social media channels. Make sure that you know what is being discussed, so that you can respond appropriately if issues arise.

1.2.6 Know and follow record management practices. Council has regulatory and legal obligations to retain certain information as records. Ensure that all relevant information which will be interpreted as a Council position is captured and registered on Council's records management system. Online Council statements can be held to the same legal standards as traditional media communications.

1.2.7 Inappropriate content on all social media tools implemented by Council includes:

- Profane language or content.

- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation.

- Disparaging comments about co-workers.

- Sexual content or links to sexual content.

- Solicitations of commerce.

- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.

- Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public or public systems.

- Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.

1.2.8 It is not appropriate to use corporate email addresses to create personal accounts in sites unrelated to Kempsey Shire Council.

2   STANDARDS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USED BY COUNCIL

2.1   Facebook Standards

Facebook is a global networking site which enables users to send messages and update their profiles to share information with friends. It is free to use with a relatively low impact on resources and has the potential to deliver many benefits in support of Council's communications objectives. For information on how Facebook works see *Appendix A*. For a glossary of terms see *Appendix B*.

2.1.1   Positioning and appearance of Council's Facebook page.

Kempsey Shire Council will utilise a page format within Facebook (creating a profile for a corporation would breach Facebook's terms of use).

The page picture will be the Kempsey Shire Council logo.

The account summary will state "****" (*eg: Kempsey Shire Council – Lifestyle…second to none.).*Visit our website at www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au "

2.1.2 Language

The administrator will use proper grammar, avoiding jargon and abbreviations. Facebook is more casual than most other communication tools though still represents Council at all times. Community Relations will be Council's 'voice' on Facebook.

2.1.3 Administrators

Administrators must be approved by the Director Community Engagement.

2.1.4 Comment Management

It is preferable that only organisational comments are posted on the wall. The option '*fans can write on the wall*' will be unavailable.

Fans will not be prevented from commenting on posts provided the comment does not include inappropriate content (see clause 1.2.7 of this procedure). Although not recommended, comments on wall posts can be restricted. If a comment is inappropriate the administrator will reply privately in a polite fashion.

It is necessary to monitor the page activity using tools available in Facebook. It is recommended that the administrator subscribe to the status updates via RSS *(Appendix B)*.

Comments should be addressed as soon as possible with a maximum timeframe of forty eight hours for return comments.

The standard for frequency of posts is a minimum of three posts per week and maximum of three posts per working day with a minimum gap of thirty minutes between posts to avoid flooding fans with information.

Comments must relate to current or future Council events or opportunities.

Council does not approve the addition of Facebook applications to the page unless specifically authorised by the Director Community Engagement.

Comments may need to be registered on Council's record management system. Refer to clause 1.2.6.

2.1.5 Sources of Content and Approval

Content for the page will comprise a mixture of existing communications re-purposed for Facebook, and content produced exclusively for Facebook.

- Published Media releases - the headlines of media releases. Depending on subject matter and length these may be paraphrased to lighten/humanise the tone.

Approval required – Nil. Published media releases will be previously approved by the Director Community Engagement.

- Marketing messages – these may include information about events Council is staging or attending.

   Approval required- Nil. Verify event details with event coordinator.

- Videos and photos – alerting Council's Facebook friends to new rich media content on our other digital outposts and/or posting on our page.

   Approval required – Must ensure 'consent for release' process has been undertaken. All videos must be approved by the Director Community Engagement.

- Blog posts – headlines from any blogs run by Council should be mentioned on Facebook if relevant.

   Approval required – Nil. Blog posts will have prior approval.

- Leveraging website updates - new or updated sections on www.kempsey.nsw.gov.au , new publications, or web site user surveys and online interactive consultations where we are inviting participation.

   Approval required – Nil. Content previously approved by the Director Community Engagement or Director responsible for the content.

- Crisis communications – in the event of a major incident where Council needs to provide up to the minute advice and guidance, Facebook would be used in addition to the corporate web site.

   Approval required-Lead Combat Agency will provide comment with relevant information.

- Leadership – highlighting relevant research, events and awards.

   Approval required- Verify details with Director of relevant department.

- Asking and answering questions – occasionally, Council may be able to ask questions of Council's Facebook fans for immediate customer insight or to conduct a 'straw poll' on behalf of the Community Engagement team. More often, Council will answer questions put to us via Facebook from Council's fans.

   Approval required- The page administrator must exercise sound judgement and common sense to ensure that posts are accurate and not misleading. If there is any doubt regarding content, do not post but rather consult the officer responsible to provide and confirm response from Council.

2.1.6 Campaign-specific or branch specific

While the Council should aim to avoid diluting the corporate social media profile, it may occasionally be more appropriate for a particular campaign or policy area to have its own social media page.

Council should consider separate mediums when:

- The subject matter is niche or specialist (i.e. of limited interest to the bulk of our followers; or with a specific target audience such as youth).

- They are in support of a specific blog by the Mayor or General Manager.

When additional accounts are used Council will need to ensure they refer to each other and re-post any content of relevance to the different profiles.

Council's initial social media profile should be the only Council presence on social media sites for the first 12 months. Requests after this period will be assessed individually.

2.1.7 Promotion

The page will be promoted by:

- A link from Council's web site home page, news page, and events page.

- A link from Council's other social media outlets (YouTube, Flickr, Twitter) asking key influencers on Facebook to announce us to their friends.

Further promotional opportunities include;

- An Intranet story and article in Inbiz, including a request that staff become "fans" of the page.

- Adding the link in all media releases.

- An email to key stakeholders, Councillors and Managers.

VARIATION

Council reserves the right to review, vary or revoke this procedure which will be reviewed periodically to ensure it is relevant and appropriate.

***Appendix A* – What is Facebook?**

How Facebook operates;

- An account is created which comprises your username, password and an image.

- The Facebook account can be established as a profile, page or group.

  - A profile is for people who join Facebook on an individual basis.

  - A page is designed for institutions, companies or businesses. A page can be established as an official page which allows institutions, businesses and other entities to create their official space within Facebook in order to communicate with their fans or a community page which are intended to support a cause or a movement. If such a page becomes very popular (thousands of fans) it will be adopted and updated by the Facebook community.

  - A group is created by a user and the people that join the group may have different roles: administrator, voting members and members. Groups can be public, private or secret, and are used to create networks of people interested on a specific topic.

- The administrator of a Facebook page updates "posts", which can be read by all friends/fans. Videos and photos from Council events can be posted onto the Council page and the administrator can invite residents to become fans.

- Two useful terms often used to describe "postings" are "microblogging" – blogging in miniature by posting short updates throughout the day about thoughts and findings of interest – and "hyper-connectedness" – the idea of being in constant contact with your network and aware of what holds their attention right now.

- The Council "news" feed (the information you see when you use Facebook) is made up of Council updates and replies to those updates. Fans will see their own streams, which display the updates of the users they are following. Therefore what you see is not the same as what other users will see.

- Facebook users can interact with each other in Messages and posts.

  - A message composed and sent by the administrator or fan can only be seen by the sender and recipients, similar to an email.

  - A post is a message on the Council's public "wall", Council would update the status by posting a "message" on its "wall". This message can be seen by anyone who looks at the Council page.

- Council Facebook posts can also be integrated with other social media profiles – for example Facebook can be used to edit your Twitter tweets.

- Facebook is fast and targeted, has constant updates, is accessible, allows subscribers to choose what they want to know and is a go-to place for users to manage their events calendar.

Appendix B – Facebook glossary of terms

Ads
An advertisement. Users can create Facebook Ads to market their products and ideas. Ads are not free.

Application
Users can add applications to their profiles, pages, and groups. There are dozens upon dozens of applications to choose from. Some are built by Facebook. Most are built by external developers.

Event
A calendar-based resource that users can add to their profiles, pages and groups that lets them share news about upcoming affairs or social gatherings.

Fan
A person who has joined a page because they like what that page represents.

Friend Finder
A Facebook utility that helps users find present and former friends, family, co-workers, schoolmates, and other acquaintances.

Highlights
Featured photos, events, notes and more that you don't want to miss. Stories are chosen based on what your friends have interacted with.

Inbox
The Facebook mail application.

Insights
Facebook's answer to web page analysis. For each Facebook page, Insights tracks the number of page views, unique views, total interactions, wall posts, discussion topics, fans, new fans, removed fans, reviews, photo views, audio plays, and video plays.

Like
A feature that appears as a link next to something you see on Facebook that allows users to let others know they appreciate that something, whether it is a video, a comment or something else.

Limited Profile
A profile that allows only restricted access.

Member
A person who has joined and participates with a group.

Mobile
Facebook Mobile offers multiple Facebook features for your phone.

Network
A circle of friends and acquaintances that centres on a city, school, company, or military organization. See Help Centre to learn more.

News Feed
News Feeds highlight what's happening in your social circles on Facebook. News Feeds are posted to profiles for all to see.

Notes
Notes are like mini-blogs for your profile.

Notifications
Like Mini Feeds, notifications are news feeds from friends, sent automatically as they engage in activity on their profile.

Page	A page is not a profile. It may look like one, but it's not. The features and capabilities are different. It is a Facebook site intended for and created by artists, musical groups, celebrities, businesses, brands and similar entities (not individuals). You can add pages to your profile to show your friends what you care about. Only the official representative of an artist or business can create and make changes to a page.
Photos	A Facebook application that lets users upload albums of photos, tag friends, and comment on photos.
Profile	A profile is not a page. It may look like one, but it's not. The features and capabilities are different. It is a Facebook site intended for and created by people who want to share information about themselves and socialize with others. A profile displays a user's personal information and their interactions with friends. Each registered user may have only one profile.
RSS	Really Simple Syndication.
Status	A micro-blogging feature called which allows users to inform their friends of their current whereabouts, actions, or thoughts.
Stream	The stream shows you posts from your friends in real-time. This keeps you up to date on everything that's happening. You can control who appears here.
Tabs	Tabs mark the different sections of a profile. • **The Info tab** displays basic information like Birthday and Hometown, as well as interests and activities. The Info tab also lists all Groups the user is a member of, and all the Pages the user is a Fan of. • **The Wall tab** displays the user's interactions with friends (comments and messages) as well as status messages. • **The Photos tab** displays profile photos and albums. • **The Boxes tab** displays all of the applications and features not showcased elsewhere on the profile. • **Other tabs.** Users can feature their Applications by creating a tab unique to that application.
Tag	Marking a photo or video with text that identifies the image or the person in the image.
Translations	A Facebook application that allows translators from around world to translate Facebook into different languages.
Updates	News feeds sent to you from pages that you have joined.
Video	A Facebook application that lets users share videos on Facebook. Users can add their videos with the service by uploading video, adding video through Facebook Mobile, and using a web cam recording feature. Additionally, users can "tag" their friends in videos they add much like the way users can tag their friends in photos.
Wall	A featured section inside a Facebook profile. It's a space on every user's profile page that allows friends and users themselves to post messages for all to see.