



### 1.3.1 Social Media

<b>Type:</b>	Office of the CEO – Communications & Community Engagement
<b>Legislation:</b>	
<b>Delegation:</b>	
<b>Other Related Document:</b>	Code of Conduct Policy (1.2.1); Workplace Behaviours

#### Objective

To provide protocols for using social media to undertake official business and guidelines for employees in their personal use of social media.

For the purpose of this Policy ‘employees’ denotes employees, volunteers, contractors and if applicable Elected Members.

#### Policy Scope

The Social Media Policy outlines protocols for using social media to undertake official Town of East Fremantle Business and provides guidance for employees in their personal use of social media.

This policy aims to inform employees how to use social media appropriately and has been developed to assist employees to use social media so they can participate in the use of social media while being mindful of their responsibilities.

The Social Media Policy applies to all Town of East Fremantle employees volunteers and managers should ensure their staff and volunteers are aware and understand this policy.

Reference should also be made to the Town of East Fremantle’s Code of Conduct.

#### Policy

This Policy applies to the official use of social media, where employees have been authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to use social media as a communication tool, to engage the community or to distribute content on behalf of the Town.

This includes posting to the Town’s official social media account/s (eg Facebook) and participating as a representative on a third-party site (eg news comment, online forum).

This policy also provides guidance to employees in their personal use of social media. Employees are reminded of their responsibilities under the Town of East Fremantle’s Code of Conduct and other policies, procedures and processes.

### **Official use of social media**

The same high standards of conduct and behaviour expected of the Town staff also applies when participating online through social media. Online participation should reflect and uphold the values, integrity and reputation of the Town of East Fremantle.

Officers managing the Town of East Fremantle social media account/s are responsible for engaging online with the general public and other stakeholders in an official capacity.

Statements / comments made from the Town's social media account/s must not:

- endorse or make judgements about specific individuals, groups, businesses, services or agencies.
- discuss circumstances surrounding the Town's specific relationship with individuals, groups, businesses, services or agencies.
- make personal judgements about any matter pertaining to the Town of East Fremantle, including decisions of Council, management, staff, policy, procedure or process.
- engage in any on-line discussion involving specific individual circumstances or personal details. If this occurs the employee should direct the person/s involved to an alternative medium (eg email, telephone, letter) as appropriate.

### **Principles for official use of social media**

All employees who are authorised to use or manage social media as an official communication tool need to be familiar with and apply the following principles:

- The Town's official social media account/s must be administered by an authorised officer/s.
- Before commencing a social media project it must be approved by the executive manager of the relevant department and the Chief Executive Officer.
- Always use authorised Town of East Fremantle contact details, not personal details, when posting to or responding from social media accounts.
- Maintain confidentiality and only post publicly available information. Under no circumstances should official or confidential information be disclosed.
- Do not make commitments or engage in activities on behalf of the Town unless you are authorised by the Chief Executive Officer to do so.
- Protect your own privacy and personal information and do not disclose private details of other employees. Do not disclose details of private conversations unless you have obtained explicit consent from all relevant parties.
- Avoid statements that advocate or criticise decisions, policies, procedures and processes of the Town.
- Always be courteous, polite and respectful. Be sensitive to diversity and avoid arguments or making personal attacks. Do not post obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful content.
- Make sure the information you publish is correct as people may make decisions based on the information you post.
- Respect copyright.

- Keep records of all posts you make in an official capacity as set out in the Town's Record Keeping Procedures and Record Keeping Plan.
- Review content before you post it and have another employee review the content before posting it.

### **Personal use of social media**

Town of East Fremantle employees should be aware that content published on social media is, or may become, publicly available even from personal social media accounts.

Employees must ensure they:

- are mindful that their behaviour at all times is bound by the Town's Code of Conduct, even outside work hours and when material is posted using an alias or pseudonym.
- make clear that any views expressed are their own and not those of the Town of East Fremantle.
- do not use a work email address to register personal social media accounts.
- do not make comments that are obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, discriminatory or hateful to or about, work, colleagues or peers, Elected Members or the Town of East Fremantle.
- do not to publish, post or release any information that is considered confidential, private or not public, including confidential information in regards to the Town of East Fremantle, personal information of employees, Elected Members and other individuals associated with the Town of East Fremantle.
- do not post comments or images that are or could be perceived to be:
  - made on behalf of the Town of East Fremantle.
  - compromising the capacity to fulfil duties as an employee of the Town in an impartial and unbiased manner (this applies particularly where comment is made about a decision of Council, management, staff, policy, procedure or process).
  - unreasonable criticism about an individual, community group, or other stakeholders.
  - compromising public confidence in the Town.
- remember the Internet is not anonymous and everything written on the Web can be traced back to its author one way or another.
- do not return fire, if a negative post or comment is found online about the Town of East Fremantle or one of its representative, do not counter with another negative post.

As a local government employee, there is no clear line between your work life and your personal life. Always be honest and respectful in both capacities.

Employees should be aware that the Town may observe content and information made available by employees through social media.

As comments made by staff on their personal Facebook account may not be considered private, employees should use their best judgement, when posting material, that it is neither inappropriate nor harmful to the Town of East Fremantle, its members of council, employees or residents.

***It should also be noted that comments / postings made by staff on their personal Facebook Account pertaining to the Town that are or could be perceived to be in breach of the Town of East Fremantle Code of Conduct or any other Town policy, procedure or process will be dealt with seriously and this may impact on the employee's employment with the Town.***

<b>Responsible Directorate:</b>	Office of the CEO
<b>Reviewing Officer:</b>	Human Resources Coordinator
<b>Decision making Authority:</b>	
<b>Policy Adopted:</b>	21/3/17
<b>Policy Amended/Reviewed:</b>	17/9/19
<b>Former Policy No:</b>	4.4.1