

COUNCIL POLICY



Media & Social Media Policy

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Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed at four (4) yearly intervals at least, to ensure it meets all statutory requirements and the needs of council. It may also be reviewed at other times as determined by council.

Revision History

Version	Council Meeting Date	Resolution No.	Responsible Officer
I			Communications Officer

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I Introduction

This policy has been developed to provide a framework to assist councils when dealing with the media and when operating in the online social media environment.

It is divided into two sections – Media and Social Media.

The Media section refers to print, broadcast and online media used for communicating information to the public, including but not limited to newspapers, magazines, internet publishers, radio and television broadcasters.

The Social Media section refers to online platforms and applications – such as social networking sites, blogs, video and audio sharing sites and message boards that enable people to publish and share content.

2 Media Policy

2.1 Administrative framework for engagement with the media

2.1.1 Appointment and role of the Media Coordinator

2.1.1.1 The General Manager will appoint a member of council staff to be the Council's Media Coordinator. The Media Coordinator should be a suitably qualified member of staff.

2.1.1.2 The General Manager may appoint more than one Media Coordinator.

2.1.1.3 The Media Coordinator's role is to:

- a) be the lead point of contact for all media enquiries, requests for interviews, requests to film or photograph councillors, council staff, facilities or events for news and current affairs purposes;
- b) be responsible for preparing all media statements prior to their release;
- c) liaise with relevant staff members within the organisation where appropriate;
- d) ensure that media statements are approved by the Mayor and/or General Manager prior to their release;
- e) develop and/or approve media training and/or induction to be provided to relevant staff and/or councillors;
- f) maintain a record of all media enquiries and responses;
- g) ensure that media organisations and their representatives are treated professionally, equally and without bias;
- h) ensure that media enquiries are dealt with promptly;
- i) provide guidance to councillors approached by the media for comment to avoid communication of misinformation, and
- j) ensure that all media releases are published on the Council's website.

2.2 Who can engage with the media

2.2.1 The General Manager

2.2.1.1 The General Manager is the official spokesperson for the Council on operational and administrative matters.

2.2.1.2 The General Manager may delegate to other council staff to speak on their behalf where appropriate, (for example, where the delegated staff member has professional expertise regarding the subject matter, or the General Manager is unavailable).

2.2.2 The Mayor

- 2.2.2.1 The Mayor is the principal member and spokesperson of the governing body of the Council, including representing the views of the Council as to its local priorities (section 226(c) of the *Local Government Act 1993*).
- 2.2.2.2 If the Mayor is unavailable, the Deputy Mayor may act as the Council's spokesperson.
- 2.2.2.3 The Mayor may delegate their role as spokesperson to other councillors where appropriate, (for example, where another councillor is best placed to comment, because the issue is of particular interest to them, or it is within their particular area of expertise).

2.2.3 Councillors

- 2.2.3.1 As a member of the governing body and as a representative of the community, councillors are free to express their personal views to the media.
- 2.2.3.2 When engaging with the media councillors:
 - Must not purport to speak for the Council unless authorised to do so;
 - Must clarify when speaking to the media that they are expressing their personal views as an individual councillor and that they are not speaking for the Council (unless authorised to do so);
 - Must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council;
 - Must not disclose council information unless authorised to do so, and
 - Must seek information and guidance from the Media Coordinator where appropriate before providing comment to the media to ensure they have the most up-to-date and relevant information and have considered reputational or other risks.
- 2.2.3.3 In the interests of promoting a positive, safe and harmonious organisational culture, councillors should endeavour to resolve personal differences privately and not prosecute them publicly through the media.
- 2.2.3.4 Where councillors (including the Mayor) become aware of potential issues that could result in media interest, they should provide this information to the Media Coordinator.

2.2.4 Council Staff

- 2.2.4.1 Council staff must not speak to the media about matters relating to the Council unless authorised by the General Manager or Media Coordinator to do so.
- 2.2.4.2 If Council staff receive a media enquiry or they are invited to comment to the media on a matter relating to the Council, they must refer the enquiry to the Media Coordinator.
- 2.2.4.3 Council staff are free to express their personal views to the media on matters that do not relate to the Council, but in doing so, must not make comments that reflect badly on the Council or that bring it into disrepute.
- 2.2.4.4 If authorised to speak to the media, Council staff:
 - Must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council;
 - must not disclose Council information unless authorised to do so by the Media Coordinator, and
 - Must seek information and guidance from the Media Coordinator where appropriate before providing comment to the media to ensure they have the most up-to-date and relevant information and have considered reputational or other risks.
- 2.2.4.5 Where Council staff become aware of potential issues that could result in media interest, they should provide this information to the Media Coordinator.

2.2.5 Tone

- 2.2.5.1 All media engagement by Councillors and staff must be conducted in a professional, timely and respectful manner.

2.2.6 Induction and training

- 2.2.6.1 The Council shall provide training to Councillors and staff who engage or are authorised to engage with the media.
- 2.2.6.2 Media engagement training will be provided to councillors as part of their induction or refresher training or as part of their ongoing professional development program.

2.2.7 Councillors' questions about media engagement

- 2.2.7.1 Councillors must direct any questions about their obligations under this policy to the Media Coordinator or the General Manager.

2.3 Standards of conduct when engaging with the media

- 2.3.1 Councillors and staff must comply with the Council's code of conduct when engaging with the media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a council official.
- 2.3.2 Councillors and staff must not share information or make comments to the media through either direct or indirect mechanisms that:
 - a) are defamatory, offensive, humiliating, threatening, or intimidating to other Councillors, staff or members of the public;
 - b) contains profane language or is sexual in nature;
 - c) constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*, or is unlawfully discriminatory;
 - d) is contrary to their duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and their responsibilities under any policies or procedures adopted by the Council to ensure workplace health and safety;
 - e) contains content about the Council, Councillors, staff or members of the public that is misleading or deceptive;
 - f) divulges confidential Council information;
 - g) breaches the privacy of other Councillors, staff or members of the public;
 - h) contains allegations of suspected breaches of the Council's code of conduct or information about the consideration of a matter under the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*;
 - i) could be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of the Council where they have not been authorised to make such comment;
 - j) commits the Council to any action;
 - k) violates an order made by a court;
 - l) breaches copyright;
 - m) advertises, endorses, or solicits commercial products or business.

2.4 Use of media during emergencies

- 2.4.1 During emergencies, such as natural disasters or public health incidents, the General Manager will be responsible for coordinating media releases and statements on behalf of the Council.
- 2.4.2 Councillors and Council staff must not provide comment or information to the media that is inconsistent with official advice issued by the Council and any other agency coordinating the emergency response.

2.5 Media engagement in the lead up to elections

- 2.5.1 This policy does not prevent the mayor or councillors who are candidates at a council or any other election from providing comment to the media in their capacity as candidates at the election.
- 2.5.2 Any media comment provided by the mayor or councillors who are candidates at a council or another election must not be provided in an advertisement, newspaper column, or a radio or television broadcast paid for by the council or produced by the council or with council resources.

3 Social Media Policy

3.1 Principles

- 3.1.1 The councilors and staff of Cowra Council are committed to upholding and promoting the following principles of social media engagement:

Openness	Our social media platforms are places where anyone can share and discuss issues that are relevant to our Council and the community we represent and serve.
Relevance	We will ensure our social media platforms are kept up to date with informative content about our Council and community.
Accuracy	The content we upload onto our social media platforms and any other social media platform will be a source of truth for our Council and community and we will prioritise the need to correct inaccuracies when they occur.
Respect	Our social media platforms are safe spaces. We will uphold and promote the behavioural standards contained in this policy and our Council's code of conduct when using our social media platforms and any other social media platform.

3.2 Administrative Framework for Council's Social Media Platforms

3.2.1 Platforms

- 3.2.1.1 The Social Media Co ordinator will determine the social media platforms on which Council will maintain a presence.
- 3.2.1.2 Council's social media platforms must specify or provide a clearly accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.

3.2.2 Establishment and Deletion of Council Social Media Platforms

- 3.2.2.1 A new council social media platform, or a social media platform proposed by a council related entity (for example, a council committee), can only be established or deleted with the written approval of the General Manager or their delegate.

3.2.3 Appointment and Role of the Social Media Coordinator

- 3.2.3.1 The General Manager will appoint a member of council staff to be the council's Social Media Coordinator (SMC). The SMC should be a senior and suitably qualified member of staff.
- 3.2.3.2 The General Manager may appoint more than one SMC.
- 3.2.3.3 The SMC's role is to:
- a) approve and revoke a staff member's status as an authorised user
 - b) develop and/or approve the training and/or induction to be provided to authorised users
 - c) maintain a register of authorised users
 - d) maintain effective oversight of authorised users
 - e) moderate the Council's social media platforms in accordance with 3.5 of this policy
 - f) ensure the Council complies with its record keeping obligations under the *State Records Act 1998* in relation to social media (see clause 3.7 of this policy)
 - g) ensure the Council adheres to the rules of the social media platform(s)
 - h) coordinate with the Council's Information Services team to ensure the Council's social media platforms are set up and maintained in a way that maximises user friendliness and any technical problems are resolved promptly.
- 3.2.3.4 The SMC may delegate their functions under paragraphs (e) and (f) of clause 3.2.3.3 to authorised users.
- 3.2.3.5 The SMC is an authorised user for the purposes of this policy.

3.2.4 Authorised Users

- 3.2.4.1 Authorised users are members of council staff who are authorised by the SMC to upload content and engage on social media on the Council's behalf.
- 3.2.4.2 Authorised users should be members of council staff that are responsible for managing, or have expertise in, the events, initiatives, programs or policies that are the subject of the social media content.
- 3.2.4.3 The SMC will appoint authorised users when required.
- 3.2.4.4 An authorised user must receive a copy of this policy and induction training on social media use and Council's obligations before uploading content on Council's behalf.
- 3.2.4.5 The role of an authorised user is to:
- a) ensure, to the best of their ability, that the content they upload onto social media platforms is accurate
 - b) correct inaccuracies in Council generated content after consulting the author
 - c) engage in discussions and answer questions on Council's behalf on social media platforms
 - d) keep the Council's social media platforms up to date
 - e) where authorised to do so by the SMC:
 - i) moderate the Council's social media platforms in accordance with clause 3.5 of this policy
 - ii) ensure the Council complies with its record keeping obligations under the *State Records Act 1998* in relation to social media (see clause 3.7 of this policy)
- 3.2.4.6 When engaging on social media on Council's behalf (such as, but not limited to, on a community social media page), an authorised user must identify themselves as a member of Council staff but they are not obliged to disclose their name or position within the Council.
- 3.2.4.7 Authorised users must not use Council's social media platforms for personal reasons.

3.2.5 Administrative Tone

- 3.2.5.1 Authorised users upload content and engage on social media on the Council's behalf. Authorised users must use language consistent with that function and avoid expressing or appearing to express their personal views when undertaking their role.
- 3.2.5.2 Authorised users may use more personal, informal language when engaging on Council's social media platforms, for example when replying to comments.

3.2.6 Register of Authorised Users

- 3.2.6.1 The SMC will maintain a register of authorised users. This register is to be reviewed annually to ensure it is fit-for-purpose.

3.2.7 Ceasing to be an Authorised User

- 3.2.7.1 The SMC may revoke a staff member's status as an authorised user, if:
 - a) the staff member makes such a request
 - b) the staff member has not uploaded content onto any of the Council's social media platforms in the last six months
 - c) the staff member has failed to comply with this policy
 - d) the SMC is of the reasonable opinion that the staff member is no longer suitable to be an authorised user.

3.3 Administrative framework for councillors' social media platforms

3.3.1 Platforms

- 3.3.1.1 For the purposes of this policy, councillor social media platforms are not council social media platforms. Section 3.2 of this policy does not apply to councillors' social media platforms.
- 3.3.1.2 Councillors are responsible for the administration and moderation of their own social media platforms (in accordance with Parts 3.3 and 3.5 of this policy), and ensuring they comply with the record keeping obligations under the *State Records Act 1998* (see Part 3.7 of this policy) and council's records management policy in relation to social media.
- 3.3.1.3 Clause 3.3.1.2 also applies to councillors in circumstances where another person administers, moderates, or uploads content onto their social media platform.
- 3.3.1.4 Councillors must comply with the rules of the platform when engaging on social media.

3.3.2 Induction and Training

- 3.3.2.1 Councillors who engage, or intend to engage, on social media shall receive induction training on social media use. Induction training can be undertaken either as part of the councillor's induction program or as part of their ongoing professional development program.

3.3.3 Identifying as a Councillor

- 3.3.3.1 Councillors must identify themselves on their social media platforms in the following format: Councillor "First Name and Last Name".
- 3.3.3.2 A councillor's social media platform must include a profile photo which is a clearly identifiable image of the councillor.

- 3.3.3.3 If a councillor becomes or ceases to be the mayor, deputy mayor, or the holder of another position (for example, chairperson of a committee), this must be clearly stated on the councillor's social media platforms and updated within 7 days of a change in circumstances.

3.3.4 Other General Requirements for Councillors' Social Media Platforms

- 3.3.4.1 Councillor social media platforms must specify or provide a clearly accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.
- 3.3.4.2 A councillor's social media platform must include a disclaimer to the following effect:
"The views expressed and comments made on this social media platform are my own and not that of the Council".
- 3.3.4.3 Despite clause 3.3.4.2, mayoral or councillor media releases and other content that has been authorised according to the Council's media and communications protocols may be uploaded onto a councillor's social media platform.
- 3.3.4.4 Councillors may upload publicly available Council information onto their social media platforms.
- 3.3.4.5 Councillors may use more personal, informal language when engaging on their social media platforms.

3.3.5 Councillor Queries Relating to Social Media Platforms

- 3.3.5.1 Questions from councillors relating to their obligations under this policy, technical queries relating to the operation of their social media platforms, or managing records on social media may be directed to the General Manager/SMC in the first instance.

3.3.6 Other Social Media Platforms Administered by Councillors

- 3.3.6.1 A councillor must advise the General Manager/SMC of any social media platforms they administer on which content relating to the Council, Councillors or staff is, or is expected to be, uploaded. The councillor must do so within four weeks of becoming a councillor.

3.4 Standards of Conduct on Social Media

3.4.1 Councillors & Staff

- 3.4.1.1 This policy only applies to Councillors and staff's use of social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a council official. The policy does not apply to personal use of social media that is not connected with a person's role as a council official.
- 3.4.1.2 Councillors and staff must comply with the Council's code of conduct when using social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a council official.
- 3.4.1.3 Councillors and staff must not use social media to post or share comments, photos, videos, electronic recordings or other information that:
- a) is defamatory, offensive, humiliating, threatening or intimidating to other Councillors or staff or members of the public
 - b) contains profane language or is sexual in nature
 - c) constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*, or is unlawfully discriminatory
 - d) is contrary to their duties under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and their responsibilities under any policies or procedures adopted by the Council to ensure workplace health and safety
 - e) contains content about the Council, Councillors, staff or members of the public that is misleading or deceptive

- f) divulges confidential Council information
- g) breaches the privacy of other Councillors, staff or members of the public
- h) contains allegations of suspected breaches of the Council's code of conduct or information about the consideration of a matter under the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*
- i) could be perceived to be an official comment on behalf of the Council where they have not been authorised to make such comment
- j) commits the Council to any action
- k) violates an order made by a court
- l) breaches copyright
- m) advertises, endorses or solicits commercial products or business
- n) constitutes spam
- o) is in breach of the rules of the social media platform.

3.4.1.4 Councillors and staff must:

- a) attribute work to the original author, creator or source when uploading or linking to content produced by a third party
- b) obtain written permission from a minor's parent or legal guardian before uploading content in which the minor can be identified.

3.4.1.5 Councillors and staff must exercise caution when sharing, liking, retweeting content as this can be regarded as an endorsement and/or publication of the content.

3.4.1.6 Councillors and staff must not incite or encourage other persons to act in a way that is contrary to the requirements of this Part.

3.4.1.7 Councillors must uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of the Council's governing body but may explain why they voted on a matter in the way that they did. (see section 232(1)(f) of the *Local Government Act 1993*).

3.5 **Moderation of Social Media Platforms**

3.5.1 **Platforms**

Note: Councils, Councillors and staff should be aware that they may be considered a 'publisher' of any content uploaded onto a social media platform they administer, including content that:

- **is uploaded by a third party; and/or**
- **appears on their social media platform because they have 'liked', 'shared', or 'retweeted' the content, or similar.**

3.5.1.1 Councillors and staff who are responsible for the moderation of the Council's or councillors' social media platforms may remove content and 'block' or ban a person from those platforms. Such actions must be undertaken in accordance with this Part.

3.5.1.2 For the purposes of this Part, 'social media platform' and 'platform' means both the Council's and councillors' social media platforms.

3.5.2 **House Rules**

3.5.2.1 Social media platforms must state or provide an accessible link to the 'House Rules' for engaging on the platform.

3.5.2.2 At a minimum, the House Rules should specify:

- a) the principles of social media engagement referred to in clause 1.1 of this policy

- b) the type of behaviour or content that will result in that content being removed or 'hidden', or a person being blocked or banned from the platform
- c) the process by which a person can be blocked or banned from the platform and rights of review
- d) a statement relating to privacy and personal information (see clause 3.7.2 of this policy)
- e) when the platform will be monitored (for example weekdays 9am – 5pm, during the Council's business hours)
- f) that the social media platform is not to be used for making complaints about the Council, Councillors or staff.

3.5.2.3 For the purposes of clause 3.5.2.2(b), third parties engaging on social media platforms must not post or share comments, photos, videos, electronic recordings or other information that:

- a) is defamatory, offensive, humiliating, threatening or intimidating to Councillors, staff or members of the public,
- b) contains profane language or is sexual in nature
- c) constitutes harassment and/or bullying within the meaning of the *Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*, or is unlawfully discriminatory
- d) contains content about the Council, Councillors, staff or members of the public that is misleading or deceptive
- e) breaches the privacy of Councillors, staff or members of the public
- f) contains allegations of suspected breaches of the Council's code of conduct or information about the consideration of a matter under the *Procedures for the Administration of the Model Code of Conduct for Local Councils in NSW*,
- g) violates an order made by a court
- h) breaches copyright
- i) advertises, endorses or solicits commercial products or business,
- j) constitutes spam
- k) would be in breach of the rules of the social media platform.

3.5.3 Removal or "Hiding" of Content

3.5.3.1 Where a person uploads content onto a social media platform that, in the reasonable opinion of the moderator, is of a kind specified under clause 3.5.2.3, the moderator may remove or 'hide' that content.

3.5.3.2 Prior to removing or 'hiding' the content, the moderator must make a record of it (for example, a screenshot).

3.5.3.3 If the moderator removes or 'hides' the content under clause 3.5.3.1, they must, where practicable, notify the person who uploaded the content that it has been removed and the reason(s) for its removal and their rights of review.

3.5.3.4 A person may request a review of a decision by a moderator to remove or 'hide' content under clause 3.5.3.1. The request must be made in writing to the General Manager and state the grounds on which the request is being made.

3.5.3.5 Where a review request is made under clause 3.5.3.4, the review is to be undertaken by the General Manager/SMC or a member of staff nominated by the General Manager who is suitably qualified and who was not involved in the decision to remove or 'hide' the content.

3.5.4 Blocking or Banning

- 3.5.4.1 If a person uploads content that is removed or 'hidden' under clause 3.5.3.1 of this policy on more than one occasion, that person may be blocked or banned from the social media platform / all social media platforms.
- 3.5.4.2 A person may only be blocked or banned from a Council social media platform with the approval of the General Manager/SMC. This clause does not apply to blocking or banning a person from a councillor's social media platform.
- 3.5.4.3 Prior to blocking or banning a person from a social media platform, the person must, where practicable, be advised of the intention to block or ban them from the platform/all platforms and be given a chance to respond. Any submission made by the person must be considered prior to a determination being made to block or ban them.
- 3.5.4.4 The duration of the block or ban is to be determined by the General Manager/SMC, or in the case of a councillor's social media platform, the councillor.
- 3.5.4.5 Where a determination is made to block or ban a person from a social media platform/all social media platforms, the person must, where practicable, be notified in writing of the decision and the reasons for it. The written notice must also advise the person which social media platforms they are blocked or banned from and the duration of the block or ban and inform them of their rights of review.
- 3.5.4.6 Despite clauses 3.5.4.1 to 3.5.4.5, where a person uploads content of a kind referred to under clause 3.5.2.3, and the moderator is reasonably satisfied that the person's further engagement on the social media platform poses a risk to health and safety or another substantive risk (such as the uploading of defamatory content), an interim block or ban from the platform/all platforms may be imposed on the person immediately for a period no longer than (Council to specify time period).
- 3.5.4.7 A person who is blocked or banned from the platform/all platforms under clause 3.5.4.6 must, where practicable be given a chance to respond to the interim block or ban being imposed. Any submission made by the person must be considered when determining whether the interim block or ban is to be removed or retained under clauses 3.5.4.1 to 3.5.4.5.
- 3.5.4.8 A person may request a review of a decision to block or ban then from a social media platform. The request must be made in writing to the General Manager and state the grounds on which the request is being made.
- 3.5.4.9 Where a review request is made under clause 3.5.4.8, the review is to be undertaken by the General Manager or a member of staff nominated by the General Manager who is suitably qualified and who was not involved in the decision to block or ban the person. Where the decision to block or ban the person was made by the General Manager, the review must be undertaken by another senior and suitably qualified member of staff who was not involved in the decision.
- 3.5.4.10 Where a person that is the subject of a block or ban continues to engage on a social media platform(s) using an alternative social media account, profile, avatar, etc., a moderator may block or ban the person from the platform(s) immediately. In these circumstances, clauses 3.5.4.1 to 3.5.4.9 do not apply.

3.6 Use of Social Media during Emergencies

- 3.6.1 During emergencies, such as natural disasters or public health incidents, the General Manager will be responsible for the management of content on the Council's social media platforms.
- 3.6.2 To ensure consistent messaging both during and after an emergency, authorised users, Councillors and staff must not upload content onto the Council's or their own social media platforms which contradicts advice issued by the agency coordinating the emergency response, or agencies supporting recovery efforts.

- 3.6.3 Training on social media use during emergencies should be included in training and/or induction provided to authorised users and councillors.

3.7 Records Management and Privacy Requirements

3.7.1 Records Management

- 3.7.1.1 Social media content created, sent and received by Councillors and staff acting in their official capacity is a council record and may constitute open access information or be subject to an information access application made under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009. These records must be managed in accordance with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998 and the Council's approved records management policies and practices.
- 3.7.1.2 You must not destroy, alter, or remove social media content unless authorised to do so. If you need to alter or remove social media content, you must do so in accordance with this policy, and consult with the Council's records manager and comply with the requirements of the State Records Act 1998.
- 3.7.1.3 When/if a councillor's term of office concludes, the councillor must contact the Council's Director-Corporate Services to manage/transfer records of social media content created during their term of office and comply with the requirements of the *State Records Act 1998*.
- 3.7.1.4 In fulfilling their obligations under clause 3.7, Councillors and staff should refer to any guidance issued by the State Archives and Records Authority of NSW relating to retention requirements for councils' and councillors' social media content.

3.7.2 Privacy Considerations and Requirements

- 3.7.2.1 Social media communications are in the public domain. Councillors and staff should exercise caution about what personal information, if any, they upload onto social media. The *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* applies to the use of social media platforms by the Council and councillors. To mitigate potential privacy risks, Councillors and staff will:
- a) advise people not to provide personal information on social media platforms
 - b) inform people if any personal information they may provide on social media platforms is to be used for official purposes
 - c) moderate comments to ensure they do not contain any personal information
 - d) advise people to contact the Council or councillors through alternative channels if they have personal information they do not want to disclose in a public forum.
- 3.7.2.2 Councillors and staff must ensure they comply with the *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* when engaging on and/or moderating social media platforms. In fulfilling their obligations, Councillors and staff should refer to any guidance issued by the Information and Privacy Commission of NSW, such as, but not limited to, the Health Privacy Principles.

3.8 Private Use of Social Media

Note: Activities on social media websites are public activities. Even though privacy settings are available, content can still be shared and accessed beyond the intended recipients.

The terms and conditions of most social media sites state that all content becomes the property of the site on which it is posted.

3.8.1 What Constitutes 'Private' Use?

- 3.8.1.1 For the purposes of this policy, a Councillor or staff member's social media engagement will be considered 'private use' when the content they upload:
- a) is not associated with, or does not refer to, the Council, any other Councillor and staff, contractors, related entities or any other person or organisation providing services to or on behalf of the Council in their official or professional capacities, and
 - b) is not related to or does not contain information acquired by virtue of their employment or role as a Councillor or staff member.
- 3.8.1.2 If a Councillor or staff member chooses to identify themselves as a Councillor or staff member, either directly or indirectly (such as in their user profile), then they will not be deemed to be acting in their private capacity for the purposes of this policy.

3.8.2 Use of Social Media During Work Hours

- 3.8.2.1 Council staff may only access and engage on social media in their private capacity while at work during breaks.
- 3.8.2.2 Council staff who access and engage on social media in their private capacity during work hours must ensure it not does not interfere with the performance of their official duties.

3.9 Concerns or Complaints

- 3.9.1 Concerns or complaints about the administration of a council's social media platforms should be made to the council's SMC in the first instance.
- 3.9.2 Complaints about the conduct of Councillors or staff in engagement on social media platforms may be directed to the General Manager.
- 3.9.3 Complaints about a General Manager's conduct in engagement on social media platforms may be directed to the Mayor.