Agenda Item 6

WEDNESDAY, 21 JULY 2021

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PEOPLE

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

EXEMPT INFORMATION
None

PURPOSE
This report details the development of a Social Media Policy for employees, casual workers and contractors of Tamworth Borough Council which provides a framework for employees in their use of social media.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:
1. **That the Social Media Policy for employees, casual workers and contractors is formally approved for immediate implementation.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
Social media is now at the centre of our interactions, whether that's with each other as individuals, councillors interacting with constituents or Tamworth Borough Council as an organisation, interacting and engaging with its customers.

This represents both opportunities and challenges for Tamworth Borough Council. While it can be challenging in some areas, social media is an integral communications tool in the modern world.

The aim of the policy is:
- To preserve and protect the reputation of Tamworth Borough Council and its employees
- To support the development of Tamworth Borough Councils social media sites to promote customer engagement, promotion of council services, increase transparency, share key messages, and improve digital-based customer services
- To inform employees and other users about the acceptable use of social media in their professional capacity, ensuring the council is not brought into disrepute by affiliation with unsuitable sites or through comments posted onto public online forums.

The key is in understanding how to use social media appropriately and effectively, while understanding some of the potential pitfalls.

This policy provides a framework for the safe, responsible and legal use of social media, setting out guidance for employees when using social media, either through their personal accounts or when managing an account on behalf of Tamworth Borough Council. It also includes relevant laws, such as Copyright, Libel and Data Protection and existing Tamworth Borough Council policies, such as the Acceptable Use Policy and the Code of Conduct Policy.

Once approved, the policy will be implemented through Astute which will provide all employees with on-line training and will be available on the InfoZone. All employees will be

expected to complete the training and further support will be available for those that may need it.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
Minimal resources will be required for implementing the policy and will initially be required during the 'roll-out' stage to provide support where necessary. In addition, daily monitoring by the Communication and Marketing Team of all social media is already in place

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND
A number of legal documents have a bearing or impinge on the rational of this policy which have been considered.

The risks associated with this report are:
1. Employees refuse to sign the policy
2. Employees see the policy as an infringement of their human rights
3. Employees breach the guidance within the policy in their social media usage

Mitigation of the above risks:
1. Training provided will ensure clear messages of the use of this policy
2. Trade union have already been consulted and are fully supportive of the policy
3. The capability and Conduct Policy will be invoked for employees breaching the Social Media Policy

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS
There are no adverse equality implications from implementing this policy, an equalities impact assessment has been undertaken and forms part of the policy.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS
There are no sustainability implications from implementing this policy

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
The Social Media Policy will be reviewed on a 3 year cycle to ensure it is legally compliant, meets best practice and remains up to date for employees. The policy has undergone consultation with the recognised Trade Unions.

REPORT AUTHOR
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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS
None

APPENDICES
Appendix 1 – Social Media Policy