

Report to Standards Committee

Subject: Social Media Guidance

Date: 19 March 2026

Author: Monitoring Officer

Purpose

To seek approval of the Social Media Guidance for Councillors.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- 1) Members approve the Social Media Guidance at Appendix 1**

1 Background

- 1.1 In October 2025, Committee agreed to the creation of a cross-party working group to develop Social Media Guidance for Councillors. It was recognised that some guidance in this area may be useful for Councillors in particular with regard to how social media misuse may result in potential Code of Conduct complaints.
- 1.2 On 25th February, the Monitoring Officer presented draft Social Media Guidance to the working group to consider. In attendance at the working group meeting were Councillors Brocklebank, Feeney, Towsey-Hinton Martin Smith, Meads, Whiting and co-opted Members Louise Kopyrko and Rosalie Hawkes. The draft guidance was based on the Local Government Association's Social Media Guidance for Members. The working group made a number of observations on the guidance including:
 - There should be reference to the use of images in social media with particular regard to safeguarding and data protection

- The guidance should align with any wider media guidance for Councillors
- That the document should be effectively promoted to members if approved

1.3 Following revisions to the guidance after feedback from the working group, the Social Media Guidance at Appendix 1 is now recommended to Committee for approval.

2 Proposal

2.1 It is proposed that the Social Media Guidance at Appendix 1 be approved. If approved, the guidance will be promoted to Members by the Communications team and available on the Council's website.

3 Alternative Options

3.2 That Members do not approve the guidance or propose further changes. The guidance has been developed in consultation with the working group and having regard to similar guidance from other authorities.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 The guidance supports the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors but is not a legal requirement. The guidance does provide information on using social media safely and lawfully.

6 Equalities Implications

6.1 The Code of Conduct does require members to act in a way that is in accordance with equality obligations in line with the Equality Act 2010. In support of this, the social media guidance supports Member understanding of how to use social media safely, securely and without resulting in breaches of the Code of Conduct.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

7.1 There are no carbon reduction/sustainability implications arising from this report.

8 Appendices

8.1 Appendix 1 – Social Media Guidance

9 Background Papers

9.1 None

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer