

POLICY NO: 4.1.20

SOCIAL MEDIA

OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance for the City of Vincent to engage and manage social media (SM) in its communication activities with the community.

POLICY STATEMENT

1. SCOPE

- 1.1 This Policy is designed to provide a framework for the Council to use social media to facilitate collaboration and sharing between the City, Council Members, Employees, ratepayers and the community.
- 1.2 This Policy applies to all City Employees and Council Members.
- 1.3 The requirements of this Policy apply to all uses of social networking applications, which are applied to any City of Vincent related purpose and regardless of whether the applications are hosted corporately or not. They must also be considered where City representatives are contributing in an official capacity to social networking applications provided by external organisations.

2. BECOMING AN AUTHORISED CONTRIBUTOR

- 2.1 Before engaging in social media *as a representative of the City*, Employees must become authorised to comment.
- 2.2 To become authorised to comment in an official capacity, an Employee will need to gain approval from the Chief Executive Officer.
- 2.3 Once you have been authorised, you will be referred to as an 'Authorised Contributor' (see 'Definitions' below).

3. CEO, MAYOR AND COUNCILLORS COMMENTS

- 3.1 The CEO and Mayor are not required to obtain authorisation to contribute to the City's page – though they must follow the City's Code of Conduct and Rules of Engagement below.
- 3.2 Councillors do not have to obtain authorisation to contribute to the City's page – though contributions are not encouraged – and they can only "comment", "like" or "share" existing content. Councillors cannot post any new content onto the City's page.
- 3.3 Councillors must also follow the City's Code of Conduct and Rules of Engagement below, except for 5.3 relating to employees.
- 3.4 Councillors will only be permitted to "comment", "like" or "share" providing they disclose that they are a Councillor, and the views expressed are their own.
- 3.5 Councillors shall not post any material on the Social Media Platform concerning a Council Decision unless;
 - 3.5.1 The City's Mayor has released the information on the Social Media Platform or to the Media and Public; or
 - 3.5.2 The Official Minutes have been made public.
- 3.6 The CEO, Mayor and Councillors will use their own personal profiles to contribute to the City's SM platforms.

4. CONTRIBUTING TO OUR PAGE BY STAFF

- 4.1 No staff member may post on the City's page from their own personal SM account, including comments/share/like/re-tweet (and so on), unless approved by the Chief Executive Officer.
- 4.2 However, as it is 100% innocuous, a staff member is welcome to 'like' the City of Vincent page and also 'like' any post that an Authorised Contributor adds to our page.

5. RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 Once authorised to comment as a City representative, all 'Authorised Contributors' must:
 - 5.1.1 Disclose they are an Employee of the City in all cases (this is a given if you are posting using the City's account).
 - 5.1.2 Disclose and comment only on information classified as public domain information.
 - 5.1.3 Post only factual information.
 - 5.1.4 Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant City of Vincent Policies, including the City's Media Policy and Code of Conduct.
 - 5.1.5 Ensure comments are respectful of the community in which you are interacting online.
 - 5.1.6 Adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws.
- 5.2 If a person is authorised to comment, they must not:
 - 5.2.1 Post/respond to material or allow material to stay 'live' on our page that you know or could reasonable be expected to know is:
 - offensive;
 - obscene;
 - defamatory;
 - threatening;
 - harassing;
 - bullying;
 - discriminatory;
 - hateful;
 - racist;
 - sexist;
 - infringes copyright;
 - constitutes a contempt of court;
 - breaches a Court suppression order; or
 - is otherwise unlawful.
 - 5.2.2 Use or disclose any confidential or secure information.
 - 5.2.3 Make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the City's reputation or bring it into disrepute.

- 5.3 Employees must ensure that the privacy and confidentiality of information acquired at work is protected at all times and treated in accordance with relevant laws and policies. The potential scope and ramifications of a breach of privacy or confidentiality when using social media are severe.
- 5.4 City of Vincent social networking content and comments containing any of the following forms of content shall not be allowed:
- 5.4.1 Comments not topically related to the particular site or blog article being commented upon.
- 5.4.2 Profane language or content.
- 5.4.3 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.
- 5.4.4 Sexual content or links to sexual content.
- 5.4.5 Solicitations of commerce.
- 5.4.6 Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity.
- 5.4.7 Information that may tend to compromise the safety or security of the public.
- 5.4.8 Content that violates a legal ownership interest of any other party.
- 5.5 The Australian Advertising Standards Bureau (ASB) has made a landmark ruling that Facebook is an *advertising* medium and as such therefore falls under the industry's self-regulatory code of ethics – the Australian Association of National Advertiser's (AANA) Code of Ethics. Social media pages must comply with pertinent codes and laws, vetting all public posts to ensure they are (eg) not sexist, racist or factually inaccurate.

Companies can now be fined or publicly shamed for the comments that appear on their social media "brand" pages. The ASB ruled in general that Australia's advertising laws were applicable to everything on a brand's page — the Code applies to the content generated by the page creator as well as material or comments posted by users or friends.

6. COMPLIANCE

Depending on the circumstances, non-compliance with this Policy may constitute a breach of employment or contractual obligations, misconduct, sexual harassment, discrimination or some other contravention of the law.

Any employee who fails to comply with this Policy may face disciplinary action and, in serious cases, termination of their employment.

Council Members who fail to comply with this Policy will be removed from the Social Media Platform and may also face action under the City's Code of Conduct.

The CEO is delegated the authority to take appropriate action (including removing a person from the social media platform) if a breach occurs of the City's Social Media Policy and Guidelines.

7. DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed below apply to this document only.

"Social Media" is content created by people using highly accessible and scalable publishing technologies. Social media is distinct from industrial media, such as newspapers, television and film. Social media comprises relatively inexpensive and accessible tools that enable anyone to publish or access information – industrial media generally requires significant resources to publish information. (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_media).

Social media may include (although is not limited to):

- social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Myspace, LinkedIn, Bebo, Yammer);
- video and photo sharing websites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube);
- blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs;
- blogs hosted by media outlets (e.g. 'comments' or 'your say' feature on perthnow.com.au);
- micro-blogging (e.g. Twitter);
- wikis and online collaborations (e.g. Wikipedia);
- forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool);
- vod and podcasting;
- online multiplayer gaming platforms (e.g. World of Warcraft, Second Life);
- instant messaging (including SMS); and
- geo-spatial tagging (Foursquare).

"Authorised Contributor" is a person who creates and is responsible for posted articles and information on social media sites on behalf of the City of Vincent.

"Chief Administrator" is the person responsible for the set-up, maintenance and management of all the City's SM pages and policies.

"Comment" is a response to an article or social media content.

“Blog” (an abridgment of the term web log) is a website with regular entries of commentary, descriptions of events or other material such as graphics or video.

“Public Domain” is clip art, images, text, programs etc. that is not copyrighted (i.e. a law that gives only one person the right to produce, sell or use something).

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the attached Policy Procedure and Guidelines and “Public Usage Guidelines”.

Date Adopted:	28 February 2012
Date Amended:	6 November 2012
Date Reviewed:	23 October 2012
Date of Next Review:	November 2017

POLICY PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA (SM)

OBJECTIVE

The City will use the Policy and Guidelines to assist the Mayor, Councillors, Chief Executive Officer and employees in understanding the processes for the correct management of all forms of social media (SM) that are operated by the City.

The following procedures and protocols are to be followed:

The City's prime objective is to maintain positive and quality communications at all times.

Secondary objectives are:

- Reach a wide range and large number of residents and stakeholders
- Promote council offerings with a focus on positive, 'social' content including news, events, arts, festivals and initiatives that benefit the community
- Disseminate time-sensitive/emergency information
- Drive traffic to the council's website
- Correct misinformation

MANAGEMENT OF ADMINISTRATORS

1. Before engaging in SM as a *representative of the City*, Employees must become **authorised** to comment by the Chief Executive Officer – you are then an 'Administrator'.
2. The City's Marketing and Communications Officer (MCO) is an Authorised Contributor and the Chief Administrator of all SM accounts.
3. MCO does not require authorisation to post, though will make all attempts to works under the guidance of the CEO and/or Mayor (where appropriate).
4. The City's Arts & Creativity Coordinator (ACC) is authorised by the CEO to post/respond to Community Development content only.
5. All ACC posts must be authorised by Manager Community Development (MCD) before going 'live'. If MCD is unavailable, posts must be authorised by MCO who will decide if further approval is required.
6. If staff wish to post, content is to be emailed to MCO for uploading (or ACC for all Community Development content only).
7. The MCO, utilising media relations expertise, will ensure that:
 - a. Messages are sufficiently authorised and accurate
 - b. Responses are coordinated and posted in a timely manner
 - c. The City's voice is consistent and reflects our brand

CONTRIBUTING TO OUR PAGE BY STAFF

1. At this stage, no staff member may post on the City's page from their own personal SM account, including comments/share/like/re-tweet (and so on).
2. However, as it is 100% innocuous, a staff member is welcome to 'like' the City of Vincent page and also 'like' any post that an Authorised Contributor adds to our page.

CONTRIBUTING TO OUR PAGE BY CEO, MAYOR AND COUNCIL

1. All content published must be accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant City of Vincent Policies, particularly the City's Code of Conduct and Media Policy.
2. The CEO, Mayor and Council Members are not required to obtain authorisation to make comments/share/like/re-tweet (and so on) on the City's page.
3. The CEO may post or respond to a comment via the Chief Administrator (MCO) using an appropriate signoff.
4. If the Mayor and Council Members wish to participate, they will contribute using their personal profile/account.
5. The CEO is delegated the authority to take appropriate action (including removing a person from the Social Media Platform) if persistent breaches occur of the City's Social Media Policy and Guidelines.
6. The CEO is delegated the authority to temporarily suspend a person from contributing to the SM platforms as deemed appropriate, eg: suspending Councillor's from contributing to our SM platforms once an election is called and during Council election periods.
7. The CEO is delegated the authority to suspend or shut any SM platform down.

MONITORING

1. MCO and ACC will endeavour to check all platforms at least every 4 hours during business hours to ensure posts are moderated if necessary (removal of content that breaches our 'Public Usage Guidelines'(see below) or the AANA Code of Ethics.
2. All attempts should be made to address 'hot' comments (ie: pertinent or contentious questions or requests for information) within four (business) hours, or earlier if deemed necessary by CEO/MCO.
3. MCO and ACC will work together closely to monitor and moderate page content, informing each other of all illegal or inappropriate content.
4. All staff are welcome – within the nominated hours – to assist the MCO and ACC in monitoring the City's pages – the more eyes the better.
5. MCO and ACC will attempt to monitor pages during evenings and weekends for breaches (even though it is understood that the City's administration does not normally operate after hours).
6. MCO and ACC will set up notification emails when someone has posted to our page, so they can check them after hours and respond -if necessary/crucial.

RESPONDING TO POSTS

1. MCO will 'triage' the need to respond to posts – the quality of posts will always be a trade-off between staff/information availability and (real) time.
2. Not all posts need to be answered though attempts should be made where possible to foster two-way communication and community engagement.
3. MCO is authorised to obtain information at an Officer level (just like a public enquiry) and post without approval to suit the 'real-time' aspect of SM.
4. All staff should be forthcoming with information and provide this to MCO in a timely, efficient manner for real-time responses.
5. In keeping with the City's Media Policy, MCO will consult (where MCO deems necessary):- CEO – for administration and day-to-day matters
- Mayor – for Council decisions/Council matters

DEALING WITH NEGATIVE POSTS BY USERS

1. Content must not be deleted simply because it is unfavourable – The City must remain open and transparent.
2. All breaches of our 'Public Usage Guidelines' or the AANA Code of Ethics will be removed instantly, or as soon as possible.
3. The City's Public Usage Guidelines will be asserted and the user warned or blocked as deemed necessary by MCO.
4. If it is crucial that a response is required, especially for controversial or 'hot' topics, then the MCO will attempt to consult the CEO or Mayor – but only if MCO deems necessary – and as follows:
- CEO – for administration and day-to-day matters
- Mayor – for Council decisions/Council matters
5. If CEO/Mayor unavailable, queries will be referred to the most senior staff member available pertinent to the situation. (e.g. Director).
6. MCO will attempt to diffuse the issue by first acknowledging the comments and then responding with facts and information (versus emotion) at all times.
7. If the negative posts continue after a suitable response, MCO will attempt to take the conversation 'offline' by providing direct contact details (phone number, email address, etc) of the relevant person/department to speak to.
6. If negative posts continue to occur, MCO will not engage further but simply monitor the post for breaches.
7. MCO is authorised to warn the user and refer them to the 'Public Usage Guidelines' - and also block the user permanently if breaches continue.
8. MCO will notify staff (including CEO and Mayor) if they are mentioned or directly addressed – though not all posts can be monitored/seen. If they are unavailable to respond in real-time, MCO will take the conversation offline by providing direct contact details. If the user breaches our Public Usage Guidelines/AANA Code at any time (abusive, defamatory, etc) the content will be removed immediately.
9. If a crucial response is required, especially for controversial or 'hot' topics, then the MCO will refer to the above point but is authorised to respond as best they can.

MANDATORY ITEMS FOR ALL SM PLATFORMS

1. The City of Vincent logo.
2. All of the City's SM pages must clearly display the City's 'Public Usage Guidelines' (see below).
3. Offensive language controls and filters should be in place.
4. A 'disclaimer' to also be prominently displayed which states (adapted to suit SM platform):
"Welcome to Vincent's official News, Arts, Festivals and Events page! Please contact us by phone, email or post if you need a response, and ensure your posts follow our 'Public Usage Guidelines', thanks.
5. Appropriate 'About', 'Contact' and other details to suit the SM platform must be displayed before going live.
6. MCO's contact details to discuss the removal of a previous post, request a current post be removed or for any other matters related to our page or 'Public Usage Guidelines'.

RECORD KEEPING

1. With regards to the Local Government record keeping and the State Records Act 2000, attempts must be made by MCO to keep records where practical of activity that has a liability element, is of public concern or has a contentious nature.
2. MCO will screen grab such activity and file (digitally) on the City's server. In this way, we do not have to rely on a third party (eg: facebook itself) provider (which are often overseas) to obtain records.
3. Not everything must be recorded – as long as the City attempts to uphold the 'spirit' of the Act, then that will suffice.

City of Vincent's 'Public Usage Guidelines'

[This will be placed on all SM platforms to be clearly visible for the public and may be called something a little different to suit the platform. The below example is for facebook].

Welcome and thanks for visiting Vincent's space for inspired, cooperative and interesting community news, arts, festivals and events. We look forward to connecting with you – but we do have a few Guidelines to follow if you'd like to contribute to our facebook page.

We do encourage open discussion but facebook isn't a formal communication channel for the Council and we just can't respond to everything. So if you do need a response, then feel free to visit, call, write or email us.

When interacting with this page, we request that you:

- use the space to contribute positively
- contact us 'offline' for serious matters or for a response
- exercise common sense and courtesy
- do not post your personal contact details
- do not post advertising material or solicitations
- adhere to facebook's guidelines which can be found at:
<http://www.facebook.com/legal/terms>

All fan comments on this page are not representative of the opinions of the City of Vincent, nor do we make any warranty to their accuracy. We will make all attempts to immediately remove comments which contravene these Guidelines and the Australian Association of National Advertiser's (AANA) Code of Ethics.

Any posts or comments made on our page may be removed at any time without notice. We won't remove content simply because we don't like it – but we will act swiftly to protect the privacy and rights of any individual or group. Any comments which specifically identify or refer to individuals in a negative manner, including our employees, will be removed.

Posts may also be deleted - at our absolute discretion - if they contain:

- any discussion or promotion of behaviour that is unlawful
- inappropriate, violent, obscene, profane, hateful, derogatory, racist or sexist language, content or links
- threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory language, content or links
- content or links that infringe copyright
- comments that threaten or defame any person or organisation
- information that may compromise the public's safety or security
- solicitations, advertisements or endorsements; spam or nuisance posts
- discusses Local Government elections and/or candidates
- multiple successive off-topic posts by a single user or any repetitive posts
- any other inappropriate comments or content as determined by us

Please note that by 'liking' this page you acknowledge all of the above Guidelines and that you may be blocked from this page if we decide you're in breach.

To discuss the removal of a previous post, request a current post be removed or for any other matters related to these Guidelines please contact our Communications department on 08 9273 6011 or email marketing@vincent.wa.gov.au

Thanks for your interest, happy posting!