

GOLDSHAW BOOTH PARISH COUNCIL

Social Media & Communications Policy

1 Introduction

1.1 This Policy sets out to ensure the effective use of social media to respect others and always remain professional.

1.2 To advise Councillors to make appropriate decisions about their communication when using emails, Facebook, Twitter, and other media platforms.

1.3 This Policy outlines the standards that Goldshaw Booth Parish Council requires all Members to observe when using social media in line with the Council's Code of Conduct.

1.4 This Policy does not form part of any Contract of Employment and it may be amended at any time.

2 Who does this Policy affect?

2.1 This Policy covers all individuals working at all levels within Goldshaw Booth Parish Council, including all elected and co-opted Councillors, volunteers and staff.

3 Key objectives

3.1 Goldshaw Booth Parish Council encourages the use of social media to respond to the following key objectives which will be periodically reviewed: -

- To promote and create awareness of what the Council does and its activities.
- To respect people and their opinions.
- To create awareness of issues occurring within the Parish.
- To clarify or correct any unclear or incorrect statements or views such as incorrect news being published on media platforms about Council Services.
- To provide information, advice, and guidance (particularly in emergency situations).

4 Scope of this Policy

4.1 Goldshaw Booth Parish Council has an overall responsibility for the effective operation of this Policy. All members are expected to always comply with this Policy to protect the reputation, privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the Council, its services, employees, partners, and community.

4.2 The behaviour required by the Members' Code of Conduct shall apply to online activity in the same way it does to other written or verbal communication. Members must be aware that their online profile as a Councillor means the more likely it is, they will be seen as acting in an official capacity when using all media platforms. Members must also know that online content should be objective, non-biased, informative, and accurate.

4.3 All employees, volunteers and Councillors must take the time to read and understand this Policy as they are personally responsible for the content they post on social media and any questions regarding the Policy should be directed to the Parish Clerk.

5 Using social media

5.1 Members must not allow their interaction on any web platform to damage their working relationships with others.

- Members must not make any derogatory, discriminatory, defamatory, abusive, or offensive comments.
- Members must be responsible and respectful for the content they post on social media.
- Members must never make false or misleading statements or comments which may affect the reputation of Goldshaw Booth Parish Council.
- Members must respect the privacy of other Councillors, staff, or volunteers.
- Members must refrain from posting controversial or potentially inflammatory remarks. Language that may be deemed as offensive relating to race, sexuality, disability, gender, age, or religion.
- Members must never disclose sensitive, private, or confidential information and never publish anyone else's contact details without consent.

5.2 • The Council also recommends that Councillors have a personal email for non-council related activity, to keep everything separate.

- The freedom of information act gives the Parish Clerk consent to ask for access to Council emails.

5.3 Members must ensure all content is disability friendly and check that the grammar and spelling is correct in social media posts/emails.

5.4 All social media and press communications must be directed to Council Officers before being released to the public.

5.5 Goldshaw Booth Parish Council email accounts are monitored in office working hours and any emails should be responded to within 5 working days.

5.6 Members must not post any offensive, threatening or abusive comments/behaviour on social media, regardless of whether this on a Council related profile or personal profile

- Members will be known throughout the village and posting any posts/comments on social media which may be deemed as inappropriate, may have an impact on the image and reputation of the Council.

6. Monitoring the use of social media

6.1 You should be aware that any use of social media may be monitored and where the Policy is not being complied with then action may be taken.

6.2 Misusing social media can run the risk of legal liability against you and Goldshaw Booth Parish Council.

6.3 Reports of any concerns regarding content placed on social media should be reported to the Parish Clerk for referral to the Council as required.

ADOPTED: 12TH May 2025

Review May 2027