

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT POLICY

To ensure that the flow of information between staff and the social media community is accurate, timely and promotes Council's credibility and reputation in the wider community.

1. CONTENTS

1. Contents
2. Purpose
3. Scope
4. Definitions
5. Policy
6. Monitoring and Implementation
7. References
8. Standards

REVISION HISTORY

<i>Revision #</i>	<i>Policy Sponsor</i>	<i>Approval Date and date of next scheduled review</i>	<i>Approved By</i>	<i># TRIM Reference</i>	<i>Related Standards</i>
	GM Customer Relationships	<u>Approval Date</u> September 2013 <u>Review Date</u> September 2016	Chief Executive	D-991092	Social Media Management Policy Standards

2. POLICY PURPOSE

- To ensure that the flow of information between staff and the social media community is accurate, timely and promotes Council's credibility and reputation in the wider community.
- To manage Council's engagement with the social media community constructively and professionally.
- Social media offers an alternative way for citizens to interact with Council. Social media is now the way many people prefer to communicate especially those who are less likely to interact in more traditional ways.
- As a Council staff member you should be aware that comments made via social media platforms are as public as if you were making the same comments to a newspaper or at a public forum.

3. POLICY SCOPE

This policy covers all Hamilton City Council (HCC) staff and contractors contracted by HCC who have access to social media and social networking sites.

4. DEFINITIONS

"Social media" is the term for internet based tools used for publishing, sharing and discussing information. It includes (but is not limited to) the following:

- Blogs, often created on free tools like WordPress or Tumblr
- Wikis, as well as Wikipedia
- Social networking sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or Yammer
- Video sharing sites such as YouTube or Vimeo
- Photo sharing sites such as Flickr, Instagram and Pinterest
- Forums and discussion groups such as Google+ and TradeMe Community
- Any websites which allow comment such as news sites.

5. POLICY

5.1 Introduction

Our websites, as listed in the Social Media Management Policy standards, remain Council's primary and predominant online presence. Wherever possible Council moderated social media sites need to be linked to these primary sites.

The establishment of any council moderated social media sites needs to be approved by the Communication Unit and then by the GM Customer Relationships. The Communication Unit will retain a current register of all authorised sites including up-to-date login and password information so that Council can immediately edit/remove content or remove administrators once they leave the organisation.

All proposals for Council moderated social media sites should have developed documentation that show:

- the purpose of the site
- administration of the site including the department or unit sponsoring the site; and
- the staff who will be responsible for the content, upkeep and moderation.

Social media sites need to:

- link back to the primary council website www.hamilton.co.nz
- comply with our Information Management Policy- a single version of the truth (no duplicating and uploading to external sites of HCC's records)
- incorporate correct use of corporate identity
- align with Council's Online Strategy; and
- comply with election protocol for Council officer's guidelines and maintain political neutrality.

It is critical that we keep records of our interactions in the online social media space and monitor the activities of those we engage with. Online Council statements can be held to the same legal standards as traditional media communications and are covered by the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act. Keep records of any online dialogue about the Council and send a copy to webteam@hcc.govt.nz.

For further information, see 'Social Media Management Policy – Standards'.

5.2 Using social media with the delegated authority to speak on behalf of Council

All communication through social media platforms is in the public domain. When acting as an official spokesperson of HCC whether talking to the media, speaking in public or using social media then the protocols outlined in the news media policy apply.

Good practice requires that one's position is disclosed and that you are speaking on behalf of HCC.

The information which you disclose must be information which you have authority to disclose and must not be confidential in nature. Comments made on social media sites are often permanently available and these comments are able to be reproduced in other media.

Give credit where credit is due by respecting others' rights. Do not claim ownership or credit of something that is not yours. If you are using another party's content, make certain that they are credited for it in your post and they approve of you using their content. Do not use the copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights, or other rights of others without the necessary permissions of the holder(s).

All communication with social media sites where staff have been speaking on behalf of HCC, need to be reported to the Communication Unit in accordance with the News Media Policy.

Three months before a local government (council) election, staff must adhere to the protocol for Council officer's guidelines which includes social media.

5.3 Using social media in a private capacity as a citizen

HCC staff has the same rights of free speech as other New Zealanders, but as with all public servants there are some additional obligations which staff shall consider. See the State Services Commission for guidelines:

<http://www.ssc.govt.nz/display/document.asp?DocID=7160>

Council staff should not express personal views and opinions in the public domain with the intention of discrediting HCC or express personal views and opinions contrary to HCC policy.

Staff must ensure they do not comment on, release or post Council-sensitive matters including confidential, sensitive or personal information such as staff issues, strategic decisions or embargoed announcements.

It must be clear when speaking on social media that it is as a private individual and not as a staff member. The use of Council titles and logos must not be used.

Some sites, such as LinkedIn, allow members to “recommend” current or former employees and contractors. If you are unsure about providing a recommendation if there were issues in relation to their conduct, performance or reasons for their termination which may increase Council’s liability, please check with your HR Advisor first.

Care is required in order to maintain a politically neutral public position in relation to Council affairs instance in comments and links to other sites. Protocol by Council staff in the lead up to Hamilton City Council’s triennial elections should also be observed.

For further information, see ‘Social Media Management Policy – Standards’.

5.4 Using social media at work

Use of internet facilities for social media is also subject to the Information Technology Management Policy.

5.5 Limitations

Social networking sites that have the approval for business use by Hamilton City Council will be held in a master list by the Communication Unit.

5.6 Consequences

Breach of this policy will be considered under the staff conduct guide “The Way We Work” and HCC Management Policies “Discipline”.

6. MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

The Chief Executive's Office and General Manager Customer Relationships will monitor the implementation of this policy.

The policy will be reviewed every three years or at the request of the Senior Leadership team or in response to changed legislative and statutory requirements or in response to any issues that may arise.

7. REFERENCES

News Media Policy

Discipline Policy

Local Authority Election Protocols for Council Officer's

Information Technology Management Policy

The Way We Work – HCC staff conduct guide

Online Strategy

Social Media Management Policy – Standards

State Services Guidelines – Principles for interaction with social media

The Write Way – Writing Style and Plain English Guide

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT POLICY - STANDARDS

The following guidelines and rules will help you decide when to engage and participate in online conversations about Hamilton City Council within social media.

1. CONTENTS

1. Contents
2. When to use social media
3. How to engage online
4. Hamilton City Council Social Media Sites
5. Personal use of social media

2. WHEN TO USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media provides tools for two-way conversations that others are able to see and join. This provides an opportunity to build relationships and rapport with a single person and potentially a whole community of people. This provides potential benefits as well as potential risks that need to be managed:

Consider this before you start:

- Social media lives in a 24/7 world - it requires resourcing and time that must be considered before you engage. For example, responses and comments to your postings should be actioned as soon as practical.
- Your tone tends to be more personal, less corporate and less formal.
- You have little control over the use of your content once it has been posted – regardless of whether you edit or delete it. Your contributions may be accessible and traceable forever, and by anybody in the world, so a little bit of extra care is needed.
- You often need to agree to a social media provider's terms of service before you can use their product or platform.

The benefits of using social media

Social media tools enable us to:

- Take advantage of the large audiences already using social media networks
- Reach new audiences
- Demonstrate an open culture and provide a personal face to the organisation online
- Communicate faster and be more flexible
- Use the power of video and images to tell stories about the issues we are involved in
- Make our key messages visible in existing social networks
- Get feedback, opinions and ideas from a different segment of our community.

Risks and implications

There are many types of social media tools, from video and photo sharing tools, blogs, wikis, discussion forums and micro-blogging platforms such as Twitter. There are also risks associated with engaging with social media, from resourcing issues and time commitment, to potentially provoking a contentious issue. (Refer to Handling a Social Media Mishap)

Ask yourself these questions before you engage in social media:

- **Does a suitable channel already exist among Hamilton City Council accounts?** This is not only the first question to ask yourself, but also the most important! We owe it to our customers to use our resources wisely, and that means no doubling up on effort. See section 4.0 of this standard on 'Hamilton City Council social media sites'.
- **What do you want to achieve?** Using social media just for the sake of it is wasteful. Be clear on what results you want from using it and ask if social media will help achieve them.
- **What is the effort and ongoing commitment?** Because you don't have to pay for a Facebook page or Twitter account, social media can easily look like it's free. However, it's the time and effort you will spend to keep updating it – regularly and

possibly for a long time. It's a serious commitment, and if you don't have the time, budget, resources or passion to do it, then stay clear.

- **Do you have something to say?** It's not enough to be willing to update your social media channel – you also need to have something interesting to say. Have you got enough content, or will there be enough news, to allow you to post fresh updates regularly?
- **Will it enable you to target an audience group for your programme/project?** Know who you are trying to engage. If you are trying to engage a local group of teenagers, a Facebook group may be more effective than Twitter. If they are digital savvy media people, Twitter may be useful. Remember, some channels will be more appropriate than others. Remember, social media is a useful tool, but not a silver bullet. Use it as part of an overall communications strategy, and plan your total strategy well.
- **Can you write for social media?** You don't have to be story-telling guru, but you do need to be a competent writer, with good grammar and spelling. Be aware that social media can also pose particular challenges, such as the ability to write a message in as little as 140 characters. You will also need sound judgement when commenting on council matters. You should refer to 'The Write Way' – our communications writing style and plain English guide.

If you wish to discuss this issue in more detail for your area of the Council, please contact the Communication Unit online team: webteam@hcc.govt.nz.

3. HOW TO ENGAGE ONLINE

You need to be aware of the implications of engaging in social media and online conversations that reference the Council and your relationship with the Council.

Follow our Social Media Management Policy for how to engage online 'on behalf of Hamilton City Council'.

The following principles will act as a guide when acting as an online spokesperson for Council:

1. **Be an authorised spokesperson.** See Social Media Management Policy.
2. **Follow our News Media Policy and all other Council policies.** The News Media Policy sets out behaviours for dealing with the media. As a representative of the Council you must act with honesty and integrity in all matters – the same is true for social media. In addition, The Way We Work and Information Technology Management policies also govern your behaviour as a Council spokesperson.
3. **Be mindful that you are representing Council.** As a Council representative, it is important to be open, honest and respectful in all your communications. How you conduct yourself in the online social media space not only reflects on you – it is a direct reflection on the Council.
4. **When in doubt, do not post.** You are personally responsible for your words and actions, wherever they are. As an online spokesperson, you must ensure that your posts are completely accurate and not misleading, and that they do not reveal

sensitive or confidential information about the Council, our citizens or staff. Use sound judgement and common sense, and if there is any doubt, do not post it. If you ever feel unsure about how to respond to a post, send the link to webteam@hcc.govt.nz

5. **Be responsible for your work.** We understand that staff and representatives engage in social media activities at work for legitimate purposes and that these activities may be helpful for Council business. However, we encourage everyone to exercise sound judgement and common sense to prevent online social media sites from becoming a distraction at work.
6. **Know the internet is permanent.** Once information is published online, it is essentially a permanent record, even if you remove/delete it later or attempt to make it anonymous. If your complete thought and its context cannot be squeezed into a short word bite (such as Twitter), provide a link to an online space where the message can be expressed completely and accurately - like our website: www.hamilton.co.nz
7. **Keep records.** It is critical that we keep records of our interactions in the online social media space and monitor the activities of those we engage with. Because online conversations are often quick and immediate, it is important for you to keep track of them when you're officially representing the Council. Remember that online Council statements can be held to the same legal standards as traditional media communications. Keep records of any online dialogue about the Council and send a copy to webteam@nrc.govt.nz. For further guidance, see the Information Management Policy.
8. **Give credit where credit is due - respect others' rights.** Do not claim ownership or credit of something that is not yours. If you are using another party's content, make certain that they are credited for it in your post and they approve of you using their content. Do not use the copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights, or other rights of others without the necessary permissions of the holder(s).

4. HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL SOCIAL MEDIA SITES

Social media sites are specifically designed to inform our Hamilton residents and ratepayers of the business of Hamilton City Council. It will keep 'fans' and 'followers' updated on decisions made by Council and provide general information on Council activities, facilities and services that may effect/impact on daily life while living and working in Hamilton.

Purpose

- To provide the latest news and information from Hamilton City Council
- To get opinions on topics of change or interest relating to Council's activities

Facebook

Our Facebook page is a way to create conversation and awareness around specific issues within Council. It is the ideal platform to view our position on certain topics, correct information if needed and engage with our residents.

Twitter

Twitter is a micro-blog that enables only 140 characters to relay your information. This is why it is an ideal platform to use when needing to provide residents with 'as it happens' information including event updates or road closures.

Our main Twitter site is used for relaying Council information and is often used as a direct feed from our Facebook page.

Wall Posts and Tweets

1. Only designated administrators have the right to speak on behalf of HCC on Council social media sites. All administrators must be approved by the E-Media team (see section 2 in Social Media Management Policy on Use of Social Media).
2. The Communication Unit is responsible for monitoring the comments and posts on HCC's Facebook and Twitter sites and aim to reply to posts within one working day with the appropriate response. An acknowledgement response is recommended within an hour of the question posted, such as 'Hi John, thanks for your post, we will find out for you'. Questions directed at the Council will be investigated and answered either online or directed to the most appropriate person to handle the enquiry.
3. Posts on the HCC Facebook page or tweets on the HCC Twitter site will only be deleted if they go against our disclaimer. Posts will be removed if they are abusive, deemed offensive in anyway, are slanderous, a direct attack against an individual or the Council, not related to Council in any way or deemed as 'trolling'. All deleted posts or tweets are copied and kept in our Moderation Log.
4. All media releases and information on Council projects posted onto Facebook must link to the original documents on the Hamilton City Council website (as stated in section 1.4 of the Social Media Management Policy).
5. There is a maximum of three wall posts and tweets per day, making an exception for special circumstances. This is general social media good practice for organisations. Fans and followers are less likely to be engaged if they are bombarded constantly with updates and posts.
6. Check your facts. Before requesting a wall post for publishing on our council's Facebook or Twitter sites, check your information is accurate and if it is likely to change ensure you include how and when in the text.

Register of web and social media sites

As at May 2013, we have the following registered, official web and social media sites for Hamilton City Council.

WEBSITES

Service or campaign name	Website URL address	Business owner
Hamilton City Council	www.hamilton.co.nz	Communication Unit
Hamilton Gardens	www.hamiltongardens.co.nz	Hamilton Gardens

Hamilton City Libraries	www.hamiltonlibraries.co.nz	Libraries
Hamilton Pools	www.hamiltonpools.co.nz	Community Development & Leisure
Hamilton Theatres	www.hamiltontheatres.co.nz	Event Facilities Unit
Hamilton Zoo	www.hamiltonzoo.co.nz	Hamilton Zoo
Waikato Museum	www.waikatomuseum.org.nz	Waikato Museum
Claudeland Events Centre	www.claudeland.co.nz	Event Facilities Unit
Seddon Park	www.seddonpark.com	Event Facilities Unit
Waikato Stadium	www.waikatostadium.co.nz	Event Facilities Unit
Summer in Garden Place	www.summeringardenplace.co.nz	Community Development & Leisure
Arts Post	www.waikatomuseum.co.nz	Waikato Museum
Visit Hamilton	www.visithamilton.co.nz	Communication Unit
The Grandstand	www.thegrandstand.co.nz	Event Facilities Unit
Event Facilities	www.eventfacilities.co.nz	Event Facilities Unit

FACEBOOK

Service or campaign name	Website URL address	Business owner
Hamilton City Council	www.facebook.com/HamiltonCityCouncil	Communication Unit
Hamilton NZ - events	www.facebook.com/HamiltonNewZealand	Communication Unit
Hamilton Christmas City	www.facebook.com/HamiltonChristmasCity	Communication Unit
Hamilton Libraries	www.facebook.com/HCCLibraries	Garden Place Library
Hamilton Pools	www.facebook.com/Hamilton-Pools	Waterworld
Summer in Garden Place	www.facebook.com/SummerinGardenPlace	Community Development
Waikato Museum	www.facebook.com/waikatomuseum	Waikato Museum
Waikato Stadium	www.facebook.com/waikatostadium	Event Facilities Unit

TWITTER

Service or campaign name	Twitter address (handle)	Business owner
Hamilton City Council	@CouncilHamilton	Communication Unit
Hamilton NZ – events	@Hamilton_NZ	Communication Unit
Hamilton Libraries	@HamNZ_Libraries	Garden Place Library
Hamilton Zoo	@hamilton_zoo	Hamilton Zoo
Summer in Garden Place	@Garden_Place	Community Development
Waikato Museum	@WaikatoMuseum	Waikato Museum

FLICKR

Service or campaign name	Website URL address	Business owner
Hamilton Zoo	www.flickr.com/groups/hamiltonzoo	Hamilton Zoo

LINKEDIN

Service or campaign name	Website URL address	Business owner
Hamilton City Council	www.linkedin.com/company/hamilton-city-council	Communication Unit and People & Capability Unit (joint owners)

YOUTUBE

Service or campaign name	Website URL address	Business owner
Hamilton City Council	www.youtube.com/HamiltonCityCouncil	Communication Unit
Hamilton NZ - events	www.youtube.com/Hamiltonnewzealand	Communication Unit
Waikato Museum	www.youtube.com/waikatomuseum	Waikato Museum

Before you establish or consider starting to use a website or social media site, please contact webteam@hcc.govt.nz

5. PERSONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

The line between personal and professional are easily blurred in social media. What you say online is public, even when you are speaking in your own personal profile (such as your personal Facebook page). Therefore, anything you say online has the potential to have consequences for Hamilton City Council.

This set of five principles refers to those personal or unofficial online activities where you might refer to the Council.

1. **Include a disclaimer.** There's a big difference in speaking "on behalf of Hamilton City Council" and speaking "about" the Council. If you're unsure whether your personal opinions could be taken as professional opinions, we recommend that you include a disclaimer on your personal profile stating that the opinions are strictly personal, not professional; or preface your comments with a statement that the opinions are strictly personal, not professional.
2. **You are responsible for your actions.** Anything you post that can potentially damage the Council's reputation will ultimately be your responsibility. We do encourage you to participate in the social media space, but urge you to do so properly, exercising sound judgment and common sense. Stop and think first. Think about it this way – would you be prepared to defend and prove a negative post about a person on Facebook or Twitter in court? Would you be happy to see your name and our Council associated with your posting in the newspaper?
3. **Be an online advocate.** Even if you are not an official online spokesperson for the Council, you are one of our most important advocates for monitoring the social media landscape. If you come across positive or negative remarks about the Council or its activities online that you believe are important, consider sharing them by forwarding them to webteam@hcc.govt.nz
4. **Let the subject matter experts respond to negative posts.** You may come across negative or critical posts about the Council or its activities, or see third parties trying to spark negative conversations. Unless you are an authorised spokesperson, avoid the temptation to react yourself. Pass the post(s) along to subject-matter spokespersons who will respond to such comments, at webteam@hcc.govt.nz
5. **Be aware of mixing your business and personal lives.** Online, your personal and business life is likely to intersect. The Council respects the free speech rights of its staff, partners and representatives, but you must remember that customers, colleagues and supervisors often have access to the online content you post. Keep this in mind when publishing information online even if you think that it can only be seen by friends and family (remember that information originally intended just for friends and family can be forwarded on).

Remember never disclose sensitive and confidential information from the Council (including confidential, public excluded reports and/or commercially sensitive information), and be

aware that taking public positions online that are contrary to the Council's interests might lead to disciplinary action.