

# POLICY – COUNCIL

## Public Social Media Policy

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# 1. Document control

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## 2. Preamble

The contents of and the commitments that council makes in this policy are not intended to be and should not be interpreted to be any more than a statement of the City of Onkaparinga's general position in relation to those matters, and to facilitate its aspirations wherever it is reasonable to do so.

## 3. Policy purpose

The purpose of this policy is to communicate our social media policy to the public.

This policy guides all social media activity managed by the City of Onkaparinga, except for any specific nominated activities described in any current or future supporting sub-policies or guidelines.

It is acknowledged that any legislative requirement which affects Council will take precedence over Council's policies and procedures.

## 4. Scope

This policy applies to public conduct on all of council's third-party social media sites.

This policy excludes our public websites.

## 5. Definitions

council	means the corporation of the City of Onkaparinga
citizens	means the City of Onkaparinga's residents and ratepayers
city	means the City of Onkaparinga region
content	means words, hashtags, imagery, videos or web links
social media platform	means a third-party online tool used for communication, promotion and conversation including, but not limited to, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and X (formerly Twitter)
social media post	means a piece of content published on a social media platform
social media site	means council's social media pages on a third-party platform
tourism region	means the Fleurieu Peninsula in South Australia
user	means members of the public or third-party accounts that use a social media platform
visitor post	means content published directly onto council's social media sites by a user.

## 6. Strategic context

The policy contributes to the Community Plan 2030 outcomes under Performance:

- Our communities trust council to deliver:
  - We are transparent and accountable, sharing information in clear, accessible and timely ways.

This policy assists council to:

- maintain a safe, respectful and welcoming online community for people of all ages on our third-party social media sites
- manage third-party requests for promotion on our social media sites
- protect the organisation from the risk of inappropriate or unlawful content published to our third-party social media sites by the public.

## 7. Policy

This Public Social Media Policy has two key parts:

- **7.1 CONTENT REQUIREMENTS**  
clarifies the types of content we will publish or share on our social media sites
- **7.2 COMMENT REQUIREMENTS**  
defines unacceptable online behaviour and the consequences of policy breaches.

The council uses social media to communicate with the public in a timely and cost-effective way. We manage various social media sites across different platforms and publish content intended to engage, inspire, educate, and inform the city's citizens and visitors.

We invite the public to join our online community to view and interact with our content through comments or messages. As an inclusive city, we encourage discussion, sharing, and feedback.

Our social media sites are open forums where people of all ages can express diverse opinions while remaining respectful to each other. We aim to create a welcoming, safe, and family-friendly environment that is culturally appropriate, accessible, and values Australia's diversity.

Local councils must comply with the State Records Act 1977. All interactions on the council's social media sites are electronic records and must be archived and managed according to the Act. This includes all posts, comments, and messages, even if edited or deleted. Captured data is also subject to Freedom of Information requests under the Freedom of Information Act 1991, and may be provided to external agencies as required by legislation.

Users should have no expectation of privacy when posting to a public social media site and by doing so accept the privacy terms and conditions of the social media platform they are using.

By using our social media sites, users agree to follow the council's policies, the platform's terms of service and community standards, and all applicable laws and regulations.

### 7.1 CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

This outlines the types of content that we publish and share on our social media sites.

We only publish or share content that is either council-run or sponsored and/or content that is relevant to our city, its citizens and/or visitors.

We remain impartial and avoid favouring specific individuals, businesses, charities, causes, clubs, or groups to prevent setting expectations for promoting third parties.

In addition, council only accepts invitations to co-host events on social media if we are either running or sponsoring the event, the event is held in one of our venues, and/or is listed on the [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse](#).

In accordance with the [Australian Government Style Manual](#), written posts will use [inclusive language](#) and [alternative text](#) to explain information in images for screen reader users. [Captions and subtitles](#) will be used for audio and video content.

Examples of the types of content we publish and share on social media include:

- promoting the city and its tourism region as a great place to live, work, visit, play, study, and invest
- council-run or sponsored initiatives, programs, projects, services, venues, grants, awards, and events
- local, state, and federal government initiatives, programs, and information
- community consultation about local, state, and federal government proposals
- support for at-risk people in our community
- free community events and programs operating in our city
- campaigns that encourage people to support local business (e.g. Go South Go Local) and/or feature grant winners (e.g. Business Onkaparinga program)
- local news
- events published on the [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse](#)
- recruitment opportunities at council or external opportunities that may have a significant impact on our local economy or communities
- public recognition of achievements and awards presented to council and/or its citizens, businesses, or community groups.

Council regularly receives requests from third parties to share their content via our social media sites. Whilst we welcome content that is relevant to our city—from individuals, businesses, government agencies, organisations, not-for-profits and community groups—we cannot specifically endorse or promote third-party content, unless the promotion is part of a broader campaign aimed at delivering city-wide benefits.

We do not publish or share:

- images, videos, or memes that feature celebrities, brands, or risk copyright infringement
- material promoting or opposing political parties, individuals, charities or causes
- competitions that are non-compliant with state lottery regulations and/or the social media platform's competition rules
- solicitation for fundraising activities by third parties
- promotion or endorsement of specific commercial services, products and events which favour one business over other local businesses
- photographs of people taken without a signed talent release form unless captured in a crowd at a public place or event
- user-generated content unless council has first sought permission from the copyright owner. Council captions all images with credit for the copyright owner and tags their professional social media account.
- Any other content deemed to be inappropriate, non-compliant with legislated requirements, or outside of accepted community standards.

Council reserves the right to determine, at our sole discretion, whether content suggestions are shared or published on our social media sites.

To the best of our knowledge, content is correct at the time of publication but is subject to change at any time.

All user content must comply with the content requirements outlined in this section.

## 7.2 COMMENT REQUIREMENTS

This communicates the code of conduct for online interactions by the public on our social media sites. Any views expressed by third parties on council social media sites are not necessarily the views of council.

Visitor posts, comments, and messages will be reviewed by council's page administrators and scanned by strict profanity filters. Content may be hidden or removed if it includes one or more of the following:

- obscene, violent, offensive, indecent or profane language, pictures or videos
- threats, name calling, personal attacks, bullying, harassment or defamatory statements
- tagging and persistently arguing with others that have a different opinion to your own
- discrimination or hate speech directed at race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, ethnicity, age, religion or disability
- fraudulent, deceptive or misleading information, or representation of another individual, organisation or entity
- comments not related to the posted topic or page content
- spam, scams, or phishing attempts including multiple, successive or repetitive off-topic posts by a single user or repetitive posts copied and pasted by multiple users
- promotion or endorsement of commercial services, products or events
- solicitation for fundraising activities
- material or comments promoting or opposing political parties, individuals or causes. This includes public comments by elected members or election candidates during the caretaker period on our social media sites
- disclosure of personal contact details that compromise another person's privacy including mentioning staff by name or tagging their personal profile pages
- comments advocating illegal activity, content that breaches intellectual property rights, and/or violation of any local, state or federal laws and regulations.

All user content must comply with the comment requirements outlined in this section and violations may result in a user being blocked from our social media sites.

Factual inaccuracies and confidential leaks will be either clarified or removed from our social media sites at our discretion.

Users are personally and legally responsible for any unlawful content they publish on council social media sites.

Council reserves the right to:

- determine whether user contributions to its social media sites breach council policies and/or the platform's policies.
- hide or remove user content published on our social media sites, as well as block users who do not comply with this public social media policy.
- report behaviour that does not comply with the social media platform's terms of service and community guidelines.
- send any user content to law enforcement authorities for investigation as we deem necessary or is required by law.

Users indemnify the council against all loss, legal fees, damages and other expenses incurred or potentially incurred as a result of:

- a user's breach of this policy
- users relying on information published on our social media sites.

Questions or concerns regarding the council's social media activity or this policy should be submitted to [mail@onkaparinga.sa.gov.au](mailto:mail@onkaparinga.sa.gov.au)

## 8. Relevant legislation and references

- *Copyright Act 1968*
- South Australia *Defamation Act 2005*
- South Australia *Lottery and Gaming Act 1936*
- *State Records Act 1997*
- *Local Government Act 1999*
- *Freedom of Information Act 1991*
- *Spam Act 2003*
- *City of Onkaparinga Privacy Statement*
- Facebook Community Standards
- [Facebook Advertising Policy](#)
- Instagram Community Guidelines
- LinkedIn Professional Community Policies
- YouTube Policies
- Twitter Rules
- [Australian Tourism Data Warehouse](#)

## 9. Further information

This policy is available for inspection, during business hours at:  
City of Onkaparinga, Ramsay Place, NOARLUNGA CENTRE SA 5168.

It is also available for inspection, downloading or printing from our website  
[www.onkaparingacity.com.au](http://www.onkaparingacity.com.au).