

# **Old Stratford Parish Council**

## **Social Media Policy**

<b>Status</b>	<b>Adopted</b>
<b>Date Adopted</b>	<b>8<sup>th</sup> August 2023</b>
<b>Minute Reference</b>	<b>Minute 4</b>
<b>Adopting Committee</b>	<b>Full Council</b>
<b>Date of next review</b>	<b>August 2024</b>

## 1. Background to Policy

The aim of this policy is to set out a code of practice to provide guidance for staff and all parish councillors in the use of social media (Facebook and Twitter). Nominated members of staff /councillors will be responsible for posting and monitoring content of the councils Facebook page. They will have the authority to remove any posts made by third parties which are deemed to be defamatory, libellous, racist, sexist, obscene, threatening language or derogatory. Such posts must be reported to Facebook and the Clerk.

## 2. Information Shared via Social Media

It is the intention of The Old Stratford Parish Council to use their Facebook and website pages to:

- Provide information and updates regarding the activities and business of Old Stratford Parish Council and the community assets it supports
- Distribute information that has been supplied to the Council on official matters affecting the Parish. For example, this could include information from the Police, West Northants Council, Northamptonshire Highways etc
- Encourage discussion on matters of local interest that affect the Parish, for example planning applications or public consultations.
- Publicise community events that are run by organisations within the Parish, for example the annual fireworks display, OAPs lunches etc

Old Stratford Parish Council wishes to ensure that posts on their Facebook and web pages are aligned to their remit. Therefore, all posts must be approved by a representative of Old Stratford Parish Council and the following type of posts will not usually be published:

- General advertising to promote or market commercial products or services
- Posts of business special events or postings which are better suited to a business website or Facebook page.
- Posts of general information that is not specific to or potentially impacting Old Stratford Parish or its residents. – eg. political opinions or thoughts on national news items.

## 3. Contacting the Parish Council

Please note that sending a message, comment or otherwise publishing on the Old Stratford Parish Council Facebook pages will not be considered as contacting Old Stratford Parish Council. Additionally, such comments, posts or similar will not form part of any formal consultation and nor will such comments, posts or similar necessarily result in a response from the Parish Council.

Our contact details can be found on our website [www.oldstratford.org.uk](http://www.oldstratford.org.uk)

## 4. General Principles for Contributors

For each posting, comment or other published item please:

- Be considerate and respectful of others. Threats, abuse, offensive or vulgar language will not be tolerated. Old Stratford Parish Council want to promote discussion, and

differing views and opinions are welcome, however these should be expressed in line with the above and should not include any personal attack on individuals or other bodies

- Share your views and thoughts but do be aware of copyright issues. Be accurate regarding the information you share.

Old Stratford Parish Council reserves the right to remove any posting, comment or other material, without notice, which is in breach of the guidelines above and/or which is considered to contain words, images or phrases which (and this list is not exhaustive)

- Are, or may be, obscene;
- Are, or may be, racist;
- Are, or may be, commercial in nature or spam;
- Are, or may be, irrelevant to the Old Stratford Parish Council Facebook pages and/or the issue being discussed;
- Are, or may be, in a language other than English (as we are unable to monitor written postings in other languages);
- Include personal attacks, insults or threatening language;
- Include language which could be defamatory;
- Include personal information where the same is posted or published without the owners consent;
- Include material in breach of copyright or which violates other laws;

Please do not include personal or private information in any posting on Old Stratford Parish Council Facebook page.

Old Stratford Parish Council is not responsible for the accuracy of material posted on the Old Stratford Parish Council Facebook pages and Old Stratford Parish Council will not be held liable for any loss or damage howsoever occurred because of information and material on the Old Stratford Parish Council Facebook pages.

When using social media parish councillors, volunteers and council staff must be mindful of the information they post in both a personal and council capacity and keep the tone of any comments respectful and informative. Content should be accurate, objective, balanced and informative and should avoid guesswork, exaggeration and offensive and obscene language.

Councillors' views posted in any capacity in advance of matters to be debated by the council at a council or committee meeting may constitute Pre-disposition, Pre-determination or Bias and may require the individual to declare an interest at council meetings. Opinions expressed in posts, comments or otherwise do not necessarily represent those of Old Stratford Parish Council.

Old Stratford Parish Council reserves the right to, amongst other things, publish, display, edit or otherwise deal with the material posted on the Old Stratford Parish Council Facebook pages and to use it in any form, for any reasonable purpose and/or in or on other media/formats.