



**MERTHYR TYDFIL**  
County Borough Council  
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol  
**MERTHYR TUDFUL**

# Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council

## Members Social Media Policy



POLICY SCHEDULE

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**CONTENTS****PAGE**

1	Introduction	4
2	Objectives	4
3	Scope	4
4	Policy Statement	5
5	Policy Principles	5
6	Monitoring	7
7	Recruitment	7
8	Defamation	7
9	Reporting Defamatory Social Media Posts	8
10	Hints & Tips on How to Use Social Media Effectively	8
11	Etiquette & Style	10
12	Social Media & Council Meetings	10
13	Possible Pitfalls & How to Avoid Them	11
14	Breaches of this Policy	12
15	Legal Considerations	13
16	Implementation Responsibilities	13
17	Policy Review and Maintenance	13
18	Policy Acceptance	14
19	Glossary	14

**APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Categories of Social Media	15
Appendix 2 - Popular Social Media Sites and Services	16
Appendix 3 – Bilingual Policy for Social Media	18

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council (the Council) recognises that there are many benefits and opportunities that social media can bring as a tool. Alongside other communications it is an easy way to talk and listen to our residents, local businesses and other partner organisations. Without access to these tools we would be a weaker organisation as we would not be able to consult and engage with people in our communities on new developments and projects, to hear what they care about, what they want to get involved with and what they think of their Council.
- 1.2 Social media is a blanket term applied to a range of online multimedia tools that are used for creating content and two-way communication. They can be accessed via your smartphone, PC, laptop, tablet or smart TV. All social media accounts are free of charge and can be set up quickly and easily from an Internet page.
- 1.3 This Policy is for Members who use social media as a tool to share information (i.e. information in the public domain), open new dialogues with the people they represent in their community and beyond, and engage their electorate in productive two-way conversation. This Policy also describes the standards expected to be abided by each Member that participates in the use of social media.

## **2. Objective**

- 2.1 The objective of this Policy is to provide guidance to Members on the acceptable use of social media.
- 2.2 This Policy is intended to minimise the risk of social media which can impact on the reputation of the Council. It is the Council's aim to ensure that Members are able to enjoy the benefits of social networking whilst understanding the standards of conduct expected by the Council.
- 2.3 This Policy deals with the use of all forms of social media, including Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Wikipedia, Instagram, Vine, Tumblr, and all other social networking sites, internet postings and blogs (see Appendix 1 for further descriptions and categories of social media).
- 2.4 This Policy has been developed to manage the way in which the authority complies with the ISO 27001 standard.
- 2.5 This Policy should be used in conjunction with the Councillors Code of Conduct, the Information Security Policy and the Data Protection Policy. This Policy on the use of social media is in addition to the Council's existing policies on Internet Acceptable Usage and Email Acceptable Use.

### **3. Scope**

- 3.1 This Policy covers the use of social media by Members for both business and private purposes, regardless of whether it is used during or outside office hours, or regardless of whether accessed using computer or electronic communication systems and equipment of the Council, or the personal equipment of a Member or others.

### **4. Policy Statement**

- 4.1 It is the Council's policy to ensure that all Members are aware of their responsibilities in relation to their use of social media both professionally and privately.
- 4.2 The purpose of this Policy is to outline Members responsibilities when using the internet to access social networking websites. It is designed to make Members aware of the risks to the Council's confidential and proprietary information, reputation and compliance with legal obligations so that Members understand their responsibility in preventing or minimising these risks. In setting and monitoring these standards, the Council will comply with the individual rights of Members and any further legislative requirements.
- 4.3 Where Members access social media for Council-related purposes, or personal use, when using the Council's ICT equipment and facilities, the Information Security Policy and supporting operational policies will apply.

### **5. Policy Principles**

- 5.1 When using social media, Members should never represent themselves or the Council in a false or misleading way.
- 5.2 Members should never reveal confidential information about the Council or its employees. This can include personal and personal sensitive information about Council employees, clients and contractors, the creation of Council policy, internal discussions or commercial interests of the Council and its contractors. The same applies for personal and personal sensitive information about members of their community that Members represent.
- 5.3 Members should apply the same standards of conduct online as they are expected to apply offline.
- 5.4 When using social media accounts Members must be mindful when commenting on contentious issues, and ensure that they continue to adhere to the Councillors Code of Conduct and other relevant policies.
- 5.5 Members should seek guidance from the Corporate Communications Team before discussing a topic on social media that may be considered sensitive (e.g. a crisis

situation, staffing issues, intellectual property, or any other issue that may impact the Council's reputation). All social media activity around sensitive topics should be referred to the Corporate Communications Team.

- 5.6 Members should familiarise themselves with privacy settings of social networking platforms and should ensure that these are appropriate for both content and intended audience.
- 5.7 All private social media accounts must be created using a personal email address. Council email addresses (ending in @merthyr.gov.uk) should not be used for private social media accounts under any circumstances. Failure to abide by this is a breach of this policy.
- 5.8 If a Member chooses to disclose their affiliation with the Council they are required to remain professional in what is posted and in the image portrayed in their profile.
- 5.9 Members are reminded that social networking platforms are in the public domain and it is not always possible to know what information is being viewed, shared or archived, this will include information that is posted within a closed profile or group. There can be no reasonable expectation that posts will remain private and will not be passed on to other people, intentionally or otherwise. Material published online may have the potential to be available publicly, indefinitely.
- 5.10 Members are advised not to engage in a dispute or disagreement that is present on social media relating to Council activities. If Members become aware of any contentious posts relating to the Council they are encouraged to inform the Corporate Communications Team who will investigate the issue. Members should refrain from commenting on anything related to legal matters, litigation or any parties the Council may be in dispute with.
- 5.11 If Members inadvertently become involved in a contentious post the Council asks that they remain appropriate and polite in all responses. If necessary Members should seek advice from the Corporate Communications Team and disengage from the dialogue in a respectful manner that reflects well on the Council.
- 5.12 Members are responsible for their words and actions in an online environment and are therefore advised to consider whether any comment, photograph or video they choose to post on a social networking site is something they would want fellow colleagues, other Members and employees of the Council to see.
- 5.13 Members must avoid making any social media communications that could damage the Council's reputation, even indirectly. Members must remember that they are representatives of the Council even when using personal social network accounts.
- 5.14 Members must not use or disclose any Council information that has been acquired during the course of business under any circumstances on their private social media accounts or in any private posts without the Council's permission.

- 5.15 Members must not post comments about sensitive business-related topics, such as the Council's performance, or do anything to jeopardise the Council's confidential information and intellectual property. The Council's logos must not be included in any private social media posting or in their private profile on any social media that has not been authorised by Corporate Communications.
- 5.16 Members must not express opinions on behalf of the Council via their private social media, unless expressly authorised to do so by the Council's Corporate Communications team.

## **6. Monitoring**

- 6.1 The content of our electronic communications systems and equipment are the Council's property. Members should have no expectation of privacy in any message, file, document, data, facsimile, telephone conversation, social media post upload conversation or message or any other kind of communication or information transmitted to, received or printed from, stored or recorded on our electronic communications systems and equipment.
- 6.2 The Council reserves the right to monitor, retrieve and review, without further notice, but not limited to, Members social media postings and activities using the Council's electronic communications systems and equipment, to ensure compliance with the Council's rules and for legitimate business purposes and Members consent to such monitoring by their acknowledgement of this Policy and their use of such resources and systems.
- 6.3 The Council reserves the right to restrict access to social networking websites via its ICT equipment without prior notice.

## **7. Recruitment**

- 7.1 External employment and recruitment opportunities can only be posted on the Council's corporate social media accounts and website.
- 7.2 The Council does not permit the use of internet searches for prospective candidates on social networking websites for recruitment purposes. This is in line with the Council's Equal Opportunity Policies and Procedures.
- 7.3 Members are prohibited from providing references (positive or negative) for other individuals on social networking websites as they can create legal liability for both the author and the Council, (since they can be attributed to the Council).

## **8. Defamation**

- 8.1 Private social media accounts must not be used to defame or disparage the Council, other Members, Council employees or any third party including members of the

public; to harass, bully or unlawfully discriminate against any other Members, Council employees or third parties; to make false or misleading statements.

- 8.2 If Members are found to have made defamatory comments about the Council, other Members, an employee or any third party including members of the public they may face disciplinary action in accordance with the Councillor's Code of Conduct.

## **9. Reporting Defamatory Social Media Posts**

- 9.1 Members are encouraged to report any defamatory posts relating to the Council, Members or employees to the Corporate Communications Team.
- 9.2 Where possible Members may be asked to provide evidence of the defamatory post, such as a screen shot.
- 9.3 In the first instance the Council's Corporate Communications Team will contact the author of the post and ask for them to remove all defamatory remarks which may include comments, videos, photographs, links etc.
- 9.4 In the event that the author refuses to comply with the request to remove the post depending on the content of the post further action may be taken by the Council.
- 9.5 Where the author of the post is an individual and is not connected to the Council, the affected Member will be given an opportunity to express their chosen course of action, with the support of the Legal Department.
- 9.6 Should a Member feel that their life is in danger or that there is a real threat of violence they should contact the police immediately.

## **10. Hints & tips on how to use Social Media effectively**

- 10.1 Choose your medium (see Appendix 2 for popular social media sites) and sign up. Facebook and Twitter are good places to start. Make sure that you understand how people find you and who can access your material.
- 10.2 On Twitter the whole world can see everything you tweet. Even the messages that you tweet directly to other people can be viewed by anyone unless you have locked down your account to followers.
- 10.3 When you set up an account, consider the identity you use. The name you give yourself online is important as it allows people to find you. Prefacing your Twitter account with Cllr lets people know exactly who you are and indicates that the Code of Conduct will apply.
- 10.4 Make it easy for people to find you online. Many people will start their search for the area that you represent, so make sure you mention your location frequently as this



will then be picked up by search engines. You may also want to make sure that your social media account details are on your business cards, posters and flyers.

- 10.5 Increase your web presence by linking to other people and sites, leave comments on others' posts and encourage others to link with you. The more you are mentioned, the more people will find you.
- 10.6 Be disciplined about making time available to write new content and answer your "friends" and "followers"; a regular time each week to update your Facebook status and throughout the day to check Twitter.
- 10.7 Decide on what you are going to talk about and how. This could be weekly updates of your own activities as a Councillor; regular updates on Council actions of interest to your community; links and re-tweets of other relevant national activities; issues on which you would like feedback; notice of events and public meetings.
- 10.8 Using social media is all about two-way communication, it is good for providing information to your community or flagging up press statements, but it's better as a tool to get useful feedback. You will get feedback and you should expect some people to challenge your ideas or enter into a debate with you online. This is part and parcel of social media.
- 10.9 Think before you post on social media – never post views or opinions that you would not be prepared to discuss face to face with the person you are speaking about, or have minuted in a public meeting.
- 10.10 Remember that once something has been posted it may be seen by millions – friends, supporters, political opponents and the press and could be re-tweeted around the world in minutes. Keep your messages professional, polite and positive.
- 10.11 If you make a mistake admit it. Mistakes happen so don't try to cover it up as there will always be a record online of what was said. Don't enter into unhelpful online arguments; remember all of your followers or friends will be witnessing this online. Ignore people or block them if they persist in vexatious comments.
- 10.12 Don't post at times when you think your judgement may be impaired.
- 10.13 Bear in mind that it is possible for your followers and friends to be seen. If you follow or are Facebook 'friends' with Council employees, contractors who have been procured to provide services to the Council, or a company or member of the public making a planning application, this *might* be construed as having a close personal association with them and therefore a personal interest.
- 10.14 As with your own leaflets or newsletters, always ask permission before taking a picture that you intend to use. NEVER take photos of children without express permission of their parents based on an understanding of what you intend to use the picture for.

- 10.15 Do not allow anyone else access to your social media accounts – protect your passwords and do not share them.
- 10.16 Just like email, you can get spam in social media. Be wary about direct messages, even from people you know, that may ask you to click on suspicious links. There is a possibility if you click a link that the spam could be sent to all of the people you are following.

## **11 Etiquette and style**

- 11.1 Keep your communications clear, positive, polite and professional.
- 11.2 On Facebook, you will need to monitor and, if necessary, censor the contributions that other people make to your site; delete them if they do not match your requested standards of behaviour or language. Defamatory and offensive language will be attributed to the publisher as well as the original author and could incur financial liability. It is up to you to decide if you want to remove posts that disagree with your political position, however, if you do remove them you may be accused of censoring contributions on political grounds.
- 11.3 On Twitter, you can block people who are habitually offensive or vexatious. Remember however, blocking them only stops them engaging directly with you, their tweets will continue to be public to all of their followers.
- 11.4 Bear in mind that constituents may find party political point scoring tedious and prefer to hear information about what the Council is achieving.

## **12 Social Media and Council Meetings**

- 12.1 Recently, with the advent of webcasting there has been an increase in interest in the use of Twitter in Council meetings. The Council's constitution guides this, however, Part 4 (4.01.24) states that phones or other mobile communications during a meeting are not permitted.
- 12.2 Whilst Tweeting on meeting progress and receiving comments from the community can be helpful for transparency and engagement, excessive use of Twitter may give people the impression that you are not concentrating on the business in hand or are even relying on guidance from outside the meeting. For that reason, it is not permitted to use Twitter during Council meetings.
- 12.3 You must not tweet or communicate in any way the content of exempt or confidential business dealt with in closed sessions.

### **13**     **Possible Pitfalls and How to Avoid Them**

- 13.1    Maintaining your social media accounts can take time. Only set up accounts that you can manage, choose either Twitter or Facebook if necessary. It is possible to set up links between the two which will save you duplicating information.
- 13.2    It is good practice to set time aside regularly to make updates and reply to comments.
- 13.3    Whenever you post something on social media, it becomes a publication, you have effectively made a broadcast. As it is now in the public domain, it is subject to both the **Code of Conduct** and to various **Laws**.
- 13.4    It is important to conduct yourself on social media as you would in person on the street or in your leaflets. According to guidance from the Ombudsman, the Code of Conduct applies to you whenever you are “Conducting the business of your authority, acting, claiming to act or give the impression you are acting in your official capacity as a Member or representative of your authority”. Also the Code applies if you “Conduct yourself in a manner which could reasonably be regarded as bringing your office or your authority into disrepute”.
- 13.5    If you can be identified as a Councillor when you are using social media, either by your account name or how you describe yourself or by what you comment upon and how you comment, the requirements of the Code of Conduct apply.
- 13.6    Also if you say something that could be regarded as bringing your office or authority into disrepute the Code applies even if you are not apparently acting in your official capacity or do not identify yourself as a Councillor. The Ombudsman’s guidance states that “Making unfair or inaccurate criticism of your authority in a public arena might well be regarded as bringing your authority into disrepute”.
- 13.7    In the same way that you are required to act in Council meetings or in your communities you should show respect for others; not disclose confidential information about people or the Council; not bully or intimidate others; not try to secure a benefit for yourself or a disadvantage for others; abide by the laws of equality.
- 13.8    As a Councillor, you are aware that when you act in a quasi-judicial capacity, for example on a planning or licensing committee, you should not make up your mind about an issue that is to be formally decided upon before you had heard all the relevant information. You are allowed to be predisposed to a particular view but not to have gone so far as to have predetermined your position. It is important to remember therefore, that anything relevant you might have said about particular issues on social media could be used as evidence of you having made up your mind in advance of hearing all the relevant information.

13.9 In terms of criminal offences, these generally already apply to conduct as a Councillor, but it is worth considering them as they apply to social media:

- Harassment – it is a criminal offence to repeatedly pursue a campaign against someone where this is likely to cause alarm, harassment, nuisance or distress;
- Data Protection – It is illegal to publish personal data about individuals unless they have given you their permission. This might apply to your constituents or service users. As a Councillor you are a data controller in your own right and therefore, personally responsible for what you publish;
- Incitement – It is a criminal offence to incite any criminal act;
- Discrimination and Racially Aggravated Offences (or any other Protected Characteristic) – It is a criminal offence to make a discriminatory remark about anyone based on a “Protected Characteristic” as defined in The Equality Act (such as their race, religion, sexual orientation etc.);
- Malicious & Obscene Communications – It is a criminal offence to send malicious or obscene communications.

13.10 In terms of Civil Law and how it applies to social media:

- Defamation – It is against the law to make a false statement about someone which damages their personal or professional reputation. Crucially – even if you simply retweet or pass on information originally posted by others, you may still be held equally as responsible as the original commentator. This can also apply to publishing images. If found liable to another person, you could be ordered to pay large sums of money as damages;
- Copyright – The legal ownership of the contents of documents, photos, videos and music belong to the person who created them. You could be in breach of copyright if you reproduce such material without the owner’s permission. Always ask for written consent before you use someone else’s material;
- Political Comment and Electioneering – Remember that although it is acceptable to make political points or canvass votes via your own social media accounts, this will not be permissible if you are using this via council supplied computer equipment, certainly in the run up to elections.

#### **14. Breaches of this Policy**

14.1 Social media must not be used in a way that breaches any of the Council’s other policies or agreements. If a post, comment, blog etc. on the internet would breach any of the Council’s policies in another forum, it will also breach them in an online forum.

14.2 Failure to abide by the rules and procedures written in this Policy will be classed as a breach of this Policy.

14.3 Breaches of this Policy will be considered in accordance with the Councillors Code of Conduct.

14.4 Any misuse of social media must be reported to the Council's Corporate Communications Team.

## **15. Legal Considerations**

15.1 In creating this policy the Council has given due regard to the following Legislative frameworks:

- The Human Rights Act 1998 – Article 8 of this Act gives a right to respect for private and family life, home and correspondence. The Council acknowledges that employees have a reasonable expectation of privacy in the workplace. This Policy does not intend to infringe your Article 8 rights.
- The Data Protection Act 1998 – This Act provides a legal framework which sets out how information relating to employees, customers, clients etc. can be collected, handled and used. This Policy aims to set out how the Council will comply with data protection across social media platforms.
- The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 – This Act covers the extent to which the Council is able to monitor and record private communications received within its telecommunication systems. It applies to all public and private communications networks. The Council will abide by these Regulations and will not unlawfully intercept employee's communications. Where appropriate approval will be sought prior to any interference of staff private communications.

## **16. Implementation Responsibilities**

16.1 The Information Security Officer shall develop, maintain, and publish processes to achieve compliance with this Policy.

16.2 The business use of social media is subject to the entirety of this Policy.

16.3 Members will be aware of and adhere to all other relevant policies and procedures.

## **17. Policy Review and Maintenance**

17.1 The Social Media Policy shall be reviewed annually and at times as dictated by operational needs.

17.2 The Council takes seriously its statutory responsibilities and will, at all times, act in accordance with the law and take necessary and proportionate action in these types of matters. In that regard, the Information Governance Forum is duly authorised by the Council to keep this Policy up to date and to amend, delete, add or substitute relevant provisions, as necessary, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Governance and Corporate Services.

## 18. Policy Acceptance

18.1 All Members shall sign the Information Security Policy to indicate their agreement to comply with the Member's Social Media Policy.

## 19. Glossary

Blog	Term derived from Weblog i.e. an internet log or diary
Blogosphere	All the Blogs on the Internet
Community of Practice	Group of people who are members of an online 'club' because they have a role or an interest in an area of work
Direct Message	A message sent via Twitter to someone who follows you or who you follow
Follower	Someone who has chosen to follow you on Twitter
Friend	Someone who you have allowed to access your Facebook page. Not necessarily a real friend
Forum	A virtual discussion area
#Hashtag	A hashtag or ~ is a way of denoting a key word which can be used as a search term
Instant Messaging	A conversation with one other person. A conversation which, if you indicate that you are available for a chat is more immediate than email and easier to type than a text
Microblog	A short blog e.g. Twitter using a maximum of 140 characters
Retweet	To forward a Tweet received on Twitter
Spam	Electronic junk mail
Trending	Current popular people or conversations as in <i>trending on Twitter now...</i>
Troll	Someone who disrupts online communities or discussions through unhelpful or irrelevant posts
Tweet	A message sent on Twitter
Wiki	A tool which enables anyone to add or edit content on a website

## Appendix 1 – Categories of Social Media

Social media sites, applications and services fall into one or more of several fundamental categories. Because of constantly evolving technology and the growing mainstream use of social media, certain websites, web services and applications fit into more than one category, and may evolve over time to fall into different categories. It is useful to understand the characteristics of each category when examining the legal issues relevant to each of these categories.

- **Blog:** a "web log" or website listing posted information and other content dated in reverse chronological order, self-published by authors (known as bloggers) on sites such as Blogspot, WordPress, Tumblr and Blogger.
- **Social and business networking site:** a website where individual, corporate and organisational users can connect to other users and display online their networks of friends and contacts for other users to see and form connections with. Prominent examples include Facebook and LinkedIn.
- **Digital media sharing site:** a website where users can upload and share videos, photographs and accompanying text. YouTube and Flickr are the principal sites in this category.
- **Crowdfunding sites:** a website where users can look for investment from a wide range of people who will contribute small amounts of finance. Examples include Kickstarter, Peoplefund.it and Global giving.
- **Wiki:** a database of web pages that can be edited live by the public, such as Wikipedia and Wikitravel.
- **MMORPG (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Game) site:** MMORPG is a genre of video games that can be played by several users simultaneously regardless of physical location, over the internet. Players adopt avatars to represent themselves in the virtual world online and interact with each other. SecondLife is the most popular example of this category. An avatar is a customised character in digital form created by an online user to personify his presence on a website and interact with other users, such as in online gaming communities, virtual worlds (*see below*) or forums.
- **Virtual world:** a computer-based environment, such as a MMORPG, created to simulate a real or fictitious environment, often containing elements of both. Users of online virtual worlds interact through their avatars (*see above*). Popular examples include ActiveWorlds, Kaneva and SecondLife.

## Appendix 2 - Popular Social Media Sites and Services

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Social media sites connect their users to one another, to new content and to communication channels that allow for an instant and permanent online presence. Many sites include traditional communication capabilities within their proprietary technologies, such as e-mail, chat (for example, Instant Messaging), blogging and others. The principal function of most social media sites is to provide links to users and publish these links online for others to see.

Below is a list (with descriptions) of some popular social media sites, services and applications. Although not exhaustive, it includes the most popular social media sites on the internet.

- **Activeworlds:** A platform that hosts over 1000 3D virtual worlds, creating interactive online experiences for users.
- **A Small World:** an invitation-only social networking service that includes private messaging, forums and event calendars.
- **Delicious (formerly del.icio.us):** a social bookmarking site where members can save their website bookmarks in a central online location for future retrieval from any internet browser at any time, and share those bookmarks with friends.
- **Digg:** an online community where users discover, vote for, share and comment on content from the internet, including news, video and images.
- **Doostang:** a career-focused social networking site that enables members to post and apply to job openings, network with friends and friends of friends online and conduct job searches according to industry, geography and other criteria.
- **Facebook:** a social networking site where members can connect with friends and other people in their network, post links, comments, photos and videos and conduct public conversations by writing on members' "walls". It also allows members to post private messages not visible to the public.
- **Flickr:** an online photo management and sharing application that enables members to make the photo and video content they upload available on the web for viewing and commenting (public and private). Flickr is for personal (non-commercial) use only.
- **Foursquare:** A location-based social networking service generally logged into using a mobile device where users share their location with friends, check in to businesses to collect points and badges and post information about nearby business or venues.



- **Friendster:** originally a social networking site that was relaunched in 2011 as a social gaming site. Also has a micropayments component called Friendster Wallet, enabling pre-paid payments between members on their sites for virtual gifts and games.
- **Geni:** a website for families to privately connect with relatives, post pictures and send messages to other members in their online family tree. Members build their family tree by connecting with other relatives who are members of the website and posting personal family data.
- **Google +:** a social network launched by Google in 2011 where members can connect with friends and other people in their "circle" and see what other people are posting through their "stream". Members can also "hang out" and video chat.
- **Instagram:** is a photo sharing service where users can share photos which have had digital filters added to them onto social networks like Facebook or Twitter. It is owned by Facebook.
- **Kaneva:** A platform that hosts a free, 3D virtual world for users to gain an interactive experience through chatting, playing games, shopping and hanging out.
- **Kickstarter:** a crowdfunding website which allows members to invest in projects for non-commercial gain.
- **LinkedIn:** a professional networking website where members can maintain connections with other members, establish connections to contacts of members in their network and be introduced to other members for help in job searches and other career-related goals.
- **Meetup:** A social networking website that allows users to organize into groups and plan face-to-face meetings.
- **MySpace:** a social networking website where members can personalise their profile pages, and to which they can post text, pictures, video and audio. Members can share all of the content they post with member friends connected to their profile, as well as with the public, and can make their pages private so that they are not accessible to unconfirmed friends.
- **Newsvine:** an online news website where members can post news articles and comments, and vote for published articles to appear at the top of Newsvine's popularity list of news stories. Newsvine is a subsidiary of NBCNews.com.
- **Pinterest:** is a pin-board style social sharing site where users can create and manage image collections based on themes such as events, interests and hobbies. Users can "re-pin" other people's images to their own board, like images or search through categories that interest them.

- **Reddit:** A social news website that allows users to submit content that other users vote on, which ranks the posts and determines their position on the site's pages.
- **Second Life:** a user-created, three-dimensional virtual world community, where members can create and customise an online three-dimensional persona known as an avatar and conduct purchases using virtual currency known as Linden dollars (L\$). Second Life provides the capability for businesses to develop and maintain a virtual presence, as well as a web-based marketplace where members can buy and sell products for avatars' use on the site.
- **StumbleUpon:** a discovery engine (a form of search engine) which finds and recommends content that is relevant to its users.
- **Tumblr:** a blogging website where members can post and share text, photos, links, music and video from their browser, phone, desktop computer and e-mail.
- **Twitter:** a microblogging site where users post status updates on their thoughts or activities in 140 characters or fewer, through instant message, mobile text or the web.
- **Typepad:** A fee-based blogging service that allows users to create blogs and use search engine optimization (SEO) and social media optimization (SMO) tools.
- **Wordpress:** An open-source software ([www.practicallaw.com/9-501-6355](http://www.practicallaw.com/9-501-6355)) program that allows users to publish websites or blogs.
- **Yammer:** a microblogging site similar to Twitter aimed at streamlining internal workplace communications. Although it is free for employees to use, companies who want to get control of and manage their corporate Yammer networks must pay a fee. Yammer is owned by Microsoft.
- **YouTube:** an online video community that allows users to publicly post, share and view original videos, with a forum for user comments and a platform for creating individual channels. YouTube provides for video embedding, allowing users to link video posted on YouTube to their profiles on Facebook, MySpace, blogs and any website.

### Appendix 3 – Bilingual Policy for Social Media

Councillors do not have to use the Welsh language when they use social media on their personal accounts. There may be occasions, however, when it is appropriate to do so – if a large public event, or a project that may be of interest to Welsh speakers is being promoted for example. If Councillors feel that they want to Tweet/post bilingually, or even just to use a few words of Welsh in a post, then they are encouraged to do so. The Council's Welsh language service is always on hand, and very happy to help with translations, suggestions and proof reading. The service can be contacted on 01685 724673.

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