

Welton Parish Council

Facebook Strategy and Guidelines

Welton Parish Council Facebook Page Guidelines

1 **Content Focus:**

- Share articles, blog posts, and council expertise.
- Start discussions and ask questions to encourage engagement.
- Post updates on council activities, important local events, and decisions.
- Share positive reviews, testimonials, and local news.
- Encourage participation with polls, surveys, and competitions.

2 **Post Etiquette:**

- Avoid commentary that is defamatory, obscene, or libelous.
- Ensure official council statements are only posted once they have been officially approved.
- Publicly acknowledge queries but respond privately for specific concerns.
- Be mindful of security settings to maintain control over content visibility.

3 **Security & Privacy:**

- Avoid posting images of young people without parental consent.
- Regularly update security features such as antivirus protection.

Councillors on Personal Facebook Pages

1 **Professionalism:**

- Personal accounts must not imply they represent the views of the council. Add a disclaimer like: *"Statements and opinions here are my own and do not necessarily represent the council's policies or opinions."*
- Avoid using council logos, email addresses, or other identifiers in personal posts.
- No disclosure of confidential information or sensitive council matters.

2 **Content Responsibility:**

- Councillors are responsible for maintaining their pages in compliance with legislation and council policies.
- Derogatory, proprietary, or libelous comments should be avoided.
- Keep discussions respectful and free from personal attacks.

3 **Security:**

- Maintain strong security settings on personal profiles.
- Be cautious about "friending" others, as they may gain access to council-related networks.

Councillors on the Welton Parish Council Facebook Page

1 Conduct:

- Councillors contributing to the council's page must maintain a professional and respectful tone.
- Posts must reflect council policy and should avoid personal opinions unless clearly stated otherwise.
- Any negative comments from the public should be addressed with factual information only.

2 Engagement:

- Encourage residents' participation by asking questions, sharing relevant updates, and facilitating discussions.
- Ensure comments from the public are addressed in a timely manner, following up as necessary.

3 Legal & Ethical Responsibilities:

- Councillors must ensure that no confidential information is shared on the council page.
- Take care to avoid engaging in online arguments and inflammatory responses.

Engagement Guidelines

1. **Timely Responses:** Respond to questions or comments within 24-48 hours. Acknowledge all queries publicly and, when appropriate, move the conversation to private messages for more specific or sensitive inquiries.
2. **Positive Interaction:** Encourage open dialogue but maintain professionalism. If a comment is negative or critical, respond with factual information and avoid engaging in disputes.
3. **Monitoring:** All Facebook posts to be forwarded to the Clerk, who will monitor the contents to ensure all posts and comments adhere to the council's communication standards.

Security and Compliance

1. **Page Administration:** The Communication Committee lead will be the primary administrator of the page, with delegated access to select councillors or committee members as necessary.
2. **Privacy & Data Protection:** Ensure all posts and comments comply with the UK GDPR and council's data protection policies.
3. **Moderation:** Any inappropriate or defamatory comments will be moderated according to council policy, and repeated violations may result in users being banned from the page.

Crisis Management

1. In the event of a PR crisis (e.g., negative public sentiment around a council decision), the following steps will be taken:
 - **Acknowledge the issue:** Post a factual, neutral statement addressing the situation.

- **Respond promptly:** Provide additional information or context in a follow-up post if necessary.
- **Escalation:** For serious issues, escalate to the Clerk and the Chair of the Council or a designated communications lead to draft a more formal response.

Welton Parish Council Facebook Strategy

1. Objectives

- **Increase community engagement:** Foster an active online community where residents feel informed and involved in local decisions and events.
- **Enhance transparency:** Provide timely, accurate information about council activities, meetings, and services.
- **Promote local events and services:** Highlight key local events, public services, and initiatives to support community awareness and participation.
- **Foster positive communication:** Build a space for respectful dialogue between the council and residents while maintaining a professional and approachable tone.

4. Audience

- **Primary Audience:** Welton Parish residents, local businesses, and community organisations.
- **Secondary Audience:** Visitors, potential new residents, and external stakeholders (e.g., regional partners).

Content Categories

- **Council Updates:**
 - Announcements about council meetings, agendas, decisions, and changes to public services.
 - Transparency on how council funds are being allocated and updates on ongoing projects.
- **Local News & Events:**
 - Highlight upcoming events, such as community fairs, festivals, local charity events, and important public meetings.
 - Share news about local developments, infrastructure projects, and town improvements.
- **Engagement Posts:**
 - Polls and surveys asking residents for feedback on local issues or council decisions.
 - Questions encouraging community members to share their thoughts on council initiatives or local challenges.
- **Spotlight Features:**
 - Showcase local businesses, organisations, or notable residents who are contributing to the community.
 - Celebrate key achievements in the community such as environmental initiatives or youth programs.
- **Emergency Updates:**
 - Timely information on road closures, weather warnings, or disruptions to local services (e.g., rubbish collection).

Posting Activity

Frequency	Content	Example
Weekly	Meetings, scheduled events	Meeting dates, decisions made, upcoming public consultations.
Weekly	Ad hoc events, new issues etc	Road closures, Christmas Light switch on
Weekly	Out of date posts	Remove flyers once event have taken place
Daily	Comments	Read and respond to comments made
Annual	Annual Audit	Relevant documentation i.e. AGAR

Success Metrics

- **Survey Responses:** Track the number of responses to polls or surveys as an indicator of active participation in council decisions.
- **Post Reach:** Use Facebook Insights to monitor the organic reach of posts (how many people view the posts).
- **Page Growth:** Track the number of new followers and audience demographics monthly.
- **Engagement Rate:** Measure the number of likes, shares, and comments per post to assess the level of community engagement.