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| **Report To:** | Policy Development Panel |
| **Date:** | 25 November 2025 |
| **Subject:** | Social Media Policy |
| **Purpose:** | To consider the draft Social Media Policy and provide feedback prior to its presentation at Cabinet. |
| **Key Decision:** | N/A |
| **Portfolio Holder:** | Cllr Jim Astill, Portfolio Holder responsible for Communications |
| **Report Of:** | James Gilbert, Assistant Director - Corporate |
| **Report Author:** | Shaun Gibbons, Group Communications and Engagement Manager |
| **Ward(s) Affected:** | All |
| **Exempt Report:** | No |


**Summary**

As part of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership's ongoing Communications Strategy, a policy document included in Appendix 1 has been prepared to consider the adoption of a consistent approach to social media channels and tactics when using social media to communicate to residents across the sub-region.

This draft policy document will be an addendum to the existing Partnership Communications Strategy and will cover topics such as house rules - how followers should behave when replying or responding to our messaging; how replies and comments are consistently handled; what content is best suited for channels; what strategic focus should each channel have; and security and housekeeping protocols.


**Recommendations**

That Members provide feedback on the draft Social Media Policy and recommend it to Cabinet.

**Reasons for Recommendations**

To have a coordinated and clearly communicated approach to South Holland District Council's use of social media when communicating to residents.

To provide clear 'house rules' for those wishing to interact and communicate with South Holland District Council on all of its social media channels.

To provide a strategic framework underpinned by audience data and analytics for all social media messaging and campaigns.

**Other Options Considered**

None

## 1. Background

1.1 In 2023, South Holland District Council, along with Boston Borough Council and East Lindsey District Council as part of the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership, adopted a Communications Strategy. As part of that Strategy, further work was undertaken to develop a social media policy for the Partnership.

1.2 This policy was to introduce a coordinated approach to how social media channels were used across the Partnership. This was to ensure consistency and also to place a strategic emphasis on data and audience insights to influence decision-making and also how and what messaging was developed**.**

## 2. Report

2.1 This report gives an overview of how the council's social media channels have developed over a two-month period in 2025, as well as a series of recommendations to apply house rules to those residents who choose to communicate with the council via its social media channels as well as clear mechanisms to answer resident queries.

2.2 This report looks at each of the Council's social media channels and recommends a series of strategic objectives and approaches based on data and audience insights.

2.3 This report also considers the use of social media channels in other departments and areas of the council, recommends a series of actions, including security and housekeeping.

## 3. Conclusion

3.1. This policy sets out the strategic framework on how each of the council's social media channel will operate and provide clear and defined roles, both for how residents interact with the council, how the council will manage comments and replies.

**Implications**

**South and East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership**

That East Lindsey District Council and Boston Borough Council adopt this policy which will be an addendum to the existing Partnership Communications Strategy.

**Corporate Priorities**

This policy will support the strategic objectives underpinned in the South & East Lincolnshire Councils Partnership Communications Strategy.

**Staffing**

None

**Workforce Capacity Implications**

None

**Constitutional and Legal Implications**

None

**Data Protection**

None

**Financial**

None

**Risk Management**

None

**Stakeholder / Consultation / Timescales**

| **Boston Borough Council** | **East Lindsey District Council** | **South Holland District Council** |
|---|---|---|
| Overview & Scrutiny (6 December 2025) | Overview (9 December 2025) | PDP (25 November 2025) |
| Cabinet Briefing (5 Jan 2026) | Exec Briefing (7 January 2026) | Informal Cabinet (22 December 2025) |
| Cabinet (27 January 2026) | Exec Board (21 January 2026) | Cabinet 20 (January 2026) |

**Reputation**

None

**Contracts**

None

**Crime and Disorder**

None

**Equality and Diversity / Human Rights / Safeguarding**

None

**Health and Wellbeing**

None

**Climate Change and Environment Impact Assessment**

*None*

**Acronyms**

None

**Appendices**

Appendices are listed below and attached to the back of the report:

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| Appendix 1 | Social Media Policy |

**Background Papers**

No background papers as defined in Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the production of this report.

**Chronological History of this Report**

A report on this item has not been previously considered by a Council body

**Report Approval**

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| Report author: | Shaun Gibbons, Group Communications and Engagement Manager shaungibbons@sholland.gov.uk |
| Signed off by: | James Gilbert, Assistant Director – Corporate james.gilbert@e-lindsey.gov.uk |
| Approved for publication: | Cllr Astill |