

# Brixworth Parish Council

## Social Media Acceptable Use Policy

Adopted July 2022



The aim of this policy is to set out a Code of Practice to provide guidance to parish councillors, council staff and members of the public who engage with the council using online communications, collectively referred to as social media.

Our social media platforms are here to provide information and advice to our residents, and we welcome comments and engagement with our content.

We understand that people have differing views on many issues, however any form of cyber-bullying is not acceptable on any platform.

While we will actively monitor our platforms, if you do notice any offensive comments on our sites at any time, please contact us at [parish.clerk@brixworthparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@brixworthparishcouncil.gov.uk).

We'll take immediate action on our accounts if content in any format (such as comments, videos, images, GIFs, attachments, links, emojis) is:

- defamatory, slanderous, misleading, or false
- abusive or threatening – this includes swearing, adapted spellings with the same meaning, etc.
- intimidatory towards our staff, elected members, or other platform users
- inciting hate crime or hate crime words obscene, profane or sexually oriented discriminatory in any way
- promoting illegal activity
- promoting individual products or services completely off-topic
- the same message posted multiple times, otherwise known as 'spamming'
- controversial, irrelevant and off topic, otherwise known as 'trolling'

### **Action**

If your content relates to the list above, we may respond publicly to your content and via direct message asking you to remove it immediately.

If you do not act, we may block your access to our social media accounts. We'll tell you that we're doing this.

Depending on the content, we will also screenshot the posts and consider legal action or sending them on to the police for investigation.

If we think that the content you post is explicit, we will take immediate action to delete the post and block your access to our accounts.

In an effort to keep our platforms a safe and respectful place, we may decide to stop the ability to comment on any of our posts.

### **Hate crime**

Hate crime is defined as any incident that's seen by the victim (or any other person) as being motivated by prejudice or hate towards their actual or perceived social identity. Social identities include:

- disability gender identity
- race, ethnicity or nationality religion, faith or belief sexual orientation

Hate and harassment can take the form of criminal or non-criminal behaviour and can include offensive comments or images on social media or text messages.

### **Allegations against council staff and elected members**

We have a zero-tolerance approach toward fraud and corruption in our organisation. If you make an allegation on our social media accounts against the council, a member of staff or an elected member, we'll ask you to report it (along with your evidence) to Northamptonshire Police, or you can tell us directly by using the Contact Us page on our website. [Contact Us – Brixworth Parish Council](#)

### **Safeguarding allegations or disclosures**

We recommend you don't make any safeguarding allegations or disclosures on our social media accounts. If you do, these will be passed onto the relevant organisations as part of our duty of care.

### **Complaints**

We understand that sometimes you can be unhappy with something we have or have not done. We can only accept an official complaint by following our complaints procedure on our website. [Official Complaints Procedure – Brixworth Parish Council](#)

### **Before elections**

Whatever type of election, if you post anything which could be interpreted as supporting a party or candidate during the pre-election period, we may have to delete it.

### **Hours**

Our social media pages are checked on a daily basis, timings may vary. We will also monitor the pages for coverage during critical and major incidents, adverse weather, and events. We do not monitor incoming direct messages as occasionally the social media platforms may filter, block, or divert them. Please use the contact us form on our website [Contact Us – Brixworth Parish Council](#)

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis. Next due July 2024.