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# Social media policy

Last Modified September 05, 2023



## Reply and responding to messages

Our social media accounts are generally monitored during working hours, Monday to Friday, except on public holidays.

We aim to respond to as many replies or comments as we can. This isn't always possible, and we can sometimes miss posts, particularly when there is heavy social media traffic.

Our communications team, who run the social media accounts will sometimes send your questions to Customer First or other colleagues to find out information for you. This means that it might sometimes take a while before we can get back to you.

If your query is urgent, serious or involves personal details, please use our [Contact us](#) where you will also find links to our [Comments, compliments and complaints](#) page and our [Customer care standards](#).

## Moderation

Where online communities have their own rules and guidelines, we'll normally follow those.

Where possible, we will rely on the measures of protection and intervention which the social networking site already has in place (e.g. against illegal, harmful or offensive content), for example by flagging comments or alerting them to any breaches of the site's terms and conditions.

We also have some of our own rules.

We reserve the right to remove any contributions that break the rules of the relevant community, or any of the following guidelines:

1. Don't post messages that are unlawful, defamatory or libellous, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profanity, sexually oriented or racially offensive
2. Don't bully, harass or intimidate any individual or organisation
3. Don't impersonate someone else
4. Be civil, tasteful and relevant
5. Don't post content copied from elsewhere, for which you do not own the copyright
6. Don't post the same message, or very similar messages, repeatedly
7. Don't publicise your, or anyone else's, personal information, such as contact details
8. Don't advertise products or services
9. Don't post any political comments
10. Don't represent a council service through a personal profile
11. Don't represent a council service through a social media page or account without permission from the Communications Team

## Defamatory comments

Please take care not to make defamatory statements when posting on our pages. By publishing such a statement we can both get into serious trouble. We will therefore take down any statement that we consider could be deemed to be defamatory.

## Blocking and unfollowing

If we block your account, this will probably be because you've contravened the rules of a particular social media space, or that you've followed or liked the council purely to promote a product or service. If for some reason we unfollow you, it might just be that we're going through a review of accounts or simply cutting down on numbers. If you see that we've unfollowed you, please don't take this as a sign of personal rejection!

## Liking and following

We can't like or follow everyone as sometimes the numbers of accounts are just too high for us to manage. So, please don't be offended if we don't. This doesn't mean we don't like you or are not interested in what you have to say.

We frequently follow or like people who provide information that is pertinent to our work as a local authority (for example UK government agencies, local media, and our other public sector partners) or those whose information we can pass on for the benefit of local people.

Occasionally, we'll also try and lend our support to local and national campaigns.

There will also be times we'll need to like or follow an account in order to take part in conversations.

Please remember that while we may like or follow someone, retweet or share their information, it doesn't mean that we endorse them.

## Sharing and retweeting

We try and share or retweet information that we think will be of interest or use to people and businesses in Blackpool. However please don't be offended if we don't retweet something you ask us to. Again, the numbers can be too big for us to manage.

As a trusted organisation, any sharing of information could be seen as endorsement of a particular view, individual or organisation, and it's important that we remain impartial and protect the council's reputation.

## Pre-election period

The council itself, as opposed to its political administration, must be politically neutral in its communications. Therefore, please do not use any of our pages to promote party political messages or other content. We will remove any comments that, in its view, may compromise its obligation to maintain political neutrality.

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