

## Policy 6.25 Social Media ~~Policy~~

<b>Directorate</b>	Business and Governance
<b>Responsible Officer</b>	Director, Business & Governance

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### Table of Administrative Changes

Amendment Version No.:	Description of Administrative Amendment	Date Reviewed
<u>1.2</u>	<u>Review of policy in accordance with Section 165 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i></u> <u>Placed on Public Exhibition 23 July 2025</u>	<u>July 2025</u>
<u>1.1</u>	<u>Review of policy in accordance with Section 165 of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i></u> <u>Workshopped with Councillors on 18 May 2025</u>	<u>May 2025</u>

Amendment Version No.:	Description of Administrative Amendment	Date Reviewed
<a href="#">1.0</a>	<a href="#">Adopted by Council (D24/16467)</a>	<a href="#">21/02/2024</a>

Under Review

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Scope

As a local government organisation, Bega Valley Shire Council is committed to open and transparent communication with the community to ensure the community is informed about, and knows how to provide feedback on, the decisions, projects and programs that impact them.

This policy outlines our commitment to upholding the principles of being open, relevant, accurate and respectful in our social media interactions and engagement between Council and its stakeholders, and to ensure ~~BVSC~~ that the right policy settings are in place so Council and Councillors can realise the full benefits of social media whilst mitigating risk.

The scope of this policy demonstrates direct commitment to the following strategic guiding principles:

- Equitable and inclusive | we ~~commitment~~ to building a connection with stakeholders upon ~~and build~~ trust and respect-
- Responsive | timely and accurate ~~sharing of information~~ sharing with community and stakeholders-
- Transparent | commitment to open communication in decision-making process and updating of progress-
- Accountable | proactive consultation and engagement internally between business areas and externally with key stakeholders.-

## 1.2 Purpose

- To provide an administrative framework for both Council and Councillor's social media platforms.
- To ensure Council complies with its record-keeping obligations under the *NSW State Records Act 1998* in relation to social media.
- To outline the standards of conduct expected of Council officials when engaging on social media platforms in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council official.

## 1.3 Definitions

Word or Terminology	Description
SMC	Council's appointed social media coordinator – (Communication and Engagement Manager).
Authorised user	Members of Council staff who are authorised by the SMC to upload content and engage on Council's social media platforms on Council's behalf.
Council official	Councillors, members of staff and delegates of Council (including volunteers and members of committees that are delegates of Council).
Personal information	Information or an opinion (including information or an opinion forming part of a database whether or not recorded in a material form) about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion.

Word or Terminology	Description
Social media	Online platforms and applications - such as but not limited to social networking sites, wikis, blogs, microblogs, video and audio sharing sites, and message boards - that allow people to easily publish, share and discuss content. Examples of social media platforms include, but are not limited to Facebook, <del>Twitter</del> X, Snapchat, LinkedIn, <u>WhatsApp</u> , <del>Yammer</del> , YouTube, Instagram, Flickr, TikTok and Wikipedia.

## 2 Legislation

*Local Government Act 1993*

*Work, Health and Safety Act 2011*

*State Records Act 1998*

*Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*

*Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*

## 3 Implementation

### 3.1 Policy Statement

Bega Valley Shire Council is committed to upholding and promoting the following principles of social media engagement.

- **Openness** - Our social media platforms are places where anyone can share and discuss issues relevant to our Council and the community we represent and serve.
- **Relevance** - We will ensure our social media platforms are kept up-to-date with informative content about our Council and community.
- **Accuracy** - The content we upload onto our social media platforms will be a source of truth for our Council and community and we will prioritise the need to correct inaccuracies when they occur.
- **Respect** - Our social media platforms are safe spaces. We will uphold and promote the behavioural standards in Council's Behaviour of Councillors and Staff policy, when using social media platforms.

### 3.2 Responsibilities

#### 3.2.1 Elected Council

Responsible for the administration and moderation of their own social media platforms and in circumstances where another person administers, moderates, or uploads content onto their social media platform, they ensure they comply with legislative record-keeping obligations under *the State Records Act 1998* in relation to social media. Councillors must comply with the rules of the platform when engaging on social media.

#### 3.2.2 Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Leadership Executive Group (LEG)

Appoints a member of Council staff to be the Council's social media coordinator (SMC). The SMC should be a senior and suitably qualified member of staff. The CEO may appoint more than one SMC.

### 3.2.3 Social Media Coordinator (SMC) – Manager, Communication and Engagement

The SMC for Bega Valley Shire Council is the Manager Communication and Engagement. The SMC:

- Maintains effective oversight of the authorised users and approves and revokes a staff member's status as an authorised user. The CEO may delegate SMC functions to other authorised users recommended by the SMC.
- Ensures authorised users comply with Council's record-keeping obligations under the *State Records Act 1998* in relation to social media.
- Ensures Council adheres to the rules of the social media platform(s) and that Council's social media platforms are set up and maintained in a way that maximises user-friendliness and any technical problems are resolved promptly.

### 3.2.4 Authorised Users

Responsible for managing, or have expertise in, the events, initiatives, programs or policies that are the subject of the social media content.

Ensures to the best of their ability the content they upload onto social media platforms is accurate and they correct inaccuracies in Council-generated content.

~~Engages in discussions and answers questions (where appropriate) on Council's behalf on social media platforms and keep Council's social media platforms up to date.~~

### 3.2.5 Council Officials

Council officials for Bega Valley Shire Council include Elected Council, members of staff and delegates of Council (including volunteers and members of committees that are delegates of Council).

Council Officials:

- Comply with Council's Code of Conduct when using social media in an official capacity or in connection with their role as a Council Official.
- Uphold and accurately represent the policies and decisions of Council's governing body.

## 4 Supporting documents

[Bega Valley Shire Council Community Engagement Strategy 2025-2029](#)

### 3.34.1 BVSC Procedures that relate to this Policy

Procedure No.	Procedure Name	External or Internal Procedure
6.25.01	Social media communications	External
6.02.01	Code of Conduct for Councillors and Staff	External
6.02.08	Record keeping requirements for Councillors	External
6.02.09	Councillor and Staff interaction	External
6.10.01	Media guidelines and procedures	Internal
6.10.02	Website and other online tools	Internal

### 3.44.2 BVSC Policies that relate to this Policy

Policy No.	Policy Name
<a href="#">6.01</a>	<a href="#">Governance</a>
6.02	Behaviour of Councillors and Staff
<a href="#">6.03</a>	<a href="#">Risk Management</a>
<a href="#">6.05</a>	<a href="#">Work Health and Safety</a>
6.10	Communications
6.11	Records Management
6.12	Access to Information
6.13	Organisational Service Standards
6.17	Community Engagement
1.06	Cultural Diversity

**Note:** Policy details may change from time to time. To ensure you are viewing the most recent version, please view Council's adopted Policies and Procedures on Council website.