

DRAFT - PROTECT

Corporate Communications

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE



Heddlu Police
**DYFED
POWYS**

POLICY OWNER

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Click: Our Structure

1. SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE FOR ALL STAFF

Here in the Corporate Communications team at Dyfed-Powys Police we're experienced in using social media and know how to get the most from these important platforms.

Our best accounts are recognised as being effective ways for us to engage with our communities, to share important information and to demonstrate the work done every day to safeguard our communities.

We have some really good stories* to share across our organisation and fascinating behind-the-scenes work which has the potential to take community, partners and peer engagement to a new level. You have to be clear on your story though...

***Your story** = Your reason for being on social media... The tale you have to tell in bite sized chunks.

2. OUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS ARE AN ASSET

It takes significant time to create and manage an effective social media account and so it shouldn't be undertaken lightly.

Done well, social media can help our communities get the information they want quickly which, in turn can reduce the need for individuals to call us or visit, which can benefit us both.

Depending on your story, social media can also help you build better relationships with partners, identify best practice and solutions to shared challenges and build networks with like minded people. Your engagement doesn't necessarily need to be with our communities, but always remember that social media provides us all with the opportunity to show our communities what we are doing for them.

3. WHAT HAPPENS WHEN IT GOES WRONG...

When social media goes wrong it can go spectacularly wrong and cause a whole host of problems for the organisation .

We're sure that you wouldn't do it intentionally, but if you or any other member of staff were to do or say something damaging or inappropriate on an organisational social media account then our existing professional standards policies will apply. Please don't let that be you.

4. OPENING NEW ACCOUNTS

We receive many internal requests to set up or endorse new accounts and, sometimes, opening a new account might be the right thing to do if the business case stacks up and there will be a return for the significant time invested in social media. But, more often than not, using the well followed corporate accounts is the best tactic.

If you are considering opening a new account you must talk to Corporate Communications first. It has been agreed that the final decision on whether a new organisational account can be opened sits with Corporate Communications.

If you feel you have valuable information to share and are keen to engage via social media, email pressoffice@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk and one of the team will be in touch to discuss your story and the options available.

5. GOOD GOVERNANCE

We embrace innovation and are always looking for new or different ways of doing things. But, to encourage innovation and enable new ways of doing things to grow in a safe environment, it is essential that we have good governance in place.

Good governance includes you sharing all corporate account passwords with us at all times. We consider a corporate account to be an account whereby you identify yourself as a serving member of Dyfed-Powys Police in your page biography and/or profile images. Your details will be stored in a password protected spreadsheet and will only be used to remove a post if absolutely necessary. Doing this will be a last resort if we are unable to get hold of you in the first instance and, we will never post on your behalf.

You will also be added to a contact group on Twitter via direct message (DM). It's important that you don't leave this group – the group will be used to issue blackout messages, instructions on post-sharing, key messages etc. during major incidents.

6. SOCIAL MEDIA IS NOT A SILVER BULLET

We have embraced social media in a big way, as has policing nationally, but it is not a silver bullet and nor is it a quick win to deliver your objectives and priorities. We can help you understand which social media platforms, if any are most appropriate for your message and your target audience.

OUR DO'S AND DON'TS



This list of do's and don'ts is a guide to what is expected of anyone operating on an account recognised as being an official Dyfed-Powys Police account.

As an overall guide staff are reminded that they should never post on social media something which they would not happily say in a meeting or public forum. **Our professional standards and HR policies apply to social media too so don't get yourself into hot water** – come and talk to us in Corporate Communications if you have any ideas, concerns or questions.

Do...

- get approval from Corporate Communications before setting up any new account – Talk through your story with us and the plan you have for a possible account.
- share your passwords with the communications team. Always. Please also remember to update us when you change your password.
- always look to the corporate account first during incidents – take your lead from the corporate lines.
- have a plan for your account – agree your story and your objectives and then understand what content is needed and when. Create and share your content at the times your audience are most likely to be on these channels. Talk to Corporate Communications about planning templates to help you.
- innovate – different approaches work for different people.
- have a personality – corporate speak or just issuing press releases won't work well on social media.
- use hashtags but use them appropriately and strategically. Your hashtag should also be your campaign 'call to action', objective or event hashtag, Has it been used before? If it has been used before, is it in line with your message and our organisation's values?
- share other people's helpful content and links . Also, credit other people's work, ideas and links.
- are you on a team account? Have a clear plan resourcing the account. If only one person is running a team account, what's the plan when that person is on leave or moves on? A team account should be for the WHOLE team.
- consider your social media account as a customer service channel and be prepared to respond to queries quickly and effectively, in a way which you would be happy with if you were the one asking the question.
- listen - social media is designed to be a two-way channel, just like any good conversation ask your own questions. Seek feedback from your followers.
- monitor your accounts daily and respond to questions same day.

Don't...

- broadcast or talk at people.
- block people who disagree with you! Speak with Corporate Communications if you feel someone is deliberately poking you.
- try to cover up mistakes, be honest and you'll get more respect for it in the long run.
- post content which will embarrass the organisation or yourself.
- ignore legal advice, it's there to help you.
- think that a disclaimer in your biography will save you from potential legal action, it won't expect your staff to make do with old technology which can be a barrier to effective working
- just build accounts and just hope people will come – sometimes it is best to go to the places where your audiences are already having conversations. Have a look at what your colleagues and peers are doing.
- assume that social media will look after itself – you will need to invest time, enthusiasm and energy to make it work. And don't leave your accounts unattended for long spells.
- assume that social media is 'free'. It isn't – your time costs the organisation. Social media is a time consuming activity and you have to consider this against your other work and priorities. Social media monitoring software used by Corporate Communications also costs money and each individual account costs the organisation to monitor.
- continue with poor performing accounts – sometimes it's best to close an account which is not delivering, effective or active. Corporate Communications has the authority to close such accounts.
- share your passwords with anyone other than your communications team.
- forget that social media is 24/7!
- leave the contact group on Twitter direct message (DM). It has been established to ensure you operate in line with organisational strategy during times of crisis and don't expose yourself or the organisation unnecessarily. This learning comes post national terror incidents.

IF YOU'RE STILL UP FOR THIS, WHAT NEXT?

1. Have a think about the story you have to tell.
2. Who are your target audience? Where are they? What interests them?
3. Make arrangements to speak with Corporate Communications about the most appropriate platform ([email us here](#)).
4. Are you still up for this? Good, then Corporate Communications will help you set up your account.



Social Media AGREEMENT FORM

For office use only

Received by:

Date received:

Authorised by:

This agreement is between the named employee and Dyfed-Powys Police.

Name of employee:

Name to be used on social media (i.e. team or individual name):

Type of social media account required (please circle)



Twitter



Facebook Group
(attached to corporate page)



Other

Terms and conditions.

In signing and returning this form, you are agreeing to all of the below.

- I have read Dyfed-Powys Police's Social Media Guidance and agree to operate corporate accounts accordingly.
- I agree to disclose passwords and usernames for accounts to Corporate Communications, so they can be logged on a password protected register of accounts.
- I understand that I may be asked to delete entries deemed inappropriate by Corporate Communications/Professionals Standards.
- I will not knowingly bring the force into disrepute.
- I understand that all communications via social media must comply with the standards of professional behaviour for police officers and police staff.
- I agree to supply monthly feedback to Corporate Communications on how the account has successfully engaged with your target audience.

I agree to all of the above (tick here)

Employee: (print name) (sign) (date) / /

Username:

Password:

Please sign and return to Corporate Communications at HQ

... and remember, give us a shout if you need us or have some innovative ideas you want to share!