

Flintshire County Council Social Media
#BeKindOnline
House Rules



House Rules

Flintshire County Council use a range of social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn to engage with residents, customers and service users. We'd love you to follow us <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Contact-Us/Social-Media.aspx>

We recognise social media is an important channel of communication to share information and advice about our services. We want our social media channels to be places where people are committed to #BeKindOnline where people are confident to share their views and opinions, even when at times they may be different to ours.

We believe social media should be a channel of communication where everyone is respected and supported, free from any form of cyber-bullying. When using social media to correspond with us we expect everyone to follow our #BeKindOnline House Rules:

We will take immediate action on our social media accounts if content in any format, such as comments, videos, images, GIFs, attachments, links, emojis:

- is defamatory, slanderous, misleading or false
- is abusive or threatening – this includes swearing, adapted spellings with the same meaning, etc
- is intimidating towards our employees, elected Members or other social media users
- where council officers and or elected Members are named with the intention of causing them harm or embarrassment
- incites hate crime or hate crime words. See our Hate Crime page for more information. <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Community-Safety/Hate-Crime.aspx>
- is obscene, profane or sexually oriented
- is discriminatory in any way
- promotes illegal activity
- promotes individual products or services
- is completely off topic
- where the same message is posted multiple times, otherwise known as 'spamming'
- is controversial, irrelevant and off topic, otherwise known as 'trolling'
- contains private or identifying information about a particular individual, typically posted with malicious intent, otherwise known as doxing
- that aims to promote factually incorrect, misleading or damaging information with the intention of influencing others.

When House Rules are breached

We are all responsible for content we post on social media, including content we choose to share.

If content breaks our House Rules we may hide or delete it. We may also respond publicly to content which breaks our House Rules or via direct message asking for it to be removed immediately.

Where people do not follow our House Rules and they do not correct their behaviour when asked, we may block access to our social media accounts. We will tell people when we do this.

Depending on the content we may also screenshot social media posts and consider legal action or reporting them to the Police for investigation.

Allegations against our employees and elected Members

We take allegations of misconduct against employees and elected Members very seriously. We have a complaints procedure for dealing with such allegations <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Contact-Us/Concerns-and-Complaints.aspx>. If an allegation is made on our social media accounts we will provide advice on the most appropriate channel to follow so that it can be fully investigated. Social media posts alleging misconduct will be removed.

Safeguarding allegations or disclosures

Safeguarding concerns are of paramount concern to us. All safeguarding allegations or disclosures on our social media accounts will be referred to the relevant organisations to be investigated. Social media posts relating to safeguarding issues will be removed whilst they are investigated. We always recommend that safeguarding concerns are reported directly to us. For more information go to <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Diversity-and-Equality/Safeguarding.aspx>

Complaints

We understand that sometimes when things go wrong people can be unhappy with us. We have a complaints procedure that explains how to make a complaint against a service. We encourage people to use our online form to report a complaint because we may need personal information that cannot be shared on social media. If you raise a concern on social media then we may correspond with you in private to collect information that will assist us to put things right.

For more information about how to register a concern or complaint go to <https://www.flintshire.gov.uk/en/Resident/Contact-Us/Concerns-and-Complaints.aspx>

Election Period

In the period running up to an election, there are strict rules on the information we can publish in order to maintain political neutrality, this applies to all Councils. In order to comply with the law, if any post could be interpreted as supporting a party or candidate during the Election Period we may have to delete it.

Hours

Our social media channels are monitored 8:30am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

In the event of emergencies or major incidents we may post outside of these hours and whilst we cannot guarantee to engage with social media comments during these times, we will clearly publicise where people can go to get their questions answered during an emergency or major incident.

Logos and branding

We will report to the relevant social media companies any profiles set up using Flintshire County Council logos, branding or imagery, including fonts without permission. This may include taking any necessary legal action.

Monitoring and moderation

While we actively monitor our social media accounts any concerns about offensive comments can be reported using private messages at any time.

Any concerns about content on our social media accounts can also be reported to customerservices@flintshire.gov.uk