

Rules of engagement

Welcome to my page, which aims to communicate my activities as a councillor. If you wish to be a part of this online community, you must agree to abide by this code of digital engagement, which is designed to keep everyone safe.

Rule 1: Debate and disagreement are welcome on this page, but only if expressed with courtesy, respect and politeness.

Rule 2: Posts should not contain abuse, harassment, intimidation or threats of any form.

Rule 3: Posts should not contain any form of discrimination – including racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia, transphobia or religious intolerance.

Rule 4: Posts should not spread false or unverified information.

Rule 5: For transparency reasons, users should not post anonymously.

If any of these rules are broken, page admins reserve the right to delete posts, block users and report content to the police if necessary.

It may not be possible to respond to all queries on this page due to time constraints - if you have specific enquiries or casework, please send directly to my official email.

The infographic is divided into two main color sections: purple on the left and yellow on the right. The purple section contains a large white speech bubble with the text 'Welcome to my page, which aims to communicate my activities as a candidate in our local elections.' Below this, it states 'If you wish to be a part of this online community, you must agree to abide by this code of digital engagement, which is designed to keep everyone safe.' To the right of the speech bubble are five icons representing the rules: two people talking, two hands shaking, a heart, a shield with a checkmark, and a person with a checkmark. The yellow section contains a person icon at the top, followed by the text 'If any of these rules are broken, page admins reserve the right to delete posts, block users and report content to the police if necessary.' Below this is an envelope icon with a '1' in a circle, followed by the text 'It may not be possible to respond to all queries on this page due to time constraints - if you have specific enquiries or casework, please send directly to my official email.'

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Handling online abuse

Set expectations – point people to your rules of engagement and apply these consistently.

Lead by example – do not post comments that could be considered abusive, and avoid posting false or unverified information.

Consider content – some content will be more controversial than others. Consider before posting how you will manage engagement with this, for example only engaging in comments on the policy itself or directing people to consultation documents.

Defuse conflict – waiting to respond can take the heat out of situations, as can reframing your own language.

Know when to step back – Remember you do not have to engage with abusive or threatening behaviour. You can set the record straight with factual information if you wish, but you can step away when you want to.

Protect your privacy – set different passwords for different accounts, and do not post information that can allow people to identify your whereabouts outside of official council business.

Understand privacy settings – there is a range of settings to help you manage who can see or comment on your posts.

Get and give support – where you feel able, provide support to fellow councillors online, and reach out to colleagues and your council for support where needed.

Record abuse – screenshot comments and keep a record of abusive or threatening communications.

Report serious issues – if you feel unable to deal with online abuse yourself or have any concerns about your safety, report this to your council or the police.



For more information on the LGA's work on handling abuse on social media and digital citizenship visit: www.local.gov.uk/civility-public-life

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