North East Derbyshire District Council

Standards Committee

29th April 2026

Social Media Guidance for Councillors – Appendix 5 of the Constitution

Report of the Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer

Classification:	This report is public
Report By:	**Sarah Sternberg, Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer**
Contact Officer:	**Sarah Sternberg, Assistant Director of Governance and Monitoring Officer**

PURPOSE / SUMMARY

To seek Members comments on the revised version of the Social Media Guidance for Members and to seek approval for referral to Council for approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Members comment on the draft and recommend it to Council for inclusion in the 2026 Constitution.
2. That once approved by Council, the Chair of Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer email all Members with the new version and clarify the requirement for Members to follow the guidance as part of the ethical framework.
3. Training is made available to all Members.

IMPLICATIONS

Finance and Risk: **Yes☐** **No ☒**

Details: This is guidance for Members and has no financial consequences in itself.

On Behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): **Yes☒** **No ☐**

Details: As in the report.

On Behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Staffing: **Yes☐** **No ☒**

Details: There is no direct impact on staff. However bullying and harassment of staff or anyone else, is covered within the guidance**.**

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: **NEDDC:** **Revenue - £125,000 ☐ Capital - £310,000 ☐** ☒ *Please indicate which threshold applies*	No
Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)	No
District Wards Significantly Affected	None directly
Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) details:	
Stage 1 screening undertaken • Completed EIA stage 1 to be appended if not required to do a stage 2	Yes, appended.
Stage 2 full assessment undertaken • Completed EIA stage 2 needs to be appended to the report	No, not applicable
Consultation: **Leader / Deputy Leader ☐ Cabinet ☐** **SMT ☐ Relevant Service Manager ☐** **Members ☐ Public ☐ Other ☐**	Yes Details: The Statutory Officers and Directors (SOD) and the Standards Committee have been consulted.

Links to Council Plan priorities;
• **A great place that cares for the environment** • **A great place to live well** • **A great place to work** • **A great place to access good public services**
All indirectly

REPORT DETAILS

1 <u>Background</u> *(reasons for bringing the report)*

1.1 As Members are aware, each year the Council's Constitution is reviewed by the Standards Committee. However the Social Media Guidance for Councillors needs a more thorough review in the light of current knowledge of the usage of social media and the risks and advantages of its use and in the light of new LGA guidance.

1.2 This year the guidance has been reviewed by the Communications and Marketing Manager from a communications point of view, as well as by myself. This means that the Communications Team's own practical experience of using social media can be fed into the revised guidance.

1.3 This includes definitions of and explanations of misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation as well as what is expected from Councillors using social media.

1.4 The LGA has produced a lot of guidance for Members on the use of and dangers of social media. The link to this is included at the end of the guidance for easy access for Members.

1.5 Part of this is the Digital citizenship 'rules of engagement' with infographics and text which can be added to any Social Media pages. These set out the expectations of users of the Social Media website in terms of behaviour and debate. The Link is: Digital citizenship: support and resources for councillors | Local Government Association

2. <u>Details of Proposal or Information</u>

2.1 The draft Guidance is attached for Members to consider.

2.2 In terms of promoting this guidance, following the Annual Meeting's approval of the revised draft Guidance, it is suggested that the Chair of Standards Committee and the Monitoring Officer jointly email all Members with the new version and outline the requirement for Members to follow the guidance.

2.3 In addition, following approval at the Annual Meeting, there is a need to carry out some social media training of Members. Members views on how best this can be done are welcome.

3 Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 To ensure Members have the latest guidance and are able to attend suitable training.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 It is not an option to decide not to review a part of the Constitution.

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1	Draft Social Media Guidance for Councillors
2	Equality Impact Assessment

Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet you must provide copies of the background papers)

None