

Social media rules and guidelines

Monitoring accounts, responding and replying

The primary purpose of the social media that the Council engages with is to facilitate communication between residents and others who live and work in Ripon City District. We will try to respond to as many replies or comments we can. However this isn't always possible.

If you have a serious or more urgent enquiry, please use the contact us directly detail on the contact us page on this website.

Liking and following

Please don't be offended if we don't 'Like', 'Follow' you on social media. This doesn't mean we don't like you or are not interested in what you have to say; it's just that the numbers can get too high for us to manage.

We sometimes follow or like people who or an organisation which provide information that is relevant to our work as a local authority (for example central government accounts, local media, and our partners) or those whose information we can pass on for the benefit of many local people.

Occasionally, we'll also try and lend our support to local and national campaigns. There will also be times we'll need to like or follow an account in order to take part in conversations.

Just because we like or follow someone, retweet or share their information, it doesn't mean that we endorse them.

Sharing and retweeting

We try and share or retweet information that we think will be of interest or use to everyone in Ripon; however, please don't be offended if we don't retweet something you want us to.

As a trusted organisation, any sharing of information could be seen as endorsement of a particular view, individual or organisation, and it's important that we remain impartial and protect the council's reputation.

Blocking and unfollowing

If we block your account, this will probably be because you've followed or liked the council purely to promote a product or service, or you've contravened the rules of a particular social media space (see Moderation).

If for some reason we unfollow you, it might just be that we're going through a sort out or simply cutting down on numbers: if you see that we've unfollowed you, please don't take this a sign of personal rejection.

Moderation

Most online communities have their own rules and guidelines, which we will always follow.

Where possible, we will rely on the measures of protection and intervention which the social networking site already has in place (e.g. against illegal, harmful or offensive content), for example by flagging comments or alerting them to any breaches of the site's terms and conditions.

We also have some of our own rules.

We reserve the right to remove any contributions that break the rules of the relevant community, or any of the following guidelines:

- be civil, tasteful and relevant;
- don't post messages that are unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive;
- don't swear;
- don't post content copied from elsewhere, for which you do not own the copyright;
- don't post the same message, or very similar messages, more than once (also called "spamming");
- don't publicise your, or anyone else's, personal information, such as contact details;
- don't advertise products or services;
- Don't impersonate someone else.

Libel

Please take care not to make libelous statements. In law this means a statement that lowers the reputation of a person or organisation in the eyes of a reasonable person. We will therefore take down any statement that could be deemed to be libelous.

Pre-election period or 'Purdah'

In the six-week run up to an election - whether local, general, referendum or European - all councils have to very careful not to do or say anything that could be seen in any way to support any political party or candidate. We will continue to publish important service announcements using social media but may have to remove responses if they are overtly party political.