

LORD HOWE ISLAND BOARD

Business Paper

OPEN SESSION

ITEM

Social Media Policy

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board adopt the draft Social Media Policy attached.

BACKGROUND

The NSW Government's Social Media Policy and Guidelines encourage NSW Government agencies to make greater use of social media.

The Board uses a number of methods of communicating with the community and stakeholders. The focus traditionally has been on using written means, such as letters, householders, articles in the Signal and the Board's Community Information Bulletin. The Board also uses email extensively as well as posting information on the website. As needed, public meetings are held or community working groups set up for particular purposes.

The LHI Communications and Community Engagement Survey Report completed in 2016 recommended broadening the range of media used by the Board in communicating with the community, and specifically using social media in engaging with the younger (and not so young) demographic.

The reality is that social media has become an integral part of people's personal and work lives. It increases the range of communication tools available to relate to friends, colleagues, government, business and communities.

While there are a range of social media options, one of the most widely used form of social networking is Facebook. Many businesses and government organisations have Facebook pages for particular purposes. Facebook can be powerful in conveying information and receiving feedback around particular issues or projects.

Within the context of the NSW Government Policy and the draft Board Policy, three social media sites have already been established by the Board in relation to three major projects. These are:

- Renewable Energy Facebook page
- Weed Eradication Facebook page
- Rodent Eradication Facebook page

COMMENT

While social media can be a powerful communication tool, it can also be misused. For government agencies such as the Board, it is vital to establish rules for how social media can

be used effectively and appropriately. While there is a NSW Government Social Media Policy and Guidelines, government agencies have been encouraged to develop their own social media policies, giving consideration to:

- Communication and engagement goals
- Governance and roles and responsibilities
- Management, authorisation of use and appropriate behaviour
- Privacy, confidentiality and information security

A LHI Board Social Media Policy has therefore been drafted to provide a framework for the use of social media by the Board for official purposes. This policy aims to help capitalise on the opportunities to better engage with the community through social media, whilst ensuring risks of misinformation and to the Board's reputation are minimised.

The attached draft policy (Attachment 1):

- Provides definitions of social media
- Identifies responsibilities and compliance requirements
- Identifies approvals processes
- Requires all social media platforms to have an approved management plan, which includes identification of site administrators
- Identifies how staff may be authorised to comment and the required behaviour of authorised representatives
- Provides guidance on privacy, confidentiality, information security and unacceptable social media behaviour.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Board adopt the draft Social Media Policy attached.

Prepared: Penny Holloway, Chief Executive Officer

Attachments:

Attachment A: Draft Social Media Policy

LORD HOWE ISLAND BOARD POLICY

TITLE	Social Media Policy		
DATE ADOPTED		AGENDA ITEM	N/A
CURRENT VERSION		AGENDA ITEM	N/A
REVIEW	Bi-annually	RECORD NUMBER	ED17/2645
ASSOCIATED LEGISLATION	<i>Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009</i> <i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</i> <i>Public Sector Employment and Management Act 2002</i> <i>State Records Act 1998</i> <i>Lord Howe Island Act 1953 (NSW)</i>		
ASSOCIATED POLICIES	Media Contact and Liaison Policy - Adopted May 2008 No Bullying Policy – Adopted November 2007 Respectful Workplace Policy - Adopted November 2010 Behaving Ethically: a guide for NSW government sector employees (PSC) NSW Government Social Media Policy and Guidelines, November 2016		

1. SUMMARY

The NSW Government's Social Media Policy and Guidelines encourage NSW Government agencies to make greater use of social media.

Social media has become an integral part of our personal and work lives. It increases the range of communication tools available to relate to friends, colleagues, government, business and communities.

This policy aims to help capitalise on the opportunities to better engage with the community through social media, whilst ensuring risks to the Board's reputation are minimised.

2. PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The objective of this policy is to provide a framework for the use of social media managed by The Lord Howe Island Board (the Board) for official purposes.

This policy is designed to sit underneath the NSW Government's Social Media Policy and Guidelines.

The Lord Howe Island Board will proactively engage in official social media activities where there is a clear strategic opportunity to enhance overall communication with the community or other stakeholders. Social media can be used to inform the community about the Board's services; to provide information about programs and events and to create new avenues for consultation.

LHIB Social Media Policy

It is essential that employees understand that comments published via social media platforms are treated the same way as public statements made through traditional media. Published comments should be made by an authorised spokesperson.

The objective of this policy is to set the parameters for the use of social media, where it forms part of the employee's professional responsibilities and to manage risks associated with Board's use of these tools.

The intention of this policy is to establish a culture of openness, trust and integrity in all forms of official communication between the community, business and government.

4. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees (see definition) of the Lord Howe Island Board.

This policy covers all Lord Howe Island Board official social media sites or tools, inclusive of those that are public-facing and those that are there for internal use only, managed by The Lord Howe Island Board for official purposes.

This policy covers comments made by the Lord Howe Island Board for official purposes on social media sites managed by organisations external to the Lord Howe Island Board.

This policy does not cover personal or non-official use.

5. DEFINITIONS

Employees

In this policy, employees include permanent staff and executives, contractors, temporary and casual staff, students on placements and volunteers.

Site Administrator

In this policy, site administrator refers to the Lord Howe Island Board employee charged with the use, maintenance and management of the social media site. A site administrator may be responsible for more than one social media site, or, there may be several site administrators responsible for different social media sites.

Social media

Social media refers to sites, tools and platforms that provide users with infrastructure and resources to connect and communicate with each other and share and exchange content or information. They include but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites - e.g. Facebook, MySpace, Bebo, Google Plus, Tumblr, LinkedIn, Yammer.
- Video and photo sharing websites - e.g. YouTube, Flickr, Instagram
- Micro-blogging sites - e.g. Twitter
- Forums and discussion boards - e.g. Whirlpool, Yahoo! Groups, Google Groups
- Blogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs and blogs hosted by traditional media outlets

- Blogs hosted by media outlets (for example 'comments' or 'your say' feature on theage.com.au)
- Online encyclopaedias – e.g. Wikipedia
- Instant messaging software/applications e.g. MSN, WhatsApp, iMessage, QQ, WeChat, Skype
- Any other websites that allow individual users or organisations to use simple self-publishing tools
- Wikis and online collaborations (for example Wikipedia)
- Vod and podcasting
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (for example World of Warcraft, Second life)
- Instant messaging (including SMS)
- Geo-spatial tagging (Foursquare).

6. GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES

All employees are responsible for being aware of the policy and understanding their responsibilities around using social media in their professional and personal capacity.

It is important to note that an employee's normal obligations, outlined in the NSW Public Service Commission's Behaving Ethically: a guide for NSW government sector employees, continue to apply to the use of social media as they do for other forms of media.

7. COMPLIANCE

Depending on the circumstances, non-compliance with this policy may constitute a breach of contract of employment or other contractual obligations, misconduct, sexual harassment, discrimination, or some other contravention of the law.

Failure to comply with the policy may result in disciplinary action and, in more serious cases, may result in termination of employment.

Employees who become aware of inappropriate or unlawful online content that relates to the Board, or content that may otherwise have been published in breach of this policy the situation and circumstances should be reported immediately to their supervisor. Where other obligations are inconsistent with this Policy, these inconsistencies should immediately be referred to the Administration Manager.

8. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Approval to Develop an Official Board Social Media Platform

Employees must obtain approval from the Chief Executive Officer to develop and manage official Board social media platforms.

Requests for approval to develop and manage an official Board social media platform must describe how the platform will provide a strategic opportunity to enhance overall communication with the community or other stakeholders; and what the primary purpose for the communication is e.g. to

inform the community about the Board's services; to provide information about programs and events or to consult.

Planning of Official Social Media Accounts

All approved Board social media platforms require a management plan.

Management plans should be developed in consultation with the relevant Senior Manager, in some instances, Administration Manager.

Official Board social media site management plans must include:

- A strategic plan with an overview of the subject matter and topics that will be posted, frequency of use, and type of content for delivery during the period.
- Specific outcomes the social media site will help to deliver and how it will support or improve the broader communication program.
- Process for development, review, approval and publishing of content.
- Identification of what specific types of contentious issues are expected on the social media site and a process for managing them.
- Nominated site administrator and alternate contacts who will be authorised to engage in standard activity to keep the site live.
- Funding.
- Accessibility of social media log in details.
- Account names and passwords.

Maintenance and Management of Official Social Media Accounts

For each approved social media account, an approved site administrator will be required to:

- Monitor site activity as set out in an approved social media management plan.
- Only publish content materials as set out in an approved social media management plan.
- Report to the relevant Senior Manager any areas of social media or contentious issues and that may expose the Board to reputational risk.
- Ensure the security of log in and password details of the accounts and keep the relevant Senior Manager and Administration Manager informed of any changes to these details, including contingency plans for personnel movements.

Professional use of social media

Becoming authorised to comment on social media sites

- Before engaging in social media as a representative of the Board, employees must become authorised to comment.
- Employees may not comment unless authorised to be a representative spokesperson of the Board.

- To be authorised to comment or be an authorised spokesperson, employees must have the explicit approval of the Chief Executive.

Rules of engagement

Authorised representatives must:

- Disclose that they are an employee of the Board, and use only their own identity, unless authorised to use an approved official Board account or avatar.
- Disclose and comment only on information classified as public domain information.
- Ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading and complies with all relevant Board policies and other relevant requirements.
- Not be the first to make an announcement unless specifically given permission to do so.
- Comment only on their area of expertise and authority.
- Ensure comments are respectful of the community in which they are interacting online.
- Adhere to the terms of use for using the social media platform or website, and adhere to legislation including copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and any other applicable laws, and the Board's Privacy Policy.

Authorised representatives must not:

- Post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful.
- Use or disclose any confidential or secure information.
- Comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the Board's reputation or bring it into disrepute.

Moderation of Board produced social media

The Board site owner or account holder must ensure a clear and unambiguous moderation policy is in place when inviting public comments to a Board website or social media platform.

All Board website activity including any social media must be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

9. GUIDANCE FOR NAVIGATING LEGAL ISSUES

The following is offered as general guidance to assist employees in complying with the obligations set out in this policy. When in doubt, employees should seek further guidance from their supervisor.

Privacy, confidentiality and information security

- Employees should only use personal information obtained in the course of their employment or engagement with the Board in a manner consistent with the Board's Privacy Policy

LHIB Social Media Policy

- Users should not publish or report on conversations or information that is deemed confidential or classified or deals with matters that are internal in nature.
- Personal information should not be made available on social media unless express consent has been obtained from the person in relation to the use and disclosure of their personal information.

Copyright

- Employees must respect copyright and intellectual property laws and fair use of copyrighted material.
- All employees are expected to attribute work (including images) to the original author or source wherever possible.

Harassment and bullying

- The Board's No Bullying Policy and Respectful Workplace Policy apply both online and in the physical workplace.
- Workplace bullying and harassment includes any bullying or harassing comments employees make on-line, even on their own private social networks or out of office hours.
- Abusive, harassing, threatening or defaming postings are in breach of the No Bullying Policy and Respectful Workplace Policy and may result in disciplinary action being taken.
- All employees are expected to treat their colleagues with respect and dignity and must ensure their behaviour does not constitute bullying and/or harassment.

Defamation

Employees are to refrain from publishing material that may cause injury to another person, organisation, association or company's reputation, and should seek further legal guidance if publication of such material is thought to be necessary.

Offensive or obscene material

Material may be offensive or obscene and may infringe relevant online classification laws if it is pornographic, sexually suggestive, harassing, hateful, racist, sexist, abusive or discriminatory.

Contempt of court

All employees must exercise care if referring to pending court proceedings to avoid publishing material that may have a tendency to prejudice those proceedings, in particular, material that will not be part of the evidence in those proceedings.

It is recommended that all employees make enquiries as to any applicable court suppression orders prior to commenting on any court proceeding (whether past or pending).