

Advice Note for Members – Monetised Social Media Posts

1. Purpose and scope

This note provides practical guidance for Members who post on social media where content may generate income or other financial benefit (for example, advertising revenue, paid partnerships, subscriptions or donations). It summarises key expectations that apply to online activity, with a short FAQ at the end.

2. Key principles

2.1 The Code of Conduct applies online

- The Members' Code of Conduct applies to electronic and social media communications, posts, statements and comments.
- Whether a post is within scope may depend on whether you are acting (or giving the impression that you are acting) in your capacity as a Councillor.

2.2 Clarity about “official capacity” and account branding

- When you post or comment on social media and it relates to the business of the County Council or to your role as a Leicestershire County Councillor, you may be treated as acting in your “official capacity” for Code purposes.
- Avoid using the County Council logo on your personal profile/page, particularly where you are expressing views that do not reflect the Council's position.
- Use a clear disclaimer in your profile bio, for example: “Views expressed are my own and not those of Leicestershire County Council.”
- Consider maintaining separate accounts (where practical) to reduce ambiguity between councillor and personal activity.

2.3 Interests and transparency (including income from online content)

Members must register and disclose interests in accordance with Appendix B to the Members' Code of Conduct. Appendix B includes (among other matters) activity “carried on for profit or gain” and “sponsorship” (financial benefit relating to Member duties or election expenses). If you are unsure whether any income or financial benefit connected to online content needs to be registered, seek advice.

2.4 Use of Council resources and facilities

- Members must not misuse Council resources.
- Resources and facilities provided to support your role as a Member are not to be used for business or personal gain.
- If in doubt about whether a particular activity is appropriate, seek advice before proceeding.

2.5 Filming/recording meetings and sharing content

- Council rules provide that members of the public and press are entitled to film, record and report proceedings of meetings (including via social media), subject to the stated limitation on live oral reporting/commentary.
- Members should not use social media in a way that distracts them from their participation in meetings or gives the impression that they are not properly engaged in proceedings. Care should also be taken when posting during meetings, particularly where matters are under active consideration.
- When sharing clips, you must still comply with your wider obligations (including the Code of Conduct and legal considerations such as confidentiality, data protection and copyright).

2.6 Legal considerations

Social media posts are public and can be shared widely (including by screenshot). Members should be mindful of legal risks highlighted in the Council's existing social media guidance, including (for example) defamation, copyright, harassment and data protection.

3. Practical checklist - recommended good practice

1. Be transparent about paid partnerships or sponsored content and keep your Register of Interests under review.
2. Use clear disclaimers (bio and, where needed, within posts) so the public can tell when you are speaking personally versus in a Councillor role.
3. Avoid using Council branding on your own channels and avoid language that implies official Council endorsement of commercial content.
4. Avoid posting confidential information and do not post images/video of service users or their homes without appropriate permissions.
5. Pause before posting—consider whether the content could reasonably be read as linked to Council business or your Councillor role.
6. If unsure, seek advice before posting or before introducing any income-generating activity linked to your online presence.

4. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q1. What does “monetised social media” mean?

It generally means you receive money or another financial benefit connected to your online content (for example advertising revenue, paid partnerships, subscriptions, tips/donations, or affiliate income).

Q2. Do adverts appearing on a platform prove I am personally earning money from my posts?

Not necessarily. Adverts can appear without confirming that the account holder receives income, and it is not reliable to assume personal earnings from adverts alone.

Q3. Does the Code of Conduct apply to everything I post on a personal account?

Not automatically. Whether an individual post is within scope can depend on whether it links to your Councillor role or local authority business or gives the impression you are acting as a Councillor.

Q4. When might I be treated as acting in my “official capacity” online?

If you refer online to your role as a Councillor or the subject matter relates to Leicestershire County Council business, you may be treated as acting in your official capacity and your conduct may fall within the Code.

Q5. Do I need to declare income from social media on my Register of Interests?

Potentially. The Code requires registration/disclosure of interests, including activity carried on for “profit or gain” and relevant sponsorship. If you are unsure, seek advice.

Q6. Can I share clips from Council meetings on social media?

Council rules allow filming/recording/reporting of meetings (with the stated limitation on live oral commentary). When sharing clips, you must still comply with other obligations (e.g., confidentiality, data protection, copyright, and the Code).

Q7. Should I use the County Council logo on my personal profile/page?

Members are advised not to use the County Council logo on their profile, particularly where expressing views that do not reflect the Council's position.

Q8. What disclaimer should I use?

A clear bio disclaimer is recommended, for example: “*Views expressed are my own and not those of Leicestershire County Council.*” Where needed, add an in-post line such as “*Posting in a personal capacity.*”

Q9. What if I’m worried about another Member’s monetised content?

If you have a concern, raise it privately with the Monitoring Officer and seek advice on the appropriate route. Avoid making assumptions about whether an account is monetised unless there is clear evidence of income or financial benefit.

5. Further guidance, links and support

Key references:

- [Members’ Code of Conduct \(Part 5A\)](#)
- [Register of Interests form \(online\)](#)
- [Social media guidance for Members](#)

For advice/support, you can contact the Democratic & Member Services Team, the Communications Team or the Monitoring Officer:

- Rosemary Whitelaw, Head of Governance and Strategy
rosemary.whitelaw@leics.gov.uk
- Katie Pegg, Strategic Communications Manager katie.pegg@leics.gov.uk
- Fiona McMillan, Chief Legal Officer & Monitoring Officer fiona.mcmillan@leics.gov.uk

Please note: This advice note is intended as general guidance and does not replace case-specific advice. If in doubt, seek advice before publishing or before starting any income-generating activity linked to your online presence.

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