

**CYNGOR CYMUNED  
MANORDEIFI  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**SOCIAL MEDIA  
AND  
ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS POLICY**

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<b>Amendment history</b>			
<b>Version no.</b>	<b>Date/Minute</b>	<b>Summary of amendments</b>	<b>Author</b>
V1 (draft)	27/2/23	Creation of policy	JK (Clerk)
V1	14/3/23 7d	Policy adopted	

## **Responsibility for implementation of the policy**

- The Council has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy.
- The Clerk is responsible for monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and making recommendations for changes to minimise risks to our work.
- All employees and elected members should ensure that they take the time to read and understand this policy. Any breach of this policy should be reported to the Clerk or Chair of the Council.
- Questions regarding the content or application of this policy should be directed to the Clerk.

## **Scope of the policy**

- All employees and elected members are expected to comply with this policy at all times to protect the privacy, confidentiality, and interests of the Council.
- Breach of this policy by employees may be dealt with under our Disciplinary Procedure and, in serious cases, may be treated as gross misconduct leading to summary dismissal.
- Breach of this policy by elected members will be dealt with under the Code of Conduct.

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The use of digital and social media and electronic communication enables the Community Council to interact in a way that improves the communications both within the Council and between the Council and the people, businesses and agencies it works with and serves.

Councillors are expected to abide by the Code of Conduct and the Data Protection Act in all their work on behalf of the Council.

Councillors are reminded that they are part of a 'corporate body' and any comments should reflect the opinions of the whole body, unless it is made clear that they are commenting in a personal capacity and not as a Councillor.

As more and more information becomes available at the press of a button, it is vital that all information is treated sensitively and securely. Councillors are expected to maintain an awareness of the confidentiality of information that they have access to and not to share confidential information with anyone. Failure to properly observe confidentiality may be seen as a breach of the Council's Code of Conduct and will be dealt with through its prescribed procedures (at the extreme it may also involve a criminal investigation).

The Council has a website, Facebook group and uses email to communicate. The Council will always try to use the most effective channel for its communications.

## **Communications from the Council will meet the following criteria:**

- Be civil, tasteful and relevant to the direct work of the Council;
- Not contain content that is knowingly unlawful, libellous, harassing, defamatory, abusive, threatening, harmful, obscene, profane, sexually oriented or racially offensive;
- Not contain content knowingly copied from elsewhere, for which we do not own the copyright;
- Not contain any personal information, unless with the express consent of that person;
- Will be moderated by the Chair/Vice Chair of the Council and/or the Clerk to the Council;
- Social media will not be used for the dissemination of any political, or third-party advertising.

## **Manordeifi Community Council Facebook Group**

The Manordeifi Community Council Facebook Group is intended to provide information and updates regarding the activities of the Council.

The Group will be for elected Councillors and residents of Manordeifi only and eligibility questions will be in place to ensure this is maintained.

In order to ensure that all discussions on the Council Facebook page are productive, respectful and consistent with the Council's aims and objectives, we ask you to follow these guidelines:

- Be considerate and respectful of others. Vulgarity, threats or abuse of language will not be tolerated.
- Please do not include personal/private information in your social media posts to us.
- Differing opinions and discussion of diverse ideas are encouraged, but personal attacks on anyone, including the Council members or staff, will not be permitted.
- Share freely and be generous with official Council posts, but be aware of copyright laws; be accurate and give credit where credit is due.
- Stay on topic.
- Refrain from using the Council's Facebook page for commercial purposes or to advertise market or sell products.

Any concerns or complaints relating to the Manordeifi area should be reported to the relevant authority directly, to be dealt with in the correct manner.

Sending a message/post via Facebook will not be considered as contacting the Community Council for official purposes and we will not be obliged to monitor or respond to requests for information through these channels. Instead, please make direct contact with the council's Clerk and/or members of the Council by emailing: [manordeifcc@gmail.com](mailto:manordeifcc@gmail.com)

The site is not monitored 24/7 and we will not always be able to reply individually to all messages or comments received. However, we will endeavour to ensure that any emerging themes or helpful suggestions are passed to the relevant people or authorities.

We retain the right to remove comments or content that includes:

- Obscene or racist content
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Potentially libellous statements.
- Plagiarised material; any material in violation of any laws, including copyright
- Private, personal information published without consent
- Information or links unrelated to the content of the forum
- Commercial promotions or spam
- Alleges a breach of a Council's policy or the law

The Council's response to any communication received not meeting the above criteria will be to either ignore, inform the sender of our policy or send a brief response as appropriate. This will be at the Council's discretion based on the message received, given our limited resources available. Any information posted on the Facebook page not in line with the above criteria will be removed as quickly as practically possible.

A full, user friendly guide to the use of the Community Council Facebook Group can be found in Appendix 1.

### **Council Website**

Our website will provide easy access to meeting dates, agendas minutes, policies, duties and essential information on the workings of the Community Council. We may direct those contacting us to our website to see the required information.

### **Council email**

The Clerk to the Council can be contacted by email at the following address:  
manordeificc@gmail.com

Please be aware that our Clerk works part-time hours and that there may be a delay in responses and forwarding of email to this address. An 'out of office' message should be used when appropriate.

The Clerk is responsible for dealing with email received and passing on any relevant mail to members or external agencies for information and/or action. All new Emails requiring data to be passed on, will be followed up with a Data consent form for completion before action is taken with that correspondence.

Individual Councillors are at liberty to communicate directly with residents in relation to their own personal views and, if appropriate, copy to the Clerk. NB any emails copied to the Clerk become official and will be subject to The Freedom of Information Act. These procedures will ensure that a complete and proper record of all correspondence is kept.

Councillors should also be careful only to cc essential recipients on emails i.e. to avoid use of the 'Reply to All' option if at all possible, but of course copying in all who need to know and ensuring that email trails have been removed.

Do not forward personal information on to other people or groups outside of the Council, this includes names, addresses, email, IP addresses and cookie identifiers.

### **SMS (texting)**

Members and the Clerk may use SMS as a convenient way to communicate at times. All are reminded that this policy also applies to such messages.

### **Video Conferencing e.g. Zoom**

If this medium is used to communicate please note that this policy also applies to the use of video conferencing.

## APPENDIX 1

### SOCIAL MEDIA GROUP - COMMUNITY COUNCIL ACCOUNT

#### ABOUT

This is the social media group for Manordeifi Community Council and also a group for the local community of Abercych, Carreg-Wen, Newchapel, Pontrhydyceirt, and the surrounding rural farms and properties that make up Manordeifi.

Manordeifi Community Council is an elected group of people that serve the community of Manordeifi. As well as representing the community to the local authority, your Community Councillors facilitate a wide range of projects and activities which promote the well-being of the local area, bringing local people together to help things happen and to protect and promote the community and our environment. Your Community Councillors also advise, petition, influence and advocate numerous causes and cases of concern on behalf of the local community.

This is a safe space for elected Councillors and residents of Manordeifi **ONLY**. This group is a local community group and therefore all posts must relate to the local community; example posts can include local events, meetings and clubs, exciting news/information/updates that affect the local community. **Please be kind and courteous, no hate speech, bullying or buying and selling.**

#### ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS TO JOIN GROUP

1. Do you agree to answer eligibility questions to become a member of this group?
2. Do you live in Manordeifi; Abercych, Newchapel, Carreg-Wen, Pontrhydyceirt or the surrounding farms or properties? Please provide details.
3. Do you act as a responsible adult or carer for a resident in Manordeifi? Please provide details.
4. Do you agree to all of the group rules and understand that if you do not, you may be removed from the group?

#### GROUP RULES FOR ADMINS

1. **Rule 1** – All posts must relate to the local community and your role as Community Councillor. Posts should be directly linked to local issues, services, information, and events that will empower and support residents and have a direct link to the community of Manordeifi. Ultimately, all posts should be sharing information or engaging conversations with the community.
2. **Rule 2** - Do not post anything that is in anyway illegal, defamatory, inflammatory, insulting, threatening, impolite, offensive or of a sexual nature, racist, homophobic, or otherwise offensive.

3. **Rule 3** - Do not post anything which could identify or endanger a 3rd party (who may or may not be a member). Do not share personal information and ensure you have the permission of any member you may need to mention in your post.
4. **Rule 4** - Do not post anything here which concerns matters which should be referred to the police.
5. **Rule 5** - Being part of this group requires mutual trust. Authentic, expressive discussions make groups great, but may also be sensitive and private. All information shared within the community must be fact-checked and accurate and be relevant to the residents of Manordeifi.
6. **Rule 6** - Please ask any resident to discuss or raise a complaint or issue with you or through the relevant local authority directly so as not to alarm any sensitive residents.
7. **Rule 7** – Absolutely no selling of items within this group, although free items of great value physically or mentally for residents can be posted.
8. **Rule 8** - Many issues discussed in this group may have a political nature and although we do receive support from our County Councillor and MP's, we should ensure that when discussing political issues that we are being objective and sensitive to the values of others. Political debate must follow group rules (1 to 5).

## GROUP RULES FOR MEMBERS

1. **Think Before You Post** – This is a local group created to allow elected Community Councillors and residents to communicate with each other. Before you post, please ensure that you are providing accurate, important information to the local community only. Examples of posts could include but are not limited to sharing exciting events taking place within the ward, community initiative updates, news and information that affects residents and specific details on local issues. Please ensure that the information you post is fact-checked and accurate.
2. **Reporting Concerns To Local Authority** - Please report any concerns to a Community Councillor or the relevant local authority directly, before you share details here which may alarm certain residents.
3. **Be kind and Courteous** - We're all in this together to create a warm, welcoming, and inclusive environment. When creating content or commenting on posts, please treat everyone with respect and kindness.
4. **No Hate Speech, Bullying or Illegal Activity** – Bullying, discrimination or posts referring to illegal activities of any kind will NOT be tolerated within this group.
5. **No Advertising** – Whilst Manordeifi events and news are encouraged here, please do not advertise other events outside of the community unless it has a direct correlation with our residents. Selling of any kind will NOT be allowed within this group.
6. **Respect Everyone's Privacy** – Please respect healthy boundaries and the privacy of those within this group. Please do not share any personal information and ensure that you have the permission of anyone you are specifically mentioning in your post.