



SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN 2013–2017

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June 2013

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What is social media?

The Chartered Institute of Public Relations¹ defines social media as the term given to, 'internet and mobile based channels which allow users to interact with each other and share opinions and content.' See appendix 2 for a glossary of terms used in this document.

Background

The City's Communications and Information Services (IS) teams have been trialling the use of social media since 2010 mostly through Facebook (a social networking website), YouTube (a video sharing site), Twitter (an online social networking service and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read text-based messages of up to 140 characters). The Cockburn Youth Centre and Cockburn libraries established Facebook pages in 2008. The City's 'Communication's Strategy and Action Plan 2012-17' identifies the need for a social media strategy and policy.

Since 2008, the internet is the most common way people make contact with local government. A local government which does not subscribe to social media may not understand its stakeholders, or the broader marketplace. The report of Government 2.0 taskforce, 2010, recommended that public authorities should be actively encouraged to engage on line. Australians are one of the biggest users of social media spending over seven hours per month using social media platformsⁱ.

Fact Box

1. There are roughly 13.4 million regular social media users in Australiaⁱⁱ
2. 70.6% of Australian online users have accessed a member community site in Feb 2011ⁱⁱⁱ
3. 61.5% of Australian online users now use Facebook^{iv}
4. There are 866,520 Facebook users in WA, April 2011^v
5. 80.2% of City of Cockburn residents have access to the internet at home^{vi}
6. By 2020 80% of people will choose to engage with government through the internet and social media, according to KPMG research

Social media gives stakeholders the opportunity to have two way conversations with their local government.

Social media can be a useful customer service tool – if one person asks a question and receives an answer – multiple people see that answer.

Social media gives organisations the opportunity to hear what people are saying about them, what their major concerns are and provides an opportunity to respond.

Social media is a reputation monitoring tool. Research shows that good use of social media can assist an organisation to be perceived as more accountable and transparent.

¹ CIPR Social Media (#ciprs) Best Practice Guide May 2011

Strategic Alignment & Purpose of this Strategy

The City's Vision and mission is 'To make the City of Cockburn the most attractive place to live, work, visit and invest in, within the Perth metropolitan area'.

The use of social media will assist the City to achieving the goals from the 'Leading and Listening' area of its Strategic Community Plan as detailed below.

1. Effective and constructive dialogue with all City Stakeholders*
2. A responsive, accountable and sustainable organisation
3. Quality Customer service that promotes business process improvement and innovation that delivers our strategic goals
4. A skilled and engaged workforce
5. People of all ages and abilities to have equal access to our facilities and services in our communities

This strategy will assist to achieve the primary objectives of the City of Cockburn's Communications Strategy and Action Plan 2012-2017 which are:

1. To develop staff knowledge of City activity, the City's vision and future direction, through internal communications.
2. To improve the City's community consultation and engagement processes.
3. To improve the community's knowledge of the City's Vision for the area.
4. To improve stakeholder awareness of the City's services and community facilities.
5. To keep stakeholders up-to-date with the status of major projects and issues
6. To promote the City's events.
7. To improve the perception of local government through the continual improvement of customer service.
8. To ensure that the City of Cockburn primary brand is used consistently across all marketing communication and service points.
9. To achieve continual improvement in the perception of the City as a local government and the elected members as its leaders.
10. To ensure that communications material is accessible.

Evaluation of the City's Corporate Communications Strategy and Action plan is detailed as follows:

1. Annual Community and Business Perceptions Survey;
2. Annual KPI Customer Satisfaction Surveys;
3. Internal Communications Survey (bi-ennial);
4. Analysis of media messages; and,
5. Feedback from Regional Seniors Group, Disability Reference Group, Children's Reference Group, Aboriginal Reference Group, Youth Advisory Council Reference Group and other Council supported Reference Groups.

Objective 1 - Effective and constructive dialogue with all City Stakeholders

Responses and conversations are public on social media. Staff responses must be effective and constructive. Social media enables a more collaborative, two way dialogue with stakeholders. People feel more empowered on social media. It is an easier, cost effective and faster way to communicate with stakeholders. This should be embraced as an additional avenue for public consultation. Public forums facilitate discussions and feedback. Governments have used it for the co-creation of policy, planning and priority

setting, updates on public projects and events, timely information on matters of local interest and live coverage of events, which could include Council meetings.

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
1.1 Listen to what people are saying	City officers are aware of what the community is saying, what the topical and key issues are and who the key influencers are.	The City currently uses Google alerts, is trialling "Meltwater" news and has trialled other listening tools. Other listening tools will be reviewed ^{vii}	Ongoing daily – (currently occurring)	Existing Budget	Media & Communications Officers; Marketing Officer
1.2 Develop Mayor and CEO blog strategy	Annual Community Perceptions Survey – "Council's leadership within the community"	1. Training and guidance from media officers may be required. 2. Blog entries must be related to goals of the City.	2015-2016	Existing Budget	Corporate Communications Mayor CEO
1.3 Community Engagement framework to include the use of social media	Framework developed to include social media tools	Resources to manage this must be considered.	2013-14	Existing Budget	Corporate Communications; Human Services, Community Development Services
1.4 Develop online community forum page	Increased community input into consultation/engagement. (eg 3% above previous experience)	Staff asked to put forward suggestions annually for online community forums	2015-16	Existing Budget (if Customer Management System has the capability)	IS; Corporate Communications
1.5 Develop posting guidelines for social media sites	Guidelines developed http://www.facebook.com/CityOfCockburn#!/CityOfCockburn/app_211427168875708	Current guidelines are updated as needed	Completed (currently occurring)	Existing Budget	IS; Corporate Communications
1.6 Develop a schedule of posting with social media Working Group for key matters, including: 1. Strategies to address the major concerns in the annual Community	A steady feed of interesting posts which meet City objectives	Important to get a good mix of topics that stakeholders are interested in	2013-14	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
Perceptions Survey. 2. Manage a conversation topics calendar					
1.7 Develop a marketing plan to encourage stakeholders to engage with the City on social media	1. Facebook likes (Corporate only) increased to 2000 and Twitter followers to 2000 by end 2014. ² 2. Each business unit to set own goals	Consider Google Ads and proactive means of engaging with stakeholders	2014-15	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications; Marketing Officer; Webmaster
1.8 Develop a website that allows for interaction	A suitable website is developed.	This includes; 1. the ability to comment on or like/dislike pages; 2. The ability for RSS feeds	TBA (Requires IS input & support)	Existing Budget (IS)	IS; Corporate Communications

Objective 2 - That the City of Cockburn is a responsive, accountable and sustainable organisation

Social media gives the City a higher degree of transparency and accountability. This is good for governance and for the City's reputation. The community now expects information and responses at a much faster rate. In addition, social media provides the opportunity to understand community sentiment. This is valuable customer insight. Social media offers the City the ability to tap into public opinion to improve services, design and delivery. Social media will ultimately reduce the number of calls per head of the population to the contact centre by driving more traffic to the website and through information posted on social media sites. 'Good' use of social media improves search engine optimisation.

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
2.1 Develop social media policy and guidelines	Adopted by Council	This policy and guidelines will require briefing sessions / training for all staff and will need to be covered in inductions. A short guide for personal use will also be available.	2013-14	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications; Manager Human Resources; Manager IS Services
2.2 Update customer service charter with an agreed response time	Customer Service Charter updated	1. Will recommend 4 hour response time during the working day if a response is required.	2014-15	Existing Budget	Customer Service Coordinator; Corporate Communications; Units that have their own

² 18 March 2013 – The City of Cockburn Corporate Facebook has 1180 likes ; the libraries has 711 likes; Youth Services has 350 likes; Community Services has 286 likes

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
for social media questions		2. If a question or query cannot be answered directly, a post will simply say that “we will get back to you.”			Facebook pages
2.3 Make provision for one Media and Communication Officer to be on call to take media calls and monitor and respond to social media	Media officers are on call	1. The risk of not monitoring 24/7 is one faced by many organisations. 6% social media users expect a response in 10 mins and 25% in one hour. The life of a tweet estimated at 10 minutes ³ . 2. Consider monitoring from 7am – 10pm	2013-14	Estimate \$12,000 for staff time.	Human Resources; Manager Corporate Communications
2.4 Develop a process for monitoring and posting to social media using champions across the organisation	Champions identified	1. This will include how to manage who posts and when. Through sharing the task it is hoped that additional resource implications can be managed. 2. Position descriptions will need to be amended across the organisation to include the responsibility for managing aspects of social media. 3. Who becomes social media champions and who is given which levels of access is to be determined by a Working Group in consultation with Strategic Business Manager’s Group.	2013-14	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications; Working Group
2.5	The City is	Any	2013-14	Existing	IS;

³ University of Melbourne at 2012 Social Media in Government Conference, Melbourne

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
Ensure compliance with record management requirements	compliant	communications between an agency and the public, including those which result from the use of social networking tools such as Facebook and Twitter, are considered to be a record for the purposes of the State Records Act WA 2000.		Budget	Corporate Communications
2.6 Undertake a risk assessment of the use of social media	Risk assessment undertaken	Focus on: 1. Operational, 2. Reputational, and 3. Compliance Issues.	2013-14 (See Appendix 1)	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications; Manager`s Group
2.7 Develop social media crisis plan	Plan developed	As per 2.5 above	2014-15	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications
2.8 Review social media platforms (currently - Twitter, Facebook, YouTube)	Working Group has an agenda item to discuss the merits of social media platforms	There is little point in trialling new social media platforms. There is currently more value in using the most appropriate, well established sites	Ongoing (currently occurring)	Existing Budget	Corporate Communications; Social Media Working Group
2.9 Develop methods for analysis of engagement.	Suitable methods determined	This could be: 1. Where activity is taking place 2. Reach 3. Conversation 4. Number of page views 5. Number of likes and comments	2013-14	Existing Budget	Corporate Communications

Objective 3 - Customer service to promote business process improvement and innovation to deliver the City's strategic goals

Social media is highly visible. The answer or solution is not only provided to the individual but to a wider audience demonstrating prompt action. Social media empowers the community to report problems easily. This improves general satisfaction with the local area and increases a sense of community. At times of crisis social media can assist where websites have been known to crash.

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
3.1 Reduce number of calls (and therefore cost) per capita to the contact centre through promotion of social media	No increase in number of phone calls as the population increases	An easily searchable website and the introduction of updated software will contribute to reduced calls	2015-16	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications; Coordinator Customer Service
3.2 Define which service units of the organisation should have their own social media pages	Criteria developed	Likely to be: 1. Libraries 2. South Lake Leisure Centre 3. Community Development 4. Azelia Ley Museum 5. Youth Centre Any area that has its own site will be completely responsible for managing their site. Only those areas with a high unique use will be considered for their own sites, otherwise there will not be enough activity and it will dilute the corporate site. Staff will need to be approved for use and will be trained	2013-14	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications; Social Media Working Group
3.3 Service units to incorporate social media into their own marketing plans	Business Units are using social media as a tool	This will be a staged roll out	2015-16	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications
3.4 Introduce instant messaging for the contact centre	Instant messaging available	This is different to speaking on Facebook as messages are instant <u>private</u> conversations	2015-16	TBA	Customer Service Coordinator; IS Services
3.5 Develop procedure for evaluating the benefit of	Procedure developed	This will require that the idea meets City objectives. A cost to implement will be required	2013-14	TBA	Manager Corporate Communications; Social Media Working Group

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
implementing new social media projects					
3.6 Implement pin-2-fix (a WA Local Government portal whereby customers can report issues and a customer request will be generated to the relevant council.	Pin-2-fix – live and working	WALGA project – was due to launch 2012. Technical difficulties and others problems have delayed the project	2014-15	Existing Budget	WALGA; IS Services; Customer Service Co-ordinator.

Objective 4 - A skilled and engaged workforce

Internal use of social media in State Government departments has proved to be very successful in reducing the number of business units working in silos. This is done by increasing cross unit collaboration, creating cross organisational shared interest groups and reducing emails. There were more than 110 government “Yammer” networks throughout Australia in November, 2012. Yammer is a form of social media used for internal communication used for knowledge management and collaborations.

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
4.1 Develop administrator levels and process by which staff are allowed to access social media for work use	Process developed	This will range from those allowed to post to those permitted to answer questions	2013-14	Existing Budget	Manager Corporate Communications Manager IS
4.2 Develop training packages for staff and identify frequency of training: 4.2.1 Train all staff on the usage requirements 4.2.2 Social media champions will be trained on	Training package and schedule developed	The training could be online and would be a component of the induction process	2013-14	\$8,000 per annum	Manager Corporate Communications; IS; Manager HR

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
how and when to post and how to respond.					
4.3 Source a training package for Elected Members	Training package developed and available	So that Elected Members are aware of the basic business rules.	2014-15	Elected members training budget	Manager, Corporate Communications
4.4 Develop framework for responding to social media	Response framework completed	The City's current response framework was adapted from the US Airforce response framework and appears to be working well .	2013-14	Existing Budget	Manager, Corporate Communications
4.5 Consider use of LinkedIn for recruitment	Use of LinkedIn has been assessed	For relevant roles and demographics	2015-16	Existing Budget	Manager, Human Resources
4.6 Develop internal social networking site	Internal social networking site developed (IS has advised that this will come with the new Customer Management System (MCS))	Research has shown that the use of internal social networking sites such as Yammer leads to greater cooperation across the organisation	2014-15	TBA (Manager IS)	Manager IS; Manager Corporate Communications.

Objective 5 - People of all ages and abilities to have equal access to our facilities and services in our communities

Social media will complement and not replace traditional means of communication.

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
5.1 Improve access to social media and the internet for residents	1. Training offered by Youth Centre, Libraries, Seniors Centre on suitable use of social media 2. Wi-fi made widely available in the City	Subject to demand and take up	2016-17	Existing Budget	Libraries; Seniors Centre; Youth Centre
5.2 Consider people with a disability in the use of social media and development of website	Website conforms to minimum Australian guidelines.	Considerations include: 1. Producing readable PDFs; 2. Consideration of "easychirp" (an accessible version	2016-17	TBA	Manager Corporate Communications; IS; Disability Access and Inclusion Officer (DAIO)

Strategy	Measurement	Comment	When	Cost	Who
		of Twitter); 3. Using subtitles on videos; 4. Providing transcripts of videos			

Strategy Implementation

Adoption and Endorsement - The social media strategy and policy is to be reviewed by the Strategic Business Group Managers (SBMG) before being reviewed and endorsed by the Executive for presentation to Council.

Resources will need to be estimated and funded as part of the annual budget process.

Review - The strategy will be reviewed annually as trends and best practice evolve in social media.

Appendix 1 - Risk Register

	Risk Category	Consequence	Likelihood	Level of Risk	Risk Treatment	
1	Staff do not follow City Policy and Guidelines	Moderate	Possible	High	All staff are educated on Social Media Policy. All new staff made aware of Policy. Policy reviewed once a year.	Moderate
2	Overwhelming amount of posts which require responses	Moderate	Likely	High	Ensure enough people are trained to deal with responses. Media staff are paid to be on call to monitor and control.	Low
3	Responsible officers not monitoring and responding for their area	Moderate	Possible	High	Ensure that champions in each area sign off to understand their responsibilities and that, in their absence, they appoint another champion. job descriptions are updated to include this role	Low
4	Councillors not posting in line with Council decisions, Council policy and / or guidelines	Major	Likely	Extreme	Councillors to receive information session on the policy and guidelines, once approved by Council.	Moderate
5	Corporate Communications or Customer Services miss posts by stakeholders	Moderate	Possible	High	The process for monitoring will be refined and is likely to include the Contact Centre	Low
6	Staff member with knowledge leaves department	Moderate	Likely	High	Ensure that enough people across the organisation have knowledge	Low
7	Increased workload for officers	Moderate	Likely	High	Ensure that the management of social media is spread across the organisation	Low

	Risk Category	Consequence	Likelihood	Level of Risk	Risk Treatment	
8	Bandwidth implications with more staff accessing social media	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBA
9	Negative rude or derogatory posts	Minor	Almost Certain	High	Use posting guidelines and response framework to determine how to react to posts. Negative posts are not normally an issue and it provides an opportunity for the City to clarify matters.	Low
10	Legal implications of not removing defamatory posts due to inadequate monitoring	Major	Possible	High	24 hour monitoring or monitoring out of hours is not currently normal practice in local government but it does present a concern as an organisation can be responsible for what someone else posts on their page.* Pay media officers to be on call for media and social media responses after hours	Low-Moderate
11	Not enough staff trained well enough to handle postings	Moderate	Possible	High	Ensure that social media posting becomes an integral part of the role of one person plus proxy(s) in relevant departments and that a training pack is developed accordingly	Low-moderate
12	Staff responding inappropriately on City's social media pages	Major	Possible	High	Ensure that only those with permission and training to post do so using social media response framework	Low-moderate
13	Staff bringing City of Cockburn in to disrepute through inappropriate personal use of social media and their connection to the City	Major	Likely	Extreme	Ensure that the policy covers personal use adequately and that training for all staff highlights this aspect.	Moderate

	Risk Category	Consequence	Likelihood	Level of Risk	Risk Treatment	
14	Not keeping adequate records to comply with the State Record Keeping Act (2000)	Major	Likely	Extreme	Corporate Communications Unit and Information Services to develop procedure for social media record keeping, including how and who to take snapshots of social media pages	Low

**Legal advice is in a new phase in this sphere, but advice includes the point when to act is when a potential defamatory post is identified*

Appendix 2 - Glossary of Terms - Types of social media

Blogs with comments – can be used to open public conversations, surface issues and resolve or discuss them

Podcasting – audio versions of content for updates, live deliberations, emergencies, “how to” messages

Photo sharing - helps create awareness and reaches new audiences

RSS Syndicated web feeds – people can sign up to receive updates to pages on a website which interest them

Social bookmarking, news sharing, tagging – ways of sharing content with others

Social networking – virtual communities (internal and external) such as Facebook and is most versatile for content and has the most diverse adoption rates.

Mashups – combining content from multiple sources to create an integrated web based application

Micro-blogging – a form of blogging which allows brief instant message size text updates, as popularised by Twitter

Video sharing – “how to” videos, education, promotion

Virtual Worlds – simulations of environments and people, such as online meetings and training;

Widgets – small applications and code in web pages that bring (syndicated) content to the user. They can promote awareness, use and usefulness of government sites, information and services.

Wikis – collaborative authoring and editing for knowledge sharing and public input

ⁱ Nielson, The Australian Internet and Technology Report 2010

ⁱⁱ Online Australians Shift to Social Networks, Forrester, March 2011

ⁱⁱⁱ Neilson 2011

^{iv} Neilson 2011

^v Facebook.com

^{vi} Australian Government 2011 Census data

^{vii} Listening tools include Google Alerts, social mention, Tweetdeck, Tweetface, Google alerts, Nielson buzz metrics, Sprout Social Radian 6