

Response to Request for Information

Reference FOI 001897
Date 25 January 2018

Social Media

Request:

Under the Freedom of Information Act I would like to request the following information:

1. Does your organisation have a Facebook Page(s)? If yes, what is/are the url(s) and when were they set up?

Yes, [Wolverhampton Today](https://www.facebook.com/WolverhamptonToday/). Set up in November 2011.
<https://www.facebook.com/WolverhamptonToday/>

2. Does your organisation advertise or spend any money on Facebook? If yes, please can you outline what expenditure has occurred and break down expenditure per calendar year (January to December) since 2004?

The council's spend on Facebook advertising in the last three years was:

2015 = £38,956
2016 = £34,354
2017 = £19,522 and so far this year £2,432

A significant proportion of the £38,956 spent on Facebook advertising in 2015 and £34,354 in 2016 helped support the 'Terrific for Twos' free-15 hour a week childcare offer. The campaign, funded by central Government, but delivered by the council achieved an 80% take-up rate and was commended by the Department for Education as an example of best practice.

Due to changes to our financial system we are unable to go back any further than the time frames stipulated above.

3. Does your organisation have a Twitter Account? If yes, what is/are the url(s) and when were they set up?

Yes, [@WolvesCouncil](https://twitter.com/WolvesCouncil). Set up in Aug 2010.
https://twitter.com/WolvesCouncil?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor

4. Does your organisation advertise or spend any money on Twitter? If yes, please can you outline what expenditure has occurred and break down expenditure per calendar year (January to December) since 2006?

2015 = Nil

2016 = £105

£105 was spent on promoting three city events: the Wolves in Wolves launch (£25), the Prince Albert 150th celebration (£40), the Wildlife of the Year Photography Exhibition (£40).

2017 £100 was spent on the Green City Campaign

Due to changes to our financial system we are unable to go back any further than the time frames stipulated above.

5. Does your organisation use Google G-Suite services (Google services) or does your organisation rely on google for any services (such as email hosting)? If yes, what are the services, when were they agreed and how much did they cost?

No

6. Does your organisation advertise or spend any money on Google? If yes, please can you outline what expenditure has occurred and break down expenditure per calendar year (January to December) since the payments first began?

Yes, see below:

May 2016: £1,000 for foster carer recruitment

September 2016: £1,000 for foster carer recruitment

May 2017: £2,352 for foster carer recruitment

September 2017: £600 for What's on Wolverhampton events website

Notes for guidance

Growth in the use of social media in recent years has opened up new opportunities for the council to engage and inform local people.

Across all of its social media channels, the council has developed an audience of over 244,000 followers receiving information on everything from bin collections to gigs at the Civic Halls.

Wolverhampton Today, the council's Facebook page, has 48,000 followers. The average for council's is 5,000 (source Govrank). By pro-rata population size it's the most successful local authority Facebook page in the UK. It's a platform for sharing council updates as well as stories from across the city to help bring people together.

This fits into the council's wider digital transformation programme where we are trying to provide as many services as possible online so that our customers can access them how and when they want to.

The same goes for the way we inform and engage local communities. Social media channels such as Facebook help us to inform people and get direct feedback on what they think. This helps shape the council's thinking and policies. It also means we are able to deliver cheaper, more targeted and more effective communications.

An example of this is the 'Terrific for Twos' free-15 hour a week childcare offer. The campaign, funded by central Government, but delivered by the council achieved an 80% take-up rate and was commended by the Department for Education as an example of best practice. A significant proportion of the £38,956 spent on Facebook advertising in 2015 and £34,354 in 2016 helped support this campaign.

Online advertising has also helped the council recruit new foster carers. Again, Facebook is an effective way of encouraging would-be foster carers to attend recruitment events.

Effective foster care recruitment helps us save on using more expensive commercial foster care agencies which, on average, costs the council £16,000 more a child every year.

Digital advertising on social media also helps us to get hundreds of thousands of people into the city to visit council venues such as the nationally renowned Civic Halls, Art Gallery and Bantock House. The Civic Halls alone bring £330,000 visitors to the city each year, generates £4.3m for the local economy and sustains 360 jobs.

Digital is more cost effective than more traditional forms of advertising expenditure, can be more targeted to key audiences and is directly measurable in comparison.

- 7 Is there an official policy for the use of organisational Facebook or Twitter Accounts (ie how to post, what to use it for and when to delete or preserve records)? If there is a policy (or policies) please may I be provided with them?"
Yes, see attached appendix 'Extract from Acceptable Use of ICT assets & Social Media policy'.

4 Use of social media

Social media applications include, but are not limited to:

- Social networking sites e.g. Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn
- Video and photo sharing websites e.g. Flickr, YouTube
- Micro-blogging sites e.g. Twitter
- Weblogs, including corporate blogs, personal blogs or blogs hosted by on-line media publications
- Forums and discussion boards such as Yammer, Yahoo! Groups or Google Groups
- Online Encyclopedias such as Wikipedia
- Any other websites that allow individual users or companies to use simple publishing tools

Social media applications are not limited to websites and this policy applies to any other electronic application (such as mobile phone based, or hand held device based applications) which provides for the sharing of information to user groups or the public at large. Online communications may include posting or publishing information via Social Media Applications, uploading and/ or sharing photos or images, direct messaging, status “updates” or any other form of interaction and/ or communication facilitated by social media.

4.1 Personal social media accounts – guidelines

- 4.1.1 Revealing or implying a place of employment potentially increases exposure to both the individual and the Council. Individuals are responsible and accountable for information that they put forward and should monitor their posts accordingly.
- 4.1.2 Disparaging or adverse comments about the Council, employees, contractors or colleagues must not be made.
- 4.1.3 Under no circumstances will employees share confidential information arising from their employment with the council.
- 4.1.4 Material posted by others with inappropriate or disparaging content and information stored or posted by others (including non-employees) in the social media environment may also damage the Council’s reputation. If you become aware of any such material which may damage the Council or its reputation, you must immediately notify the Council’s Communications team.
- 4.1.5 Work email addresses must not be used to set up personal social media accounts. Do not use your Council email address if you register for services or buy personal goods online. You may use your Council email address to register for professional services, such as appropriate news alerts and professional forums and membership of professional bodies.

- 4.1.6 Avoid using the same online accounts for both personal and professional activities.
- 4.1.7 Employees should ensure that social media interactions are professional, appropriate and in line with Council safeguarding policies (e.g. is it appropriate to accept or send friend requests)
- 4.1.8 Access to webmail services such as Google Mail, Hotmail and Yahoo is not permitted from Council devices. This is due to the risk of information leakage from the Council network, aligned to Information Governance policies.
- 4.1.9 Do not upload Council documents to external file-sharing or collaboration services unless:
- You understand the terms and conditions of using the service, including how your information is used by the service provider and the legal liabilities for disclosure of information
 - You are completely confident that the material you are uploading is appropriate for release to the public domain, even if releasing it is not your intention
 - You know which country the information would be stored in, and the location is compliant with relevant UK and EU legislation
 - You know for sure that you can permanently delete the material from the service
- 4.1.10 Yammer, LinkedIn and similar services are aimed at professionals. You should treat these services with as much caution as other “free” services. In particular you should be aware that such services often try to copy your contacts list from Outlook or your phone, in which case you might disclose information about other people.

4.2 City of Wolverhampton Council social media accounts – Principles of use

- 4.2.1 All use of Council social media accounts should be in accordance with the council's objectives and values, its Code of Conduct for Employees, the Email, Internet, Intranet, Equal Opportunities and Dignity at Work policies and procedures.
- 4.2.2 Officers must not set up any council social media accounts without the prior engagement and agreement of the Corporate Communications Team and approval from the appropriate Head of Service.
- 4.2.3 Officers with responsibility for council social media accounts, known as account moderators, must inform the Corporate Communications Team of any changes to account passwords or account moderation.
- 4.2.4 Account moderators must only engage with appropriate accounts linked to the council's day to day business and not personal interest such as football clubs and celebrity accounts.

- 4.2.5 All council accounts must have clear council branding, approved by the Corporate Communications Team.
- 4.2.6 Account moderators who publish on council social media accounts are indemnified for posts as long as they have received instructions or information and acted in good faith. The moderator needs to ensure the accuracy of the information or to ensure that the person asking for the information to be published is authorized to do so.
- 4.2.7 Account moderators must act in accordance with the council's Data Protection and Information Security policies.
- 4.2.8 Account moderators must act professionally at all times in council social media accounts. All posts must be in line with the council's values and the Employee Code of Conduct.
- 4.2.9 Content copied from elsewhere, for which the council does not own the copyright, must not be published.
- 4.2.10 Account moderators must not publish the same or similar content repeatedly or in bulk, this can also be called "spamming".
- 4.2.11 Council social media accounts must not be used at any time for political purposes or political party campaigning.
- 4.2.12 Account moderators must regularly review the council accounts they are responsible for. Any inappropriate content must be removed immediately and the Account Moderator must report the content to their line manager, Corporate Communications and directly with the social media site or application.
- 4.2.13 Accounts moderators must not post promotional content for commercial organisations or endorse external organisations, unless it has been approved by the appropriate Head of Service and Corporate Communications have been consulted.
- 4.2.14 Account moderators should not use the same passwords for social media accounts that are used to access council computers or devices.
- 4.2.15 Account moderators should not follow links or download software on social media pages posted by individuals or organizations that you do not know.
- 4.2.16 If any content on any social media web page looks suspicious in any way, account moderators should close their browser and should not return to that page.
- 4.2.17 Accounts, moderators must configure social media accounts to encrypt sessions whenever possible. Facebook, Twitter and other support

encryption as an option. This is extremely important for roaming users who connect via public Wi-Fi networks.

4.2.18 If a device that is used to access council social media accounts is lost or stolen, Corporate Communications must be notified immediately so that passwords can be changed.

4.2.19 Roles and responsibilities

- Line managers are responsible for ensuring that account moderators and any social media accounts within their control are monitored effectively and operate within the policy and code of practice. All managers are responsible for ensuring that those in their teams understand this policy and abide by it, and for giving guidance on the appropriate use of social media sites in the workplace. Line managers must also inform Corporate Communications about any changes to the management of accounts including change of account moderators and passwords.
- Account moderators are responsible for the effective operation of council social media accounts in line with the policy and code of practice, following approval and support from Corporate Communications. On receiving access to social media all account moderators will be asked to sign a declaration and affirm their acceptance of the Social Media Policy and principles set out in the Social Media Code of Practice and will be regularly reminded of the consequences of failing to uphold them. Failure to acknowledge acceptance of these principles will result in access to social media facilities being denied.
- Corporate Communications are responsible for approving Council social media accounts and will maintain a record of all accounts, their moderators and passwords. They will also support the initial development of council accounts and monitor accounts using a social media monitoring application and will be responsible for advising on the appropriate use of the social media.