



# Our Social Media Policy

June 25



Te Kaunihera-a-Rohe o Ngāmotu  
**New Plymouth  
District Council**

# NPDC social media channels

**At NPDC, we want to foster a respectful online community by reducing instances of hate, racism, abuse and misinformation. And we don't want you to inadvertently break the law.**

- We serve the interests of our residents and our role is to inform and entertain you and this includes sharing our stories on social media platforms such as Facebook and inviting people to offer their views.
- We welcome feedback on social media but will not allow comments that are insulting, inflammatory, abuse towards individuals, derogatory or those that spread misinformation or include personal attacks.
- Readers are allowed to disagree with someone else's opinion, but not disagreeable in the way you do so.
- We take pride in hosting readers' thoughts and opinions – but we are not here to enable trolls, pile-ons, attacks on other commenters or to post comments that risk breaking the law.
- Moderating these comments each day is a mammoth task for our small team – we have more than 90k followers on our social media channels, and can take 1 staff member a whole days work to moderate a single post.



# Hiding & turning off comments, or banning people on our social media channels

- Sometimes we have to hide or turn off comments, or ban users from our social media pages - and it is always a last resort as per this policy.
- It is never a case of “censoring” any particular viewpoint, or moderators only approving opinions with which they agree.
- When comments are turned off they are closed to everyone and we will post to explain why they have been closed.

## Reasons we hide comments?

- Comments that are insulting, discriminatory, inflammatory, spread factually incorrect information or break the law
- Comments in capital letters, or mostly in capital letters, or with bold font
- Comments that contain swear words, profanities or threatening language or use derogatory or misogynistic nicknames
- Excessive criticism of other comments or commenters or personal attacks on others
- Comments that contain advertising, URL links, Gifs, pictures, videos or link to explicit content, or are generated by bots, anonymous or fake accounts.
- Spam or clickbait

We also reserve the right to reject publication or withdraw any comment from a discussion at any point.

We operate a three strikes rule – we reserve the right to ban you from commenting on our channel for 12 months for repeat behaviour or offences of the above and we will inform you of this.





# During an Election period

- NPDC resources must only be used for NPDC purposes, not for candidates election campaigns. These resources include NPDC-owned physical assets, software, social media, and publications.
- NPDC's social media channels will remain neutral at all times. We will promote elections and the importance of voting, but will not associate these posts with any individual candidates.
- Any candidates must follow NPDC social media guidelines and may not use NPDC's channels for campaigning.
- Candidates cannot post, comment, rate, review, check-in or tag NPDC's social media channels during the election period - any candidate posts and activity (including candidacy of third parties) on NPDC social media channels will be removed.
- NPDC will remove any social media post from any person posting (whether positive or negative) referencing a candidate's nomination, intention to run for Council, or election campaign.
- NPDC's social media accounts will not follow any candidates.
- Candidates can share NPDC posts on their private channels and comment there.
- In 2025 this period runs from Friday 4<sup>th</sup> July – Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October.

