



**The Township of Cavan Monaghan – Policy for Social Media Use**

<b>Policy Title:</b>	Social Media Policy	<b>Policy Number</b>	2019-08
<b>Effective Date:</b>	October 2019	<b>Revision Number:</b> <b>Replaces:</b>	1
<b>Prepared By:</b>	Economic & Community Development	<b>Approved By:</b>	Council

**Policy Statement:**

1. The Township of Cavan Monaghan is committed to excellence in municipal management with a focus on accountability, transparency, communication and customer service. As a result, the Township strives to provide open access to information about its policies, services, and initiatives. The Township recognizes that social media applications are widely being utilized as communication tools with the potential to provide the public with timely information. The Township is committed to disbursing media information in a range of formats to reach a variety of stakeholders.
2. This policy applies to all Township staff and all social media accounts that are directly operated and maintained by the Township.
3. This policy is subject to the policy directions identified in both the Communications Policy and the Personnel Policy.
4. Social media sites operated by the Mayor, Councillors and members of Committees of Council are governed by the Code of Conduct for Members of Council.

## Definitions:

5. **Corporate Account** shall mean the account on the approved social media platform(s) that will include content of broad Municipal interest posted on behalf of all Municipal Departments.
6. **General Access/Personal Use Related to Municipal Operations** shall mean any personal account used by Municipal employees that references their involvement with the Township.
7. **Social media tools** are third-party internet-based applications that enable collaboration and sharing of opinions, insights, images, information and experiences through real time conversations among individuals and groups.
8. **Facebook** is a social networking website where users can post comments, share photographs and post links to news or other interesting content on the web, chat live, and watch short-form video.
9. **Twitter** is an online news and social networking site where people communicate in short messages called tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the user's profile page.
10. **Instagram** is a social networking service built around sharing photos and videos.
11. **Staff spokespersons** are staff members authorized to provide to the Social Media Administrator clarification and/or information on programs, services, activities, initiatives and issues that relate specifically to their business area.
12. **Social Media Administrator** is the dedicated staff member authorized to operate and manage the Township's social media platforms.

## Purpose:

13. To establish guidelines for the use of the social media applications specifically so that the disbursement of timely and accurate information is balanced with the Township's need to ensure that:
  - The use of social media tools does not compromise public safety or the Township's image.
  - The information provided through social media is in line with the Township's vision and guiding principles.
  - Social media content does not violate individual privacy or conflict with existing municipal policies and by-laws or other regulations as applicable.

- Social media content posted on behalf of the Township is accurate, accessible, transparent and accountable.
- The Social Media Policy is in support of the “Logo Standards Guide” approved in October 2007.

## **Goals:**

14. The primary goals of the Township’s use of social media are as follows:
  - Increase awareness of Municipal Services
  - Augment existing corporate communication methods and processes in a cost-effective manner
  - Provide an additional mechanism through which the Township keeps abreast of customer comments and perceptions regarding the Township
  - Disseminate time-sensitive information quickly
  - Correct misinformation, remedy mistakes or alter services to build stronger relationships
  - Develop trust and humanize the Township
  - Utilize social media analytical tools to help monitor, track and evaluate the Township’s communications and marketing efforts
  - Provide another method by which stakeholders can engage with the Township
  - Provide an additional method of collaborating with the public and other municipalities on mutually beneficial programs and initiatives

## **Procedure:**

15. Use of the Corporate Social Media Accounts is for corporate messaging only and shall be factual and unbiased. It will be managed by the Social Media Administrator Policy and Designated Communicators as defined in Appendix B of the Social Media Policy Document.
16. Corporate Social Media Accounts will not be used by individual employees or elected officials.
17. Posts requiring a political response on behalf of the Township will be forwarded to the Mayor (or his/her designate), or where appropriate the Chair of the relevant Committee. The Social Media Administrator together with the CAO will draft an appropriate response in accordance with the Social Media Response Chart (Appendix E) and the Communications Policy.
18. Posts that represent a complaint as defined in the Municipal Complaint Policy will be handled in accordance to provisions in that policy.

19. Emergency situations requiring the mobilization of the Municipal Emergency Plan will follow the protocol defined in the IMS Emergency Plan. Emergency information will be developed, approved and released by the Emergency Information Officer and Command Staff as listed in the Municipal Emergency Plan.
20. Use of the Corporate Social Media Accounts is for corporate messaging only and is managed by the Social Media Administrator and is not to be used by individual employees or elected officials.
21. If the Township's Corporate Social Media Accounts are "tagged" or mentioned in a social media post or comment, the Social Media Administrator in responding, will follow the process identified in the Social Media Response Chart (Appendix E).

### **Corporate Accounts:**

1. The Township will maintain a Corporate Account on approved social media platforms as outlined in Appendix A. The Corporate Account will include content on behalf of all departments and divisions.
2. The Social Media Administrator in collaboration with the CAO and relevant Department Heads will be responsible for creating and maintaining the content for the Corporate Account on each platform. The Corporate Accounts will be creating using corporate contact information, not personal contact information i.e. @cavanmonaghan.net not email@gmail.com.
3. The Social Media Administrator will be responsible for ensuring that social media monitoring on the Corporate Accounts is conducted in accordance with the established monitoring procedures.
4. Emergency situations requiring the mobilization of the Municipal Emergency Plan will follow the protocol defined in the IMS Emergency Plan. Emergency information will be developed, approved and released by the Emergency Information Officer and Command Staff as listed in the Municipal Emergency Plan.

### **General Access/Personal Use Related to Municipal Operations:**

1. It is strongly recommended that employees do not identify themselves as Municipal employees on their personal social media accounts, however, if they do, employees must represent their comments as their own and not reflective of the position of the Township. Employees of the Township of Cavan Monaghan shall be governed by the policies and regulations set forth in the Personnel Policy.
2. When identifying themselves as a Municipal employee on social media, all

Municipal employees will take measures to minimize risk to the Township by abiding by relevant legislation. This includes but is not limited to the Township's Personnel Policy as noted above.

3. Township devices are not to be used for personal social media use. The Township does not support and will not tolerate comments/expression and/or confidential material, defamation of a person's character or organization being posted on any social media sources with regards to the Township of Cavan Monaghan. Social media platforms are public as if you were making the same comment to the media or at a public form. Violation of this policy will constitute grounds for termination with cause.
4. Use of the Corporate Social Media Accounts is for corporate messaging only and is managed by the Social Media Administrator and is not to be used by individual employees or elected officials.
5. Social media sites operated by the Mayor, Councillors and members of Committees of Council are governed by the Code of Conduct for Members of Council. Guidelines for elected officials' personal use of social media are included in this document as Appendix C.

### **Content, Monitoring & Maintenance Requirements:**

1. The content on social media is to be timely, professional, relevant, accurate, align with corporate policies and respect privacy legislation. Content must also be information within the jurisdiction of and supported by the Township. Content should be posted on a regular basis with some content designed to invite feedback as a key component of social media is public engagement.
2. To minimize risk to the Township, the Social Media Administrator must:
  - Respond in a timely manner specially to comments of a sensitive or contentious manner and consult with a Director as required. Refer to the Social Media Response Chart in Appendix E for a guideline on how to respond.
  - Follow the Monitoring Guidelines outlined in Section F and respond accordingly if content is determined to be inappropriate.
  - Remove social media accounts that are no longer required and/or cannot be properly maintained.
  - Post the following in a manner appropriate to each social media account and platform;
    - i. A social media disclaimer as provided in Appendix D
    - ii. Identification as a Municipal Social Media site, including the

Municipal name and logo

iii. A link to the Municipal website

3. To ensure effective communication through social media, the Social Media Administrator should adopt the following best practices:

- Post updates at regular intervals to ensure current and up-to-date information and appropriate level of social media engagement. The Rule of Thirds can be used: post original content one third of the time, re-post content from stakeholders, partners and Municipal leaders one third of the time and engage with the audience one third of the time.
- Respond to public input in a timely manner (within 24 hours), demonstrating excellent customer service when answering questions and responding to feedback. Responses to routine enquiries or comments of a typical business nature are not required outside of normal business hours. Emergency information outside of office hours will be disseminated by the CAO, or appropriate Director.
- Welcome public input, including different perspectives and constructive feedback, but avoid escalating public exchanges that become unnecessarily confrontational. These discussions should be taken off-line. Whenever possible, response to these matters should invite the conversation to continue through personal communication methods: telephone, email, or in-person discussion to resolve the issue while maintaining the individual's privacy.
- Exchanges that conflict with the Respect in the Workplace Policy will be reported to the CAO who will follow the procedure defined in that policy.
- Ensure that content compliments traditional communications and reflects corporate priorities. Municipal messaging through social media and traditional communications must be consistent.

### **Records Management Requirement:**

Posts/user comments that are the original records of the Township's business activities, rights, obligations or responsibilities, such as responses to public consultations as part of Municipal studies are deemed to be official records.

Posts/user content deemed to be official records must:

- Be retained and purged according to the Township's Records Retention By-law.
- Comply with the appropriate sections of the *Municipal Freedom of Information & Protection of Privacy Act*.

Posts/user content which is considered to be a Transitory Record of the Township, such as a post by a Designated Communicator promoting an event that is advertised elsewhere, or a post by a member of the public commenting on Municipal services is not required to be retained and therefore may be purged from social media sites.

**Cautionary Note:**

Even after being deleted/purged, copies of posts/user content may remain viewable in cached and archived pages or in other users stored content and therefore, may be susceptible to disclosure requirements under applicable privacy laws and under rules of discovery for litigation.

**Monitoring Guidelines**

The Township reserves the right to remove any posts or content on Municipal social media platforms for reasons, including but not limited to:

- Profane language or content
- Commercial endorsement or solicitation, which includes showing preference of one product or service over another, request for products, services or assets for personal gain or use
- Personal attacks on individuals, groups, or ideas
- Content that violates another person/party's copyright, trademark and/or intellectual property rights
- Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.
- Confidential information pertaining to the Township or personal information about members of the public, Municipal staff and elected officials
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- Derogatory attacks on Municipal Council, its members and other levels of government
- Derogatory comments or opinions about Municipal employees and Municipal services
- Political campaigning by politicians, individuals running for election or individuals/groups supporting or opposing a specific political candidate or party

Repeat offenders will be advised they are in violation of the approved policies and

procedures for social media and immediately removed from Municipal social media sites.

In the event that information posted to Municipal social media sites is deemed inappropriate, the following immediate steps must be undertaken:

- Document relevant details of the content (i.e. screenshots, user information, social media platform, date and time, etc.)
- Report the content to the Social Media Administrator who will escalate the content to the CAO and appropriate Department Director.
- The Department Director will immediately take appropriate action which may include directing the removal of the offending content and/or contacting law enforcement.

The Social Media Administrator will review the analytics for all social media platforms and provide reports to the Management Team and Council on an as needed basis.



## **Appendix “A”**

### Approved Social Media Platforms

1. Facebook
2. Twitter
3. Instagram

## Appendix "B"

### Designated Communicators for Corporate Social Media Accounts

<b>Platform</b>	<b>Designated Communicator</b>
Facebook	Social Media Administrator, CAO (or designate), Emergency Information Officer, Fire Chief and Director of Public Works
Twitter	Social Media Administrator, CAO (or designate), Emergency Information Officer, Fire Chief and Director of Public Works
Instagram	Social Media Administrator, CAO (or designate)

## **Appendix “C”**

### **Social Media Guidelines for Elected Officials**

#### **Follow the Code of Conduct and Corporate values**

The Township of Cavan Monaghan’s Council Code of Conduct, corporate values and policies are the foundation for these principles and guidelines.

#### **Maintain confidentiality**

Do not post information discussed in closed session. Do not post anything that you would not present in a public forum.

#### **Maintain privacy**

Do not post private or confidential information about fellow Councilors, Municipal employees or constituents. Do not discuss situations involving names, pictures or otherwise identifiable individuals without their permission.

#### **Refer customer service questions to the Township’s official channels**

If you are asked a question about Municipal operations (garbage collection, snow removal, rink times, etc.) you will likely not have all the answers. Municipal staff monitor and respond to questions using the Corporate Accounts. Rather than duplicating the service provided by staff, elected officials can acknowledge the question and refer people to the Township’s official customer service channels on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, website ([www.cavanmonaghan.net](http://www.cavanmonaghan.net)), or by phone or email.

#### **Give credit where credit is due**

Be authentic. Write as an extension of your own voice. When you re-post something written by someone else, first ensure you have the proper permissions to do so. Clearly state that the material, letter, response, etc., has been authored by someone else. Do not use the copyrights, trademarks, publicity rights or other rights of others without the necessary permissions of the right holder(s).

#### **More isn’t more**

Resist the urge to post everything. Refrain from cutting and pasting emails from staff or constituents into posts without clear context and permissions. These messages are written for a specific audience, for a specific purpose, that is probably different from your own. You could be doing your readers a disservice by sharing information without context. Take the time to interpret the contents and re-present them based on your audience and its needs.

#### **Provide information when it counts**

Should you decide to engage in social media, know that monitoring and responding in a timely way are crucial. Social media participants expect timely responses to requests

and expect co-participants to monitor social media properties frequently and regularly.

**When in doubt do not post**

Like Municipal staff, elected officials have an obligation to ensure their posts are accurate and not misleading, and that they do not reveal confidential information.

**Know the Internet is permanent**

Once information is published online, it becomes part of a permanent record. It is a good practice to provide a link to an online space where your thought or message can be expressed completely and accurately if it, along with its context, cannot fit within a character-restricted space (such as Twitter).

**Social media needs maintenance. If you start it, commit to it**

Be dynamic: update news feeds, post developments, upload new pictures. Social media participants are savvy; if your online property appears static, it is likely to quickly fall into disuse.

## **Appendix “D”**

### **Facebook Disclaimer**

We welcome your participation on this Facebook page. This page is monitored regularly during business hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday) excluding statutory holidays. Comments outside of business hours will be reviewed the following business day. This is the official Facebook page for the Township of Cavan Monaghan. This page is NOT intended to report emergencies. If you have a police, fire or EMS emergency please call 9-1-1.

For details on how to file a non-emergency complaint and how it is processed please visit the [Municipal Complaints Policy](#) on our website. This page is intended to serve as a social media outlet for the Township of Cavan Monaghan in matters relating to public safety. Information on road closings, health hazards, large emergencies and other similar incidents will be posted along with updates as time allows. Every effort will be made to keep the information up to date but in the event of emergency, users are encouraged to look for formal media releases on the Township website and through local and regional emergency response agencies i.e. Peterborough Police/Peterborough & Peterborough County EMS.

This Facebook page is intended to enhance our communication – not to replace normal Municipal business processes. If you would like to request a Municipal service, please contact the Customer Service and Office Administrator at 705-932-9325 email: [info@cavanmonaghan.net](mailto:info@cavanmonaghan.net) or visit the Municipal website at [www.cavanmonaghan.net](http://www.cavanmonaghan.net).

### **Rules of Participation**

You are welcome to post respectful comments on our wall.

The Township reserves the right to remove any posts or content on Municipal social media for reasons, including but not limited to:

- Profane language or content
- Commercial endorsement or solicitation, which includes showing preference of one product or service over another, request for products, services or assets for personal gain or use
- Personal attacks on individuals, groups, or ideas
- Content that violates another person/party’s copyright, trademark and/or intellectual property rights
- Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or

sexual orientation

- Confidential information pertaining to the Township or personal information about members of the public, Municipal staff or elected officials
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- Derogatory attacks on municipal Council, its members and other levels of government
- Derogatory comments or opinions about Municipal employees and Municipal services
- Political campaigning by politicians, individuals running for election or individuals/groups supporting or opposing a specific political candidate or party.

Notwithstanding the criteria listed above, the Township reserves the right to post, refuse to post or remove, any content from its Facebook page at any time, without notice and to block repeat offenders. The overall goal is to ensure that all parties participate online in a respectful, relevant way.

You are responsible for your own privacy.

When you registered for your Facebook account, you provided personal information to Facebook. And since then, you may have added even more information and photos to your profile. The Township would like to remind you that if you don't have your privacy settings restricted, then anyone who "likes" our page could potentially view your personal information. Be sure to get to know the security settings within the social media you are using.

### **About your personal information**

Personal information, which includes your Internet Provider (IP) address, is being collected, managed, processed and/or stored by a third party service provider and is therefore, not in the sole domain, custody and control of the Township. Additionally, your personal information may cross the border to a foreign jurisdiction and will therefore, be subject to the governing laws of that jurisdiction.

The Township will post topics and updates on Municipal activities and, from time to time, will ask for your feedback. This information will be monitored, reported back to staff and sometimes Council. We look forward to hearing from you.

## **Twitter Disclaimer**

We welcome your participation on this Twitter account. This account is monitored regularly during business hours (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday). Tweets outside of business hours will be reviewed the following business day.

This is the official Twitter account for the Township of Cavan Monaghan. This account is NOT intended to report emergencies. If you have a police, fire or EMS emergency please call 9-1-1.

For details on how to file a non-emergency complaint and how it is processed please visit the [Municipal Complaints Policy](#) on our website. This account is intended to serve as a social media outlet for the Township of Cavan Monaghan in matters relating to public safety. Information on road closings, health hazards, large emergencies and other similar incidents will be posted along with updates as time allows. Every effort will be made to keep the information up to date but in the event of emergency, users are encouraged to look for formal media releases on the Township website and through local and regional emergency response agencies i.e. Peterborough Police/Peterborough & Peterborough County EMS.

This Twitter account is intended to enhance our communication – not to replace normal Municipal business processes. If you would like to request a Municipal service, please contact the Customer Service and office Administrator at 705-932-9325 email [info@cavanmonaghan.net](mailto:info@cavanmonaghan.net) or visit the Municipal website at [www.cavanmonaghan.net](http://www.cavanmonaghan.net).

## **Rules of Participation**

You are welcome to retweet our messages along with your own respectful comments.

The Township reserves the right to remove any tweet, retweet, mention or reply on Municipal social media for reasons, including but not limited to:

- Profane language or content
- Commercial endorsement or solicitation, which includes showing preference of one product or service over another, request for products, services or assets for personal gain or use
- Personal attacks on individuals, groups, or ideas
- Content that violates another person/party's copyright, trademark and/or intellectual property rights
- Content that promotes, fosters or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, colour, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation
- Confidential information pertaining to the Township or personal information about

members of the public, Municipal staff or elected officials

- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity
- Derogatory attacks on municipal Council, its members and other levels of government
- Derogatory comments or opinions about Municipal employees and Municipal services
- Political campaigning by politicians, individuals running for election or individuals/groups supporting or opposing a specific political candidate or party.

Notwithstanding the criteria listed above, the Township reserves the right to post, refuse to post or remove, any content from its Twitter account at any time, without notice and to block repeat offenders. The overall goal is to ensure that all parties participate online in a respectful, relevant way.

**You are responsible for your own privacy.**

The Township would like to remind you that if you don't have your privacy settings restricted, then anyone who "follows" our account could potentially view your personal information. Be sure to get to know the security settings within the social media you are using.

**About your Personal Information**

Personal information, which includes your Internet Provider (IP) address, is being collected, managed, processed and or stored by a third-party service provider and is therefore, not in the sole domain, custody and control of the Township. Additionally, your personal information may cross the border to a foreign jurisdiction and will therefore, be subject to the governing laws of that jurisdiction.

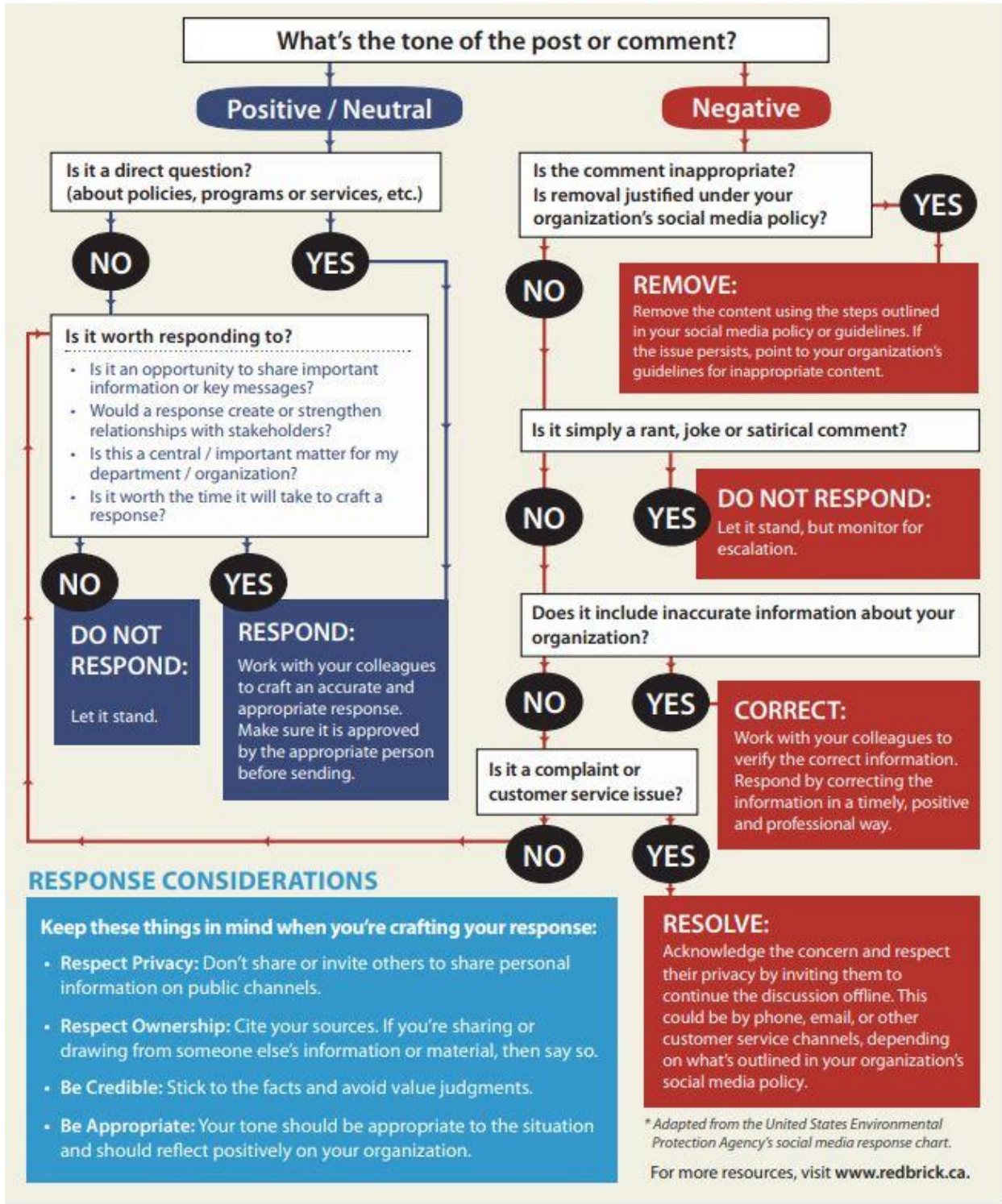
The Township will tweet messages and updates on Municipal activities and, from time to time, will ask for your feedback. This information will be monitored, reported back to staff and sometimes Council. We look forward to hearing from you.



# Appendix "E"



## Social Media Response Chart



Social Media Response Chart