



Social Media and Digital Communications

Navigating the risks and opportunities for UK Councils

Rachel Eden, APSE Associate

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Course Brochure

Social Media and Digital Communications

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Course Overview

Today's digital world provides local authorities with fantastic opportunities. With the right approach, you can campaign, inform, streamline services, and build a real connection with the public. But how can you balance these benefits with increasingly complex risks and controversies such as misinformation and AI generated content?

The digital landscape has transformed how councils connect with residents, businesses, and community partners. While offering powerful engagement opportunities, social media and AI present significant risks that local authorities must navigate. This course provides training on both effective digital communication and risk management in the council setting.

APSE's course on Social Media and Digital Communications looks at how you can make the most of the benefits and mitigate the downsides. We explore how to build policies and guidelines in line with government regulations; how to turn incidents of misinformation into a positive narrative; how to educate your staff and the public about deep fakes; how to use AI responsibly and how to really improve public engagement.

The course is highly interactive, giving you the opportunity to share ideas and best practice. Our expert trainers also incorporate real case studies from UK councils who have successfully navigated these challenges, hands-on workshops, and collaborative exercises. Participants will learn to balance effective digital engagement with robust risk management and security practices in the local government context.

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Who should attend?

This course is ideal for anyone who manages or contributes to their authority's social media and digital communication methods. No deep understanding of social media is a pre-requisite.

Trainer Profile

Councillor Rachel Eden, APSE Associate

Rachel is an experienced trainer and qualified accountant with specialisms in, communications and financial management.

Rachel is a Member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants. Before moving into training Rachel practised as a management accountant working for a large software company and now runs a boutique accountancy practice alongside her training work.

Rachel has also served as an elected member on Reading Borough Council since 2010 and has run for parliament twice.

An experienced course designer she has been training staff, volunteers and partners since 2007. As an experienced communicator, public speaker and media operator, Rachel is an associate of APSE and combines theoretical understanding with the practical insight from her public facing roles

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Learning Outcomes

- Develop communication strategies aligned with council priorities
- Identify and respond to disinformation about council services
- Navigate AI tools safely within local authority constraints
- Create engaging content while maintaining council integrity
- Manage digital risks affecting council operations

What do participants have to say about APSE's training?

"Well explained and easy to understand."

"It enhances your understanding and removes assumption."

"It's very engaging and interesting. And all questions are encouraged and answered."

"Very informative, delivered in an engaging way."

"Attention was engaged throughout the course. Relative and informative."

"It is a very knowledgeable course and every point explained thoroughly and the slides were very well presented and didn't include too much information."

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Course Programme

For further information, please contact training@apse.org.uk

Part 1

08:45 - 09:00	REGISTRATION (and Tech Check)
09:00 - 10:15	UNIT 1: Council Digital Communication Strategy and Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Developing social media policies aligned with local government requirements<input type="checkbox"/> Understanding council regulatory frameworks and compliance<input type="checkbox"/> Managing council reputational risks<input type="checkbox"/> Data protection and GDPR compliance in local government context<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinating across council departments and services<input type="checkbox"/>
10:15 - 10:45	COMFORT BREAK
10:45 - 11:45	UNIT 2: Disinformation and Digital Threats in Local Government <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Identifying and responding to misinformation about council services<input type="checkbox"/> Protecting council reputation from deepfakes and AI-generated content<input type="checkbox"/> Managing coordinated campaigns targeting council decisions or services<input type="checkbox"/> Emergency communication protocols for councils<input type="checkbox"/> Verification procedures for council communications
11:45 - 12:00	PLENARY

Part 2

08:45 - 09:00

REGISTRATION (and Tech Check)

09:00 - 10:15

UNIT 3: AI and Emerging Technologies in Council Communications

- Understanding AI capabilities for council service delivery
- Responsible use of AI tools in council communications
- Risk assessment for AI-generated content in local government
- Protecting against AI-enabled impersonation of council officials
- Digital authentication for council communications

10:15 - 10:45

COMFORT BREAK

10:45 - 11:45

UNIT 4: Strategic Council Communication

- Effective use of platforms for different council services
- Content planning across council departments
- Managing resident engagement and feedback
- Social listening for community needs
- Digital accessibility for all residents
- Promoting council services and initiatives effectively
- Measuring engagement with council communications

11:45 - 12:00

PLENARY, FEEDBACK AND CLOSE

NEW MUNICIPALISM








Delivering for local people and local economies

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In-house - tailored training to meet your needs.

The package includes:

-  A pre-course consultation so we can tailor the course to meet the needs of your team, service, directorate or authority.
-  Trainee Needs Analysis.
-  Customisation of the materials.
-  Delivery of the course on a mutually convenient date and time to meet your authority's needs and working patterns.
-  Analysis of trainee feedback, which we share with you.
-  Trainer feedback, if required.
-  Post-course materials on password-protected hidden webpage.

If delivered online, the course is suitable for up to 15 participants and over two half-days or one full day, via Microsoft Teams

If delivered onsite, it is suitable for up to 20 participants. Trainer travel, subsistence and accommodation is charged at cost.

Enquire about an in-house course [HERE](#)



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About APSE Training

APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence) is a not-for-profit local government think tank, working with over 300 councils throughout the UK, promoting excellence in public services.

APSE is the foremost specialist in local authority front line services, hosting a network for front line service providers in areas such as waste and refuse collection, parks and environmental services, leisure, school meals, cleaning, housing, and building maintenance.

APSE Training aims to provide inspiring and impactful lifelong learning and development opportunities, nurturing talent and enabling growth. A broad range of courses are available via the APSE website and as bespoke in-house courses.

APSE Training is compliant with APSE's Quality Assurance processes under ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 27001 and GDPR. We are also a Platinum Carbon Literate Organisation, which demonstrates our commitment to raising awareness of the climate crisis.

Contact us

The team is ready to help.

Please direct enquiries to: training@apse.org.uk | 0161 772 1810

APSE Head of Training: [Fiona Sutton-Wilson](#)

Senior Training Officer: [Amy Caldwell](#)

Training Co-ordinator: [Helen Reed](#)

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