

# A New Way to Communicate With the Electorate...

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East Renfrewshire Council

# Presentation Overview

- Introduction
- Social Media and Politics – a global perspective
- Catching up in the UK
- Local Government
- Communicating with my electorate
- Building campaigns
- Speaking with one voice – delivering council messages
- Championing social media use
- Conclusions

# Who am I?

- Councillor Paul O’Kane
- Elected first time in 2012
- Voluntary sector background
- Youngest Councillor in East Renfrewshire (by about 25 years!)
- Bain of Officer’s lives...
- Twitter/Facebook geek!



# Social Media and Politics: A Global Perspective



# Obama Campaign

- Introduced the world to a new type of communication with the electorate
- Opened new debates
- Created a social media revolution
- Helped deliver a landslide victory



# Facts and Figures

- 2008 Presidential election
- Facebook:  
Obama had 2,379,102 supporters  
McCain had 620,359 supporters
- 380% more supporters
- Twitter, Youtube, Myspace
- Personalised email, individual Barack Obama accounts
- Fundraising and message sharing
- \$30 million raised on personal fundraising pages!

# What about the UK?

- Political Parties beginning to reflect social media trends
- Increased use of Facebook, Twitter and Youtube
- Direct information, personalised emails, party leader profiles



facebook Search for people, places and things Paul Francis O'Kane Home

Create Page

2011  
2010  
2009  
Joined Facebook

**The Labour Party** ✓  
149,119 likes · 5,908 talking about this

Political Party  
Welcome to the official Labour Party Facebook page. Where you can keep up to date and talk with other supporters.

149k

Like Donate to Labour Join Labour Chat (91)

About · Suggest an Edit Photos Likes

Profile summary

**The SNP** ✓  
@theSNP

Scotland's largest political party and party of Government. Centre left and social democratic.

Scotland, Europe · snp.org

11,073 TWEETS   1,142 FOLLOWING   22,490 FOLLOWERS

Follow

YouTube GB Upload Sign in

Popular on YouTube  
Music  
Sports  
Gaming  
Movies  
TV Shows  
Spotlight

CHANNELS FOR YOU  
Jame Oliver's Food Tube  
The Multiverse  
The YOMYOMF Network  
Beardman  
YouTube Spotlight

**Conservatives** ✓  
Subscribe 5,609

Wrong, Ed  
15,126 views 1 month ago  
Ed Miliband claimed that rebalancing the economy wouldn't work. He

Related channels on YouTube  
Người Việt TV  
UK Parliament  
Liarpoliticians  
thatcheritescot  
Alex Wickham  
Margaret Thatcher



# Local Government

- Important growth area for social media
- Local Authority presence growing on Facebook and Twitter
- Elected member presence growing
- New ways to share information
- New ways to highlight work and campaigns

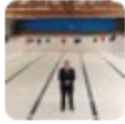
# Communicating with my electorate

- Election campaign 2012
- Building a facebook and twitter presence
- Website
- Easy way to share manifesto, campaign events and remind people to register/vote
- Once elected – maintain and build on contacts made in election campaign
- Start a new conversation as an elected representative

# Twitter



- @PFOKane
- Sharing information
- Messages from @eastrencouncil 'Retweeting'
- Engaging in debate and discussion
- Addressing constituent issues
- Positive experience but be wary of negativity



**Cllr Paul O'Kane** @PFOkane

14 Aug

I may have jinxed it...\*decides to maintain twitter silence  
[#comeonscotland](#)

Expand



**Cllr Paul O'Kane** @PFOkane

14 Aug

What a game! [#comeonscotland](#)

Expand



**Cllr Paul O'Kane** @PFOkane

14 Aug

Good luck to all children and young people starting a new term today at an [@EastRenCouncil](#) school! Especially those in P1 or S1 - welcome!

[Collapse](#)

[Reply](#) [Delete](#) [Favorite](#) [More](#)

**1**  
FAVORITE



8:04 AM - 14 Aug 13 · [Details](#)

# Facebook

- [Facebook.com/councillorpaulokane](https://www.facebook.com/councillorpaulokane)
- A place for information giving
- Growing campaigns
- Conversation with constituents
- Sharing photos and events in the ward





**Councillor Paul O'Kane: Serving Neilston, Uplawmoor and Newton Mearns North**

6 August

Fantastic set of exam results from across East Renfrewshire today - the results are outstanding. All our secondary schools saw improvements in their levels of attainment. These achievements are a tribute to the hard work of pupils well supported by teachers and parents, all of whom contribute to this impressive attainment in the Council area. Well done! Remember, if things went better than you thought or not as expected then you can get advice from your school, there is also a national helpline run by Skills Development Scotland - 0808 100 8000. Whatever happened there are plenty of people here to support you and there are lots of options.

Like · Comment · Share

1

2 people like this.



Write a comment...

Cha



**Councillor Paul O'Kane: Serving Neilston, Uplawmoor and Newton Mearns North**

6 June

I visited Neilston Leisure Centre recently to see the work being undertaken to bring the pool back up to standard and have it re-opened this summer! Looking forward to seeing it back at the heart of our community.



[REDACTED]

What was the logic used in the budget review to justify keeping the community ER magazine? — [REDACTED]

Like · Comment · 2 December 2012 at 19:10 via Mobile

[REDACTED]

Please join our cause on facebook

Paul.<http://www.causes.com/causes/800800/actions/1703493>



**A pledge to invite friends to join our campaign**

[www.causes.com](http://www.causes.com)

Can all members please take time to email friends and concerned parties to join our campaign to save the Neilston Pool and Leisure centre! Thanks Kind regards Matt & Jacqueline PS mind email the local councillors and let them know your views as well!

Like · Comment · Share · 13 November 2012 at 14:26

[REDACTED]

I notice with interest that you have voted to approve the building of houses on Waterfoot park - part of the ever diminishing greenbelt area in East Renfrewshire. Could you please provide me with the reasons why you voted yes, and what the advantages to East Renfrewshire are in destroying a much loved children's play park?

Like · Comment · 9 August 2012 at 14:02

# Building Campaigns

- Elected members should be at the heart of community issues
- Social media is an invaluable way of building community campaigns
- Engaging community in something positive
- Building a new war memorial
- Campaigning to save a popular bus route
- Signposting to national campaigns





# One Voice

- Can be unusual in Local Government
- Social media can provide a platform to share key decisions
- Work closely with media team in council
- Corporate vision
- Opportunity to “sell” decisions to the electorate
- Opportunity to showcase what Council does well
- Opportunity to troubleshoot problems

# Championing Social Media

- Key individuals taking responsibility
- Take a chance
- Backed up by strong policy and procedure
- Media team willing to encourage use throughout council
- Champions in every department
- Elected members can lead by example



Have a go!

# Conclusions and Questions

