

## **Presentation on sociale media – ECPRD Rome 2014**

### **SHEET 1**

This presentation is optimistically entitled The social media strategy of the Dutch House of Representatives. I use the word optimistically, because strategy sounds like such a big word. It makes me think of policy documents that lots of people have read and discussed before the policy in question can be implemented. It feels like we should have such a document in order to go to work. However, we have no such strategic document on the use of social media at the House of Representatives.

We do have a group of terrier like people who think we should be on social media, strategy or no. And so we are.

We are increasingly active on social media. Our efforts are still relatively small, and focus (for the moment) on Twitter.

### **SHEET 2**

#### **What do we do?**

We have a general Twitter account for the Dutch House of Representatives. This account has appr. 27.000 followers. We post around 5 to 10 tweets per day, all related to what's on at the House, procedures, news items. Where possible/necessary we link to our corporate website. Various people are involved in posting tweets. Within my department, our editors and our information officers post tweets. We also have short summaries of plenary debates (made by the people in the parliamentary reporting department), which are tweeted as well, and posted by the people responsible for the summary. Since our new website went live in october 2013 [YES, WE FINALLY HAVE OUR NEW WEBSITE – NOTICE HOW I VERY CASUALLY DROP THIS INFORMATION}, Twitter activity has increased. The main reason for this is that we finally offer 'follow us on social media' buttons on the new site, which makes it a lot easier to post tweets directly from the site.

Around the same time (Ocober last year) we started responding to tweets. These are mainly tweets that have a question and are addressed to us (our account is mentioned in the tweet). It must be an obvious question (so we

need to be beware of irony, cynicism etc). We find this doesn't cost any extra time, and is experienced as an additional service. The people that handle public enquiries, also handle these questions. We do not respond to jokes, political opinions, etc.

## **SHEET 3**

### **Committees on Twitter**

Started out with a pilot project: trial period of 6 months, beginning August 2013. Two committees. Accounts are registered by dept Communications (bec. Of corporate image, look and feel), in cooperation with committee staff, we developed a manual: when to tweet, what to tweet (and what not!), how to respond, when to respond etc. Staff members of the committee are responsible for posting tweets.

@lenM      @Euza

After trial period, we evaluated the use of the accounts. We found that in both cases, followers are mainly professionals, i.e. civil staff of ministries, lobbyists etc. The committee staff generally knows who these followers are (by name/function). That made it possible to do a questionnaire to evaluate the Twitter accounts from the users' perspective.

It turns out that the committee Twitter accounts are considered an asset both by its followers as well as by the committee staff. Followers would like even more info via Tweets (actual information and pictures on working visits e.g., decisions made in committee. Committee staff has noticed a decrease in the number of phone calls, because information that was previously given out to people who called one at a time, is now distributed to a large group at once.

The result of the positive evaluation is that both committees will continue their Twitter accounts and that the House Management Team has ruled that other committees can start an account as well. As we speak, there are three committees in the process of starting to tweet. A fourth one started two weeks ago – and this is special, as it is an Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry, which is

the most powerful instrument the Dutch parliament has at its disposal to scrutinize the work of the Government.

@EnqueteWoCo

## **SHEET 4**

### **What's next?**

- **More committees on Twitter**
- **Speaker of the House on Twitter**

@AnouchkaVM. Started on June 6. 1 tweet so far 😊

- **House of Representatives on YouTube**

We recently launched a YouTube Channel. We now use it for the hearings of the parliamentary committee of inquiry and a temporary enquiry committee. But we've also posted a video on the work of committees general, as well as press conference.

- **House of Representatives on Facebook?**

We have a great plan for a Facebook fan page for the House of Representatives, and are currently in the process of convincing our management team as well as the Speaker of the House of its value. We do hope we'll be able to launch the page in september with the start of the new parliamentary year.