Social Media Guidance

The term 'social media' is used here to describe dynamic and socially-interactive, networked information and communication technologies, for example Web 2.0 sites, SMS text messaging and social networking sites. This policy refers to the term ‘Friend’. This is used be social media networks and websites to describe a member of your network.
For example ‘Friend’ on Facebook or ‘Follower’ on Twitter.

Purpose

The purpose of this social media policy is as follows:

- Encourage good practice
- Protect members, coaches, volunteers, players
- Promote effective use of social media as part of a club’s activities whilst protecting the integrity of the club and maintaining a high standard of communication with users of Social Media.

1. Personal accounts

1.1.
Whilst this policy is to govern the use of the club accounts, we would ask that those with personal social media accounts are mindful of who can view their profile and act accordingly.

1.2.
If you are friends with colleagues, volunteers, players or prospective players, staff or club partners you should consider carefully before posting comments regarding the club or it’s members or associates that could cause offence or be viewed as contravening confidentiality rules.

1.3.
If you identify yourself as a member of the club within your personal accounts please remember that your actions or comments could be construed as those of the club.

2. Usage policy

2.1.
The Internet and Social Media are exciting opportunities for us to engage with existing members and supporters of the club and potential new members.

2.2.
Before setting up a new URL / webpage or social media account on behalf of the club please consider the purpose of the account and what benefits you feel it may have. For example when setting up accounts with Facebook you may choose between a ‘group’ and a ‘page’ depending on your requirements.

2.3.
In line with schools and youth organisations, club coaching staff must not be 'friends' with any active junior member unless you have a clear and transparent reason, for example; they are a relative, family friend etc.

2.4.
In the same way as we would not pass on our personal address or contact details to junior members, coaching staff members must not become 'friends' with junior members on their own personal social media accounts.

2.5.
This is a commonly recognised as best practice in order to promote a safe and transparent online environment that protects the organisation, the members and also your interests and reputation.

3. Intellectual Property

3.1
Social Media users are reminded that they must consider intellectual
Property rights, copyright and ownership of data.

3.2
Intellectual property (IP) law is the law protecting the rights of creators and owners of intellectual creativity. IP law also regulates the creation, use and control of a protected work. The main branches of IP law are copyright, patents, trademarks, designs, passing off and the law of confidential information. For latest information please visit http://www.ipo.gov.uk/

4. Conduct

4.1.
We believe in free speech, however on social media accounts for example Facebook pages we reserve the right to remove certain content that you may post on club owned and administered websites and pages. As a general rule users can post content freely on a social media account except when content could be considered illegal, obscene, defamatory, threatening, infringing upon intellectual property rights, invasive of privacy or otherwise injurious or objectionable.

4.2.
Users cannot use the club name to promote or endorse any product, opinions, cause or political party. Stating that the club endorses your personal opinion is prohibited.

4.3.
Users should understand that content posted becomes the sole responsibility of the individual who originally posted the content.

4.4
All opinions expressed by users of social media sites are expressed strictly in their individual capacity and not as a representative of the club.

4.5.
The club will not be liable, under any circumstances for any errors, omissions, loss or damages of any kind incurred as a result of use of any content posted on social media sites.

4.6.
Remember that you are required to protect confidential and proprietary information regarding the club members and coaching staff.

4.7.
Prospective and current members' uses -these users, along with others who have an interest in the club, are active in social media, e.g. setting up Facebook groups and blogging.

4.8.
The committee will monitor these sites to get further insight into the needs of its users. Possible responses to any contentious issues identified in unofficial social media sites should be referred to the club secretary for further investigation.
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4.9.
Ex member uses –The club recognises the opportunity to communicate with ex members through social media to develop an on-going relationship with them. These uses are the responsibility of the club secretary, who has ultimate responsibility for ex members contact details.

5. Disciplinary Action

5.1.

The club reserves the right to administer sanctions and other disciplinary measures for the breach or misuse of the club social media policy. The sanction will be determined by the club secretary, coach, the club welfare officer/or a combination/or disciplinary committee and may include a fine, suspension, written warning, referral to the Governing Body or outside agencies including the local police authority and any other disciplinary deemed appropriate.