



Social Media Policy

Introduction

This Social Media Policy has been produced and agreed by the Club's Executive Committee (Board of Directors).

For some time now the Executive Committee has recognised that there are a number of issues if unauthorised Facebook profiles/pages, and other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp concerning the Club, are not identified and closed. Similarly, any issues related to inappropriate use of authorised Club social media 'outlets' must be strongly dealt with.

Related to this, the Club was notified by the Hampshire Rugby Football Union (HRFU) that it regularly 'trawls' social media associated with its Clubs looking for inappropriate content of Facebook profiles/pages and other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp concerning the Club. Some while ago, the HRFU discovered that very inappropriate photos were put on Facebook by Club members. In addition, there was an occasion a few years ago where Club members entered inappropriate dialogue on to another Club's social media in a puerile attempt to 'wind up' players of that Club on the night before a match between it and our Club – creating to say the least bad relations between the two Clubs. Further, more recently an unauthorised WhatsApp group associated with the Club was discovered as having inappropriate posts of so-called jokes, and extreme negativity towards the Club.

The use of unauthorised social media 'entries' related to the Club, and examples of inappropriate use of social media, has all meant that the Executive Committee must exercise 'formal' control of any social media identified as associated with the Club, and set down some dos and don'ts in a Social Media Policy.

The Club recognises that there is no doubt that use of social media can bring substantial benefit to an individual or organisation if managed appropriately. Social media provides an opportunity to promote individuals and groups, communicate key messages, as well as allowing individuals to connect and share ideas at a low cost and to a wide audience. However, if not managed appropriately misuse of social media could well be a public relations nightmare for the Club, and depending on the circumstances, could mean that it would face legal or 'regulatory' action.

Remember that social media is an area of public comment, and any person or organisation is liable for any statement it makes in this sphere as if the same statement was being made in the media. Any person or organisation 'running' a 'public' profile, page or account may well have a number of journalists as followers or friends. Thus, any comments, posts, photos, videos, etc. provided on social media sites have to be considered the same as communicating with the press/media.

Those persons responsible for social media profiles, pages, etc. identified as associated with the Club must **before any operation** submit case details for 'formal' approval by the Executive Committee, via the Club Secretary Maria Carbone at maria_carbone@hotmail.co.uk. This also applies to Rushmoor Sunday Football Club which is based at the Club. The case details must include:

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- information on the purpose of the social media profile, page, whatever,
- information on the Club members who will be allowed access to the social media profile, page, whatever,
- the name and contact details of the administrator(s)/controller(s), who will be responsible for policing the social media profile, page, whatever, and reporting any 'anomalies' to the Executive Committee,
- confirmation that the social media profile, page, whatever, will be closed (i.e. only accessible to nominated Club members),
- confirmation that the social media profile, page, whatever will be appropriately 'locked down' by using the best security settings that are possible,
- confirmation that all content of this, the Club's Social Media Policy, will be adhered to.

Currently there are 11 Facebook profiles/pages that have been formally approved by the Executive Committee. These are for the Senior playing Squad (administrator/controller - David Thorley and Daryl Brown), Club Page & Entertainments (administrator/controller - Lauren Utton), U6&7s (administrator/controller - James Huckle), U8s (administrators/controllers - Anthony Rowe and Jim Burton), U9s (administrators/controllers - Kate Young and John Playfoot), U10s (administrators/controllers - Brad Fletcher and Stephanie Leigh), U11s (administrator/controller - Ben Stocker), U12s (administrator/controller - Tracy Playfoot), U13s (administrators/controllers - Tracy Playfoot, Michael Moseley, Joji Giray, Kathryn Browne and Chris Collett), U14s (administrator/controller - Chris Collett), U15s (administrators/controllers - Chris Collett and Steven Douglas)

Currently there are 14 WhatsApp Groups that have been formally approved by the Executive Committee. These are for the Executive Committee (Board of Directors) (administrator/controller - Gary Allcock), U7s (administrators/controllers - James Huckle, James Underdown and Hugh Walker), U8s Parents and Coaches (administrator/controller - Anthony Rowe), U8s Coaches (administrator/controller - Anthony Rowe), U8s First Aiders (administrator/controller - Anthony Rowe) U11s (administrator/controller - Ben Stocker), U12s (administrator/controller - Tracy Playfoot), U13s (administrator/controller - Joji Moseley), U14s (administrator/controller - Joji Moseley) U14/15s Coaches (administrator/controller - Chris Collett), U15s (administrator/controller - Steven Douglas), U16s (administrator/controller - Cathie White), Safeguarding (administrator/controller - Tracy Playfoot), Rugby Fundraising (administrator/controller - Tracy Playfoot).

Any member running a Facebook profile/page, and other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp that has not been formally approved by the Executive Committee, or thinks that they have a case for another Facebook profile/page and/or other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp, then they should submit a documented case to the Executive Committee containing the required information (see the 7th paragraph of this Policy), and not go any further until 'written' approval is received from the Executive Committee. As mentioned above, cases should be e-mailed to the Club Secretary, Maria Carbone, at maria_carbone@hotmail.co.uk.



Overall, all members must fully comply with this social media policy. Compliance with this policy is a condition of membership and any non-compliance will be subject to the Club's disciplinary procedures. The Executive Committee has the right to take appropriate action in the event of any member breaching the terms of this policy.

Policy Item 1: Be Authentic, Constructive and Respectful

On authorised Club Facebook profiles/pages, and other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp, and indeed on any personal profiles/pages and accounts, all Club members (playing and non-playing) must:

- never post malicious, misleading or unfair content about the Club, its members, other Clubs, County RFUs, the RFU, sponsors, indeed any organisation or person,
- not post content that is obscene, racist, defamatory, threatening (harassing, bullying, etc) disparaging or discriminatory concerning the Club, its members, other Clubs, County RFUs, the RFU, sponsors, indeed any organisation or person,
- never post comments that you would not say directly to another person or organisation – you must first consider how other people might react before you post,
- if you respond to published comments that you may consider unfair, always be accurate and professional.

Policy Item 2: Be Respectful and Courteous

On authorised Club Facebook profiles/pages, and other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp, and indeed on any personal profiles/pages and accounts, all Club members (playing and non-playing) must:

- think before you post anything or respond to someone on-line and ensure that all of your communications are respectful and courteous. Once you have put something on-line, there is almost no taking it back and it is almost impossible to really delete. Your comments may be seen by the media, sponsors, etc and could impact negatively on you and the Club.
- avoid getting into heated discussions online or talking about sensitive issues. Speak to a member of the Club's Executive Committee if you feel as though someone is trying to provoke a response from you or harasses/threatens you online,
- think very carefully before you post and/or tag an image,
- be fully aware that the images you share online will reflect on yourself and the Club so it is important that you consider this before uploading or tagging photos and videos. Also be aware that these photos may be taken out of context and used by the media or other people - so if you are not happy for the image to be shared publicly, it should not be placed on-line,
- respect other people's accounts and devices,



- if there is an occasion where a member leaves a mobile phone unattended or has not properly logged out of an account, do not use that person's device or account to harass others or impersonate that person and cause them and/or the Club 'humiliation'.

Policy Item 3: Respect Copyright and Intellectual Property

On authorised Club Facebook profiles/pages, and other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp, and indeed on any personal profiles/pages and accounts, all Club members (playing and non-playing) must:

- respect other people's intellectual property including trademarked names and slogans and copyrighted material (it is best practice to assume that all content online is protected by copyright),
- make sure you have permission to post copyright items, properly attribute the work to the copyright owner where required, and never use someone else's work as if it were your own. If you are unsure as to who might own an item of content, it's better to err on the side of caution and not post the content,
- in addition to respecting the laws pertaining to copyright and Intellectual Property, respect all laws and regulations in relation to privacy (data protection).

Policy Item 4: Respect Confidentiality

On authorised Club Facebook profiles/pages, and other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp, and indeed on any personal profiles/pages and accounts, all Club members (playing and non-playing) must:

- only reference information that is publicly available,
- not disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to the Club, its members, its suppliers, sponsors or any third party that has confidentially disclosed information to the Club,
- not cite, post or reference the Club, its members, other Clubs, County RFUs, the RFU, sponsors, indeed any organisation or person without approval from the Club's Executive Committee.

Policy Item 5: Be Careful in Use of Logos, Trademarks or Materials

On authorised Club Facebook profiles/pages, and other social media 'outlets' such as Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and WhatsApp, and indeed on any personal profiles/pages and accounts, all Club members (playing and non-playing) must not use the logos, trademarks or materials of the Club, other Clubs, County RFUs, the RFU, sponsors, any organisation, unless it has been cleared for public use or been otherwise approved by the Club's Executive Committee.

Policy Item 6: Monitoring

At least two Club officers must be allowed to join any social media page, whatever, which has Farnborough RUFC or any permutation in the group title, to allow monitoring.



All members must note that the Club's Executive Committee will be regularly monitoring use of social media by members to ensure that all are in compliance with this Social Media Policy. Whilst the Club may need to take formal action in appropriate cases, all members must acknowledge what is expected in terms of social media use.

Monitoring will also help the Club to identify perceptions towards it online, as well as any unauthorised and 'fake' profiles and accounts.

FRUFC Ltd Executive Committee (Board of Directors)

October 2020