

Use of Social Media Policy

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Section A

1. Aim

This policy sets out our organisation's expectations on the workforce's use of social media and reminds staff of the standards of behaviour expected of them when they are posting on social media, as well as the consequences of falling below those standards.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority employees as far as possible, except where there is a specific local agreement, or a clause within the contract of employment, which is at variance with the provisions as contained within the NJC agreement. This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and it may be amended at any time. This Policy may apply to Agency Workers or Contractors.

3. Vision and Values

Our vision is for a prosperous and sustainable Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Driven by our values and using our collective voice and strengths, we seek inclusive good growth for an equitable resilient, healthier and connected region.

Our values define what is important in the way we deliver this vision. At Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority our core values are Collaboration, Integrity, Vision, Innovation and Leadership. We are committed to ensuring our culture enables our employees to display these values regardless of their roles within the organisation. Managers and employees alike must ensure our core values are upheld when implementing this policy.

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4. What do we mean by Social Media?

For the purposes of this policy, social media is any online platform or app that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes social forums such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. Social media also covers blogs and video and image-sharing websites such as YouTube.

Employees should be aware that there are many more examples of social media than can be listed here and this is a constantly changing area. Employees should follow these guidelines in relation to any social media that they use.

5. Use of Social Media at work

Our organisation encourages employees to make reasonable and appropriate use of social media as part of their work. It is an important part of how we communicate with our stakeholders/promote our services/communicate with our audience/allow communication between staff.

Employees may contribute to our organisation's social media activities, for example by writing for our blogs/managing a social media account for our organisation.

Employees must be aware at all times that, while contributing to our social media activities, they are representing our organisation. Staff who use social media as part of their job must adhere to the following rules.

Employees should use the same safeguards as they would with any other form of communication about our organisation in the public sphere. These safeguards include:

- making sure that the communication has a purpose and a benefit for our organisation;
- obtaining permission from a manager before embarking on a public campaign using social media; and
- getting a colleague to check the content before it is published.
- Speaking to the Communications Digital Team.

Any communications that employees make in a professional capacity through social media must not:

- bring our organisation into disrepute, for example by:
 - criticising or arguing with customers, colleagues or rivals;
 - making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
 - posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
- breach confidentiality, for example by:
 - revealing information owned by our organisation;
 - giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or customer contact) or organisation (such as another organisation); or

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- discussing our organisation's internal workings (such as deals that it is doing with a customer or its future business plans that have not been communicated to the public);
- breach copyright, for example by:
 - using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 - failing to give acknowledgment where permission has been given to reproduce something; or
- do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:
 - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
 - using social media to bully another individual (such as an employee of our organisation); or
 - posting images that are discriminatory or offensive, or links to such content.

6. Excessive use of social media at work

Employees should not spend an excessive amount of time while at work engaged in personal/non-work related social media. This is likely to have a detrimental effect on employees' productivity. They should ensure that use of social media does not interfere with their other duties.

7. Monitoring use of social media during work time

Our organisation reserves the right to monitor employees' social media usage. We consider that valid reasons for checking an employee's internet usage include suspicions that the employee has:

- been using social media for personal/non-work related reasons when they should be working; or
- acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.

Our organisation has a data protection officer.

Workers have a number of rights in relation to their data, including the right to make a subject access request and the right to have data rectified or erased in some circumstances. You can find further details of these rights and how to exercise them in our organisation's data protection policy. If workers believe that our organisation has not complied with their data protection rights, they can complain to the Information Commissioner.

Access to particular social media may be withdrawn in any case of misuse.

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8. Social media in your personal life

Our organisation recognises that many employees make use of social media in a personal capacity. While they are not acting on behalf of our organisation, employees must be aware that they can damage our organisation if they are recognised as being one of our employees.

Employees are allowed to say that they work for our organisation, which recognises that it is natural for its staff sometimes to want to discuss their work on social media.

If employees do discuss their work on social media (for example, giving opinions on their specialism or the sector in which our organisation operates), they must include on their profile a statement along the following lines: "The views I express here are mine alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of my employer."

Any communications that employees make in a personal capacity through social media must not:

- bring our organisation into disrepute, for example by:
 - criticising or arguing with customers, colleagues or rivals;
 - making defamatory comments about individuals or other organisations or groups; or
 - posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content;
- breach confidentiality, for example by:
 - revealing trade secrets or information owned by our organisation;
 - giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a colleague or customer contact) or organisation;
 - discussing our organisation's internal workings (such as deals that it is doing with a stakeholder or its future business plans that have not been communicated to the public);
- breach copyright, for example by:
 - using someone else's images or written content without permission;
 - failing to give acknowledgment where permission has been given to reproduce something; or
- do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by:
 - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age;
 - using social media to bully another individual (such as an employee of our organisation); or
 - posting images that are discriminatory or offensive [or links to such content].

9. Use of social media in the recruitment process

Unless it is in relation to finding candidates (for example, if an individual has put their details on social media websites for the purpose of attracting prospective

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employers), the HR department and managers should not conduct searches, either themselves or through a third party.

All employees are required to adhere to this policy. Employees should note that any breaches of this policy may lead to disciplinary action. Serious breaches of this policy, for example incidents of bullying of colleagues or social media activity that might cause serious damage to our organisation, may constitute gross misconduct and lead to summary dismissal. Please see the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure for more information.

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Governance – Use of Social Media Policy

References:
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
Disciplinary Policy and Procedure

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Document Control Sheet

Purpose of document:	This policy sets out our organisation's expectations on the workforce's use of social media and reminds staff of the standards of behaviour expected of them when they are posting on social media, as well as the consequences of falling below those standards.
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If applicable, has an initial Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been completed?	Yes
Document lead and author:	HR Team
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What other documents should this be read in conjunction with:	Guidance documents listed in policy
Who will review the document (job title):	HR Team
Why is this document being reviewed?	N/A – new Policy
Mandatory read	Yes

Revisions

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