

# FIFE SPORTS AND LEISURE TRUST

## Social Media Policy

### 1.0 Policy Statement

- 1.1 Fife Sports and Leisure Trust (FSLT) recognises that the Internet provides a range of unique opportunities to participate in interactive discussions and to share information using a wide variety of social media, such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, blogs, virtual worlds and wikis. However, use of social media by Staff (see Section 2.2 below) can pose risks to business, particularly in relation to confidential information and the reputation of FSLT. Using social media sites can also, in certain circumstances, potentially jeopardise compliance with our legal obligations.
- 1.2 We expect Staff to be familiar with and adhere to this Social Media Policy (“the Policy”) at all times so as to minimise risks to the organisation, avoid loss of productivity and ensure that our IT resources and communications systems are used only for appropriate business purposes.
- 1.3 The Policy outlines:
- 1.3.1 the standards to be observed by Staff in relation to the use of social media;
  - 1.3.2 the circumstances in which FSLT will monitor use of social media; and
  - 1.3.3 the action that FSLT will take in respect of any breaches of those standards.
- 1.4 This Policy should be read in conjunction with Fife Council’s IT Acceptable Use Policy and FSLT’s Disciplinary Policy.
- 1.5 The Policy does not form part of any contract of employment and it may be amended at any time at the discretion of FSLT. You are required to sign the User Agreement form attached to the Policy and return this to the HR Manager.

### 2.0 Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 The Policy applies to the use of social media for both business and personal purposes, whether during office hours or not.
- 2.2 This Policy covers all individuals working at all levels and grades, including senior managers, officers, directors, employees, consultants, contractors, trainees, home-workers, part-time and fixed-term employees, casual and agency staff and volunteers (collectively referred to as “Staff” in the Policy).

- 2.3 During working hours, Staff are only permitted to use or access social media websites for personal purposes during their lunch or other authorised rest breaks.
- 2.4 Third parties who have access to our IT facilities and communication systems and equipment are also required to comply with the Policy.
- 2.5 Any breach of the Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal with immediate effect for gross misconduct.

### **3.0 Responsible Use of Social Media**

3.1 This section provides Staff with common-sense rules and guidelines that must be followed to ensure appropriate, responsible and safe use of social media, whether in the workplace or outwith the workplace and/or outside working hours.

#### **3.2 Protecting FSLT's Reputation:**

3.2.1 Staff must not under any circumstances post disparaging or defamatory statements about: -

3.2.1.1 our organisation;

3.2.1.2 our Staff

3.2.1.3 our clients;

3.2.1.4 suppliers; and/or

3.2.1.5 other affiliates, sponsors and stakeholders;

3.2.2 Staff should also avoid social media communications that might be misconstrued in a way that could damage our business reputation, even indirectly. For example, Staff should always refrain from entering into inflammatory or inappropriate debate which could reflect badly on FSLT or damage our reputation;

3.2.3 Staff should make it clear in social media postings that they are speaking on their own behalf. Write in the first person and use a personal e-mail address when communicating via social media.

3.2.4 Staff are personally responsible for what they communicate in social media. Remember that what you publish might be available to be read by the masses (including the organisation itself, future employers and social acquaintances) for a long time. Keep this in mind before you post content online.

3.2.5 If you disclose your association as an employee of FSLT, you must also state that your views do not represent those of your employer. For example, you could state, "the views in this

posting do not represent the views of my employer". You should also ensure that your profile and any content you post are consistent with the professional image we always expect you to present to clients and colleagues.

3.2.6 You must not under any circumstances post comments about sensitive business-related or confidential topics concerning FSLT or its Staff, such as FSLT's performance. Even if you make it clear that your views on such topics do not represent those of the organisation, your comments could still damage our reputation.

3.2.7 If you are uncertain or concerned about the appropriateness of any statement or posting, refrain from making the communication until you discuss it with your line manager or HR Department. Apply your common sense. When in doubt...leave it out.

3.2.8 If you see content in social media that disparages or reflects poorly on FSLT or our stakeholders, you should immediately contact your line manager or HR Department. All Staff are personally responsible for protecting the business reputation of FSLT.

### **3.3 Protecting FSLT's Intellectual Property and Confidential Information:**

3.3.1 Staff should not do anything to jeopardise our valuable trade secrets and other confidential information and intellectual property through the use of social media;

3.3.2 In addition, Staff should avoid misappropriating or infringing the intellectual property of other companies and individuals, which can create liability for FSLT, as well as the individual author; and

3.3.3 You must not use FSLT's logo, brand names, slogans or other trademarks, or post any other confidential or proprietary information without the prior written permission of FSLT.

### **3.4 Respecting Colleagues, Customers, Clients and Suppliers:**

3.4.1 Do not post anything related to your colleagues or our customers, clients, business partners, suppliers or other stakeholders without their written permission; and

3.4.2 In particular, you must not post anything that your colleagues or our customers, clients or others would find offensive or inappropriate, including discriminatory comments, insults or obscenity.

#### **4.0 Personal Use of Social Media**

Personal use of social media during working hours or by means of our computers, networks and other IT resources and communication systems is only permitted during lunch and other authorised breaks as set out in 2.3.

#### **5.0 Business Use of Social Media**

- 5.1 If your duties require you to speak on behalf of FSLT in a social media environment, you must still seek approval for such communication from your line manager, who may require you to undergo training before you do so and impose certain requirements and restrictions with regard to your activities.
- 5.2 Likewise, if you are contacted for comments about the organisation for publication anywhere, including in any social media outlet, direct the inquiry to the Business Improvement Manager and do not respond without written approval.
- 5.3 The use of social media for business purposes is also subject to the terms of the Policy.

#### **6.0 Compliance with Related Policies and Agreements**

- 6.1 Social Media should never be used in a way that breaches the Policy or any of the other policies of FSLT. If an Internet posting, blog or social media comment would breach any of FSLT's policies in another forum, then it will also breach them in an online forum.
- 6.2 For example, Staff are prohibited from using social media in a way that would:
  - 6.2.1 Breach Fife Council's IT & Email Acceptable Use Policy;
  - 6.2.3 Breach any obligations that you have, or FSLT has, relating to confidentiality;
  - 6.2.4 Breach FSLT's Disciplinary Policies and Procedure;
  - 6.2.6 Harass or bully any member of Staff and / or breach FSLT's Fair Treatment at Work Policy;
  - 6.2.7 Unlawfully discriminate against other staff or third parties OR breach FSLT's Equal Opportunities Policy;
  - 6.2.8 Breach FSLT's Data Protection policy (for example, relating to disclosure of personal information about a colleague online);

6.2.9 Breach any other laws or ethical standards (for example, by using social media in a false or misleading way, such as by claiming to be someone other than yourself or by making misleading statements).

## **7.0 Breach of the Policy**

7.1 Any breach of this Policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal with immediate effect for gross misconduct. In the case of contractors and other non-employees, breach of this Policy may result in termination of their engagement. Breach of the Policy may also give rise to civil or criminal liability.

7.2 Disciplinary action may be taken regardless of whether the breach is committed during working hours, and regardless of whether FSLT's IT equipment and facilities are used for the purpose of committing the breach.

7.3 Any member of Staff suspected of committing a breach of this Policy will be required to co-operate with FSLT's investigation into the allegations, which may involve you requiring to hand over relevant passwords and login details to FSLT. Failure to comply with such a request may, in itself, result in disciplinary action being taken.

7.4 Staff may also be required to immediately remove Internet postings that are deemed by FSLT to constitute a breach of this Policy. Failure to comply with any such request may in itself result in disciplinary action being taken.

7.5 In particular, misuse of social media during working hours or using FSLT IT equipment by creating, viewing, accessing, transmitting or downloading any of the following material will amount to gross misconduct (this list is not exhaustive) which may result in termination of your employment/engagement with FSLT: -

7.5.1 pornographic material;

7.5.2 chain letters or other spam;

7.5.3 offensive, obscene, or criminal material or material which is liable to cause embarrassment to FSLT or otherwise bring FSLT into disrepute;

7.5.4 a false and libellous/defamatory statement about any person or organisation;

7.5.5 material which is abusive, racist, sectarian, sexist, defamatory or unlawful, offensive or otherwise discriminatory on any protected ground;

7.5.6 confidential information about FSLT or any of our Staff;

7.5.7 any other statement which is likely to create any liability (whether criminal or civil, and whether for you or FSLT); and/or

7.5.8 material in breach of copyright.

## **8.0 Monitoring**

8.1 The contents of our IT equipment and communication systems are, and remain at all times, the property of FSLT. Therefore, Staff should have no expectation of privacy in any message, data, document, social media post, blog, discussion or any other information sent, received or stored on our IT systems.

8.2 We reserve the right to monitor, intercept and review, without further notice, Staff activities using our IT equipment and communications systems, including but not limited to social media postings and activities, to ensure that our rules are being complied with and for legitimate business purposes. By your acknowledgment of receipt on completion of the User Agreement Form of the Policy, you consent to such monitoring by FSLT regarding your use of social media resources and systems. This might include the use of network monitoring technology.

8.3 We may store copies of such data or communications for a period of time after they are created, and may delete such copies from time to time without notice.

8.4 Do not use our IT resources and communications systems for any matter that you wish to be kept private or confidential from the organisation.

## **9.0 Implementation of the Policy**

9.1 The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for the effective operation of the Policy, but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for its operation to the Chief Executive. Responsibility for monitoring and reviewing the operation of the Policy and making recommendations for change to minimise risks lies with the Corporate Services Manager.

9.2 All managers have a specific responsibility for operating within the boundaries of the Policy, ensuring that all members of Staff understand the standards of behaviour expected of them and taking action when behaviour falls below its requirements.

9.3 All Staff are responsible for the success and implementation of the Policy and should therefore ensure that you take time to read and understand it.

9.4 If you become aware of any breach of this Policy or other misuse of social media, you should report this to your Line Manager or Corporate Services Manager.

9.5 Questions regarding the content or application of the Policy should be directed to Chief Executive or Corporate Services Manager.

**10.0 Review of the Policy**

10.1 This policy is reviewed periodically by the Board of Directors.

10.2 We will continue to review the effectiveness of this policy to ensure it is achieving its objectives.

10.3 Staff are invited to comment on this policy and suggest ways in which it might be improved by contacting the Trust's HR Manager.

**FIFE SPORTS AND LEISURE TRUST**

**USER AGREEMENT FORM FOR SOCIAL MEDIA**

I acknowledge receipt of FSLT's Social Media Policy relating to the use of social media inside and outside of the workplace.

I have read and understood the Policy and I consent to the monitoring and recording of my social media communications using FSLT's equipment and communications systems.

I accept that a breach of the Policy may result in disciplinary action being taken against me, up to and including immediate dismissal/termination of my employment/engagement by reason of gross misconduct.

I am signing this document to accept the terms of the Policy, for retention by FSLT.

Full Name:

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Centre:

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Signed:

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Date:

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