



**MORECAMBE
FOOTBALL
CLUB**

MFC SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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Social Media Policy

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Social Media Policy

Policy Statement:

Social Media can bring significant benefits to Morecambe Football Club, particularly for building relationships with current and potential stakeholders, members and customers. However, it is important the use of Social Media *within* the Club, is for authorised Colleagues only, where it is part of their day-to-day job role and function.

This policy applies, at all times, to all permanent and casual Colleagues, volunteers, work-placements or interns, Board members and contractors at Morecambe Football Club who use Social Media for business or for personal reason, no matter whether Social Media use takes place on Club premises or not.

Please take the time to read and understand what we consider is a crucial document that provides guidance to employees on how to conduct themselves on social networks.

Policy Definition:

For the purposes of this policy, Social Media is a type of interactive online media that allows parties to communicate instantly with each other or to share data in a public forum. This includes, but is not limited to, online social forums such as **X, Instagram, Snapchat, Facebook and LinkedIn**.

Social Media also covers **blogs and video** and image sharing websites like **YouTube and Flickr** along with **online review websites** like **Trustpilot and Trip Advisor**.

Policy Overview:

Whilst we encourage Colleagues to 'share' and/or comment on Social Media, we expect you to be respectful and mindful about comments that are made, ensuring you show professionalism if making reference to any department within Morecambe Football Club. A misjudged status update can generate complaints or damage the Club's reputation. There are also security and data protection issues to consider. This policy explains how Colleagues can use Social Media safely and effectively.

General Social Media Guidelines:

Morecambe Football Club recognises that Social Media offers a platform for the Club to perform communication channels, to stay connected with supporters & customers and build its profile online, however you must be mindful of being respectful and refrain from inappropriate behaviours or banter.

Following these simple rules helps avoid the most common pitfalls:

- **Know the social network**

Colleagues should spend time becoming familiar with the social network before contributing.

- **If unsure, don't post it!**

- Colleagues should err on the side of caution when posting to social networks. If a Colleague feels an update or message might cause complaint or offence, or be otherwise unsuitable, they should not make any post. Colleagues can always consult their Line Manager for advice.

- Do not publish comments about players, staff, Colleagues, referees or other clubs and any controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects.

- Do not post, host, text or email things that are hurtful, insulting, offensive, abusive, threatening, any discriminatory conduct based on a person's race, sex, gender identity, national origin, colour, disability, age sexual orientation, veteran status, marital status, religion or any other status identified by The Equality Act 2010.

- Do not use text or emails for personal conversations, sending pictures, jokes or other items of a personal nature or engage in any 'banter' or comments with or about children at the Club.

- **Be thoughtful and polite**

Many Social Media users have got in to trouble simply by failing to observe basic good manners online. Colleagues should adopt the same level of courtesy used when communicating by email. Avoid hostile or harassing communications in any posts or other online communications.

- **Look out for security threats**

Colleagues should be on guard for social engineering and phishing attempts.

Social networks are also used to distribute spam and malware.

- **Keep personal use reasonable**

Colleagues should exercise restraint in how much personal use of Social Media they make during working hours.

- **Don't make promises without checking**

Some social networks are very public, so Colleagues should not make any commitments or promises on behalf of Morecambe Football Club without checking that the Club can deliver on the promises. Direct any enquiries to a suitable Manager.





- **Handle complex queries via other channels**

Social networks are not a good place to resolve complicated enquiries and customer issues.

Once a customer has made contact, Colleagues should handle further communications via the most appropriate channel – usually email or by telephone.

- **Don't escalate things**

It's easy to post a quick response to a contentious status update and then regret it. Colleagues should always take the time to think before responding and hold back if they are in any doubt at all.

Use of Club Social Media Accounts

This part of the Social Media policy covers all use of Social Media accounts owned and run by the Club.

Authorised Users:

Only people who have been authorised to use the Club's social networking accounts may do so.

Authorisation is usually provided by the CEO. It is typically granted when Social Media related tasks form a core part of the Colleague's job. Allowing only designated people to use the accounts ensures the Club's Social Media presence is consistent and cohesive.

Creating Social Media Accounts:

New Social Media accounts in the Club's name must not be created unless approved by the CEO.

The Club operates its Social Media presence in line with a strategy that focuses on the most appropriate social networks, given available resources. If there is a case to be made for opening a new account, Colleagues should raise this with the CEO.

Purpose of Club Social Media Accounts

Morecambe Football Club's Social Media accounts may be used for many different purposes.

In general, Colleagues should only post updates, messages or otherwise use these accounts when that use is clearly in line with the Club's overall objectives.

For instance, Colleagues may use Club Social Media accounts to:

- Respond to supporter and customer enquiries including requests for help
- Share blog posts, articles and other content created by the Club
- Share insightful articles, videos, media and other content relevant to the business, but created by others
- Provide fans or followers with an insight into what goes on at the Club
- Promote marketing campaigns
- Support new product launches and other initiatives

Social Media is a powerful tool that changes quickly. Colleagues are encouraged to think of new ways to use it, and to put those ideas to a Manager.



Inappropriate Content and Uses

Club Social Media accounts must not be used to share or spread inappropriate content, or to take part in any activities that could bring the Club into disrepute.

When sharing an interesting blog post, article or piece of content, Colleagues should always review the content thoroughly, and should not post a link based solely on a headline.



Personal Social Media Rules

The rules in this section apply to any Colleagues using Club Social Media accounts and any Colleagues using personal Social Media accounts.

Acceptable use:

Colleagues may use their personal Social Media accounts for work-related purposes during regular hours, but must ensure this is for a specific reason (e.g. competitor research). Social Media should not affect the ability of Colleagues to perform their regular duties .

Use of Social Media accounts for non-work purposes is restricted to non-work times, such as breaks and during lunch.

Talking about the Club:

Colleagues should ensure it is clear that their Social Media account does not represent Morecambe Football Club's views or opinions,

Colleagues may wish to include a disclaimer in Social Media profiles: 'The views expressed are my own and do not reflect the views of my employer'.

Users must not:

Create or transmit material that might be defamatory or incur liability for the Club for example posting images that are inappropriate or links to inappropriate content, such as but not limited to, posting messages; status updates or links to material or content that is inappropriate.

Inappropriate content includes sharing and/or posting discriminatory comments/images etc, bullying and/or intimidating behaviour, being ageist, pornography, racial or religious slurs, pregnancy or maternity related, sex and/or sexual orientation, gender-specific comments, disability information encouraging criminal skills or terrorism, or materials relating to cults, gambling and illegal drugs.

The definition of inappropriate content or material also covers any text, images or other media that could reasonably offend someone on the basis of race, age, sex, religious or political beliefs, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by the law.





Confidentiality & GDPR when using Social Media

Colleagues need to be mindful when using Social Media to not reveal any trade secrets, confidential information that is owned or been acquired by Morecambe FC relating to the organisation, customers or Colleagues. This includes, but not limited to internal communications within Morecambe Football Club, such as its business, contracts with customers, players or Colleagues that has not been publicly communicated. Furthermore, when using Social Media of any medium, users must not:

- Use Social Media for any illegal or criminal activities.
- Do anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual by:
 - making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion or belief, age, disability, pregnancy or maternity; or
 - Sending offensive or harassing material to others relating to a protected characteristic for example sex, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marital status, race, religion or belief, age, disability, pregnancy or maternity via Social Media using Social Media to bully another individual (such as a Colleague of Morecambe FC); or posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content.
- Broadcast unsolicited views on social, political, religious or other non-business-related matters.
- Send or post messages or material that could damage Morecambe Football Club's image or reputation for example by, criticising or entering into protracted argument with members, supporters, customers, Colleagues or rivals.
- Interact with Morecambe Football Club's competitors in any way which could be interpreted as being offensive, disrespectful or rude. (Communication with direct competitors should be kept to a minimum).
- Discuss Colleagues, competitors, customers or suppliers without their approval.
- Post, upload or link to spam, junk email or chain emails and messages.
- Share or link to any content or information owned by the Club that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive, for example, sales figures, details of key customers, or information about future strategy or marketing campaigns.
- Share or link to any content or information owned by another Club or person that could be considered confidential or commercially sensitive, for example, if a competitor's marketing strategy was leaked online, Colleagues of Morecambe Football Club should not mention it on Social Media.
- Share or link to data in any way that could breach the Club's Data Protection Policy.



Excessive use of Social Media at work

Colleagues should not spend an excessive amount of time while at work using Social Media websites, even if they claim to be doing so as part of their work. This is likely to have a detrimental effect on Colleagues' productivity. They should ensure that use of Social Media does not interfere with their other duties.

Copyright

Morecambe Football Club respects and operates within copyright laws. Users may not use Social Media to:

- Publish or share and copyrighted software, media or materials owned by third parties, unless permitted by that third party. If Colleagues wish to share content published on another website, they are free to do so if that website has obvious sharing buttons or functions on it.
- Share links to illegal copies of music, films, games or other software.

Security and Data Protection

Colleagues should be aware of the security and data protection issues that can arise from using social networks.

Protect Social Accounts:

Club Social Media accounts should be protected by strong passwords that are changed regularly and shared only with authorised users. Wherever possible, Colleagues should use two-factor authentication (often called mobile phone verification) to safeguard Club accounts. The use of personal software or installing Apps, etc with any of the Club's IT or Social Media accounts is strictly prohibited.

Avoid Social Scams

- Colleagues should watch for phishing attempts, where scammers may attempt to use deception to obtain information relating to either the Club or its customers.
- Colleagues should never reveal sensitive details through Social Media channels. Customer identities must always be verified in the usual way before any account information is shared or discussed.
- Colleagues should avoid clicking links in posts, updates and direct messages that look suspicious. In particular, users should look out for URLs contained in generic or vague sounding direct messages.



Media Interaction

From time to time, Morecambe FC Colleagues may be required to involve themselves in activities relating to mainstream media, whether it be TV, radio or print media (including Morecambe FC's own in-house facilities).

In all instances, they must only do so either at the instruction of or with the express permission of either the CEO. In undertaking all such appearances or involvement, the Colleague will be regarded as representing Morecambe FC. Under no circumstances will permission be given for Colleague to involve themselves with mainstream media in order to discuss matters relating to Morecambe FC in a personal capacity.

Any communications that Colleagues make in a professional capacity through dealings with mainstream media **must not bring Morecambe FC into disrepute, for example by:**

- criticising or entering into protracted argument with members, supporters, 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 Morecambe FC;
 - giving away confidential information about an individual (such as a Colleague or customer contact) or organisation (such as a rival business); or
 - discussing Morecambe FC's internal workings (such as deals that it is doing with a client 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 acknowledgement 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, belief, age, pregnancy or maternity;
 - using Social Media to bully another individual (such as an Colleague of Morecambe FC); or
 - posting images that are discriminatory or offensive or links to such content.
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Policy Enforcement

Monitoring Social Media Use

Club IT and internet resources, including computers, smart phones and internet connect, are provided for legitimate business use.

The Club therefore reserves the right to monitor Colleague internet usage as well as how social networks are used and accessed through these resources. The Club will endeavour to inform an affected Colleague when this is to happen and the reasons for it. Morecambe FC considers that valid reasons for checking a Colleague's internet usage include suspicions that the Colleague has been spending an excessive amount of time using Social Media websites for non- work-related activity, or, acted in a way that is in breach of the rules set out in this policy.

Any such examinations or monitoring will only be carried out by authorised Colleagues.

Access to particular Social Media websites may be subject to disciplinary action in any cases of misuse.

Additionally, all data relating to social networks written, sent or received through the Club computer systems is part of official Morecambe Football Club records.

The Club can be legally compelled to show that information to law enforcement agencies or other parties.

Disciplinary Action

Breaching this Social Media policy is a serious matter. Colleagues who do so will be subject to serious disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Colleagues, contractors and other users may also be held personally liable for violating this policy.

Where appropriate, the Club will involve the police or other law enforcement agencies in relation to breaches of this policy.



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