

## PBNI SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

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## 1. Rationale

Social media is a group of web-based applications that allows for the creation and sharing of information. Social media is a time-efficient and cost-effective way of communicating and monitoring information. It covers all media types including text, audio, video and images.

Under this policy, social media includes all forms of current and future tools used for digital social interactions between people. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Social networking sites (Facebook, LinkedIn)
- Video and photo sharing websites (Flickr, Instagram, YouTube, Myspace, Vimeo)
- Personal and corporate blogs
- Micro-blogging (Twitter)
- Forums, discussions boards, groups

The purpose of this policy is to encourage and enable PBNI staff to use social media appropriately to enhance our work. It also makes clear our responsibilities to do so in accordance with the PBNI Code of Conduct and sets out the principles that staff are expected to follow when using social media in their personal and professional lives

This policy covers the use of social media networks both in and out of work.

All PBNI staff who use social media are expected to adhere to the same standards of propriety as would be expected in any other public forum, be it during work or in their own time. The simple rule to remember is that the principles covering the use of social and other digital media by PBNI in both a work and personal capacity are the same as those that apply for any other activity. Social media is a public forum and the same considerations would apply as, say, to speaking in public or writing for a publication either officially or out of work.

This policy applies regardless of whether the social media sites are accessed using PBNI IT facilities and equipment or equipment belonging to members of staff.

All PBNI staff must adhere to the Code of Conduct which sets out the core values – integrity, honesty, objectivity and impartiality – and the standards of behaviour expected. See <http://www.pbni.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/PBNI-Code-of-Conduct-for-Staff-19.11.13.pdf>

In particular staff should have regard to Paragraph 10 in the PBNI's Code of Conduct, which states: "*Staff of PBNI who deal with the public should do so sympathetically, efficiently, promptly and without bias or maladministration. The public is entitled to expect the highest standards of conduct and service from all PBNI staff.*"

Staff need to take cognisance of this when using social media, both in work and in a personal or private capacity. Staff should also remember that any member of the public dissatisfied about the behaviour of PBNI staff may make a complaint about them through the PBNI Complaints Policy and Procedures.

Members of PBNI are of course free to use social and other digital media in their own time. But they should always need to be mindful of their duties not to disclose official information, and not to take part in any public activity which compromises, or might be seen to compromise the service delivered.

Staff should not comment on any cases PBNI is involved in, nor should they breach PBNI confidentiality or bring PBNI's reputation into disrepute.

This policy also needs to be read in conjunction, with the Social Media Procedures but also with PBNI Information Assurance policies particularly those relating to the use of Internet and Email.

This policy and procedures covers full time staff, part-time staff, agency staff, placements and volunteers whilst they represent PBNI. The broad policy intention applies also to Board members.

## **2. Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that staff who use social and other digital media in both a work and personal capacity do so in line with the requirements contained within PBNI policies, Code of Conduct and Legislation.

## **3. Objectives**

- To ensure PBNI staff use social media and digital communications in an appropriate manner and in line with PBNI policies.
- To ensure PBNI staff understand that when using social media and digital communications in a personal capacity the same standards are expected of them as in any other public forum. That is, they adhere to PBNI standards of behaviour as set out in the Code of Conduct.

## **4. Programmes and Projects**

PBNI Communications Unit can give advice and guidance in relation to all social media and digital communications matters.

## **5. Resources**

This policy will not incur any addition cost.

## **6. Communications and Training**

PBNI staff who are responsible for updated corporate PBNI social media accounts will be trained on an ongoing basis. This policy will be communicated to all staff.

## **7. Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy will also be kept under review to ensure it is in keeping with current legislation and good practice.

All staff are responsible for the success of this policy and should ensure that they read and understand it.

## **8. Review**

This policy will be reviewed four years from the date of approval. Interim reviews may also be prompted by feedback, and/or identified changes in practice.

## **9. Non compliance**

Breach of this Policy by employees may merit consideration under the Board's Disciplinary Policy.