

POLICY AND PROCEDURE



Solihull
Life
Opportunities

St Andrew's Centre
Pike Drive
Chelmsley Wood
Birmingham
B37 7US

Charity No. 1102297
England Company No.
5025939

Social Networking Policy

Category: *staff/volunteer/ service user/
human resources/safeguarding*

Introduction

The widespread availability and use of social networking applications bring opportunities to understand, engage and communicate with our audiences in new ways. It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our service users and partners, our legal responsibilities and the reputation of the organisation as a whole.

For example, our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.

The policy requirements in this document aim to provide this balance to support innovation whilst providing a framework of good practice.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure:

- that Solihull Life Opprotunities (SoLO) is not exposed to legal and governance risks
- that the reputation of SoLO is not adversely affected
- that our users are able to clearly distinguish where information provided via social networking applications is legitimately representative of the organisation
- that our staff have a clear understanding of the implications for themselves and our members of using social networking

Scope

This policy covers the use of social networking applications by SoLO employees, Volunteers and members (referred in this document as SoLO representatives)

The requirements of this policy apply to all uses of social networking applications

Policy Name: Social Networking
Organisation: Solihull Life Opportunities

1

Next Review Date: January 2012

Pages in this document - 3

for SoLO in any purpose and regardless of whether the applications are hosted by SoLO or not.

They must also be considered where SoLO representatives are contributing in an official capacity to social networking applications provided by external organisations or are communicating with others where SoLO is their primary connection.

Social networking applications include, but are not limited to

- Blogs
- Online discussion forums
- Chatrooms
- Media sharing services, for example YouTube
- Applications, for example Twitter and Tweets
- Social Networking sites, for example Facebook

All SoLO representatives should bear in mind that information they share through social networking applications, even if they are on private spaces, are still subject to copyright, data protection and Freedom of Information legislation, the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and other legislation. They must also operate in line with SoLO's Equal Opportunities Policy.

Enforcement

Any breach of the terms set out below could result in the following actions taken:

- Staff will be disciplined in line with SoLO's disciplinary and grievance procedure
- Volunteers may be asked to cease volunteering within SoLO
- Members may lose their right to a service within SoLO.

SoLO reserves the right to require the closure of any applications or removal of content published by SoLO representatives which may adversely affect SoLO's reputation or put it at risk of legal action.

Any communications or content published causing damage to SoLO, any of its employees or any third party's reputation may amount to misconduct or gross misconduct to which SoLO's Dismissal and Disciplinary Procedures apply.

Policy

- All proposals for using social networking applications as part of a SoLO service (whether they are hosted by SoLO or by a third party) must be approved by the CEO in the first instance
- Use of social networking applications not related to any of SoLO's services must still operate in line with the requirements set out in this policy whilst SoLO representatives are actively involved within the organisation.
- SoLO representatives must adhere to the following Terms of Use. The Terms of Use below apply to all uses of social networking applications by all SoLO representatives.

- Where applications allow the posting of messages online, users must be mindful that the right to freedom of expression attaches only to lawful conduct.

Terms of Use

Personal social networking applications:

- must not be used to publish any content which may result in actions for defamation, discrimination, breaches of copyright, data protection or other claims for damages. This includes but is not limited to material of an illegal, sexual or offensive nature that may bring the SoLO into disrepute.
- must not be used in an abusive or hateful manner.
- must not be used by staff to communicate with members unless permission has been gained from the relevant Project Manager.
- must be respectful in language and tone and comply with SoLO's values statement.
- Should not contain SoLO's logo unless permission is given by the CEO.

SoLO corporate social networking applications:

- can be set up only with the prior agreement of the CEO
- must have a moderator agreed and appointed by the CEO
- must not have photographs contained where prior written consent has not been gained

Use of social networking applications in work time for personal use is not permitted.