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**Social Media**

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**Please contact the OSDG department**

1. Policy Purpose and key drivers

**1. Introduction**

Staffordshire Police is committed to building public confidence by communicating effectively with all communities in Staffordshire. It is recognised that social networking and video / photo sharing websites are increasingly used by groups who are hard to reach by more conventional media. As such their corporate use is to support the Force in communicating with this target audience.

Digital technology has revolutionised the way in which people communicate and share information. Social media websites are used to share opinions and information, promote discussion and build relationships.

Good use of social media (such as Facebook, Twitter) can help the police to better understand, respond to and engage specific audiences. Used in the right way by the organisation, social media enables real two-way communication with people interested in engaging with the police.

However, social media is not without its pitfalls and this policy is designed to help those Police Officers and Police Staff who will be using these tools as part of their everyday job avoid them.

While regular monitoring and dip-sampling of social media posts will be undertaken by the organisation, it is the responsibility of individual users to ensure that the information they are posting is accurate, appropriate and will not jeopardise court proceedings or the reputation of the organisation.

The Social Media policy ownership for the Force sits with the Neighbourhood Policing leads, and will be operated by Corporate Communications. Policy change will be operated by the Information Management Group.

**2. Aims**

To build public confidence in the police and deter and detect crime by:

- providing an additional means of communication to communities that would benefit from an online presence reaching a wider audience in Staffordshire that is difficult to reach by more traditional media;
- promoting our campaigns, news releases and job vacancies using the different social networking sites available

building two way relationships with members of the public;

- providing timely updates and responses to discussions about issues affecting the community

To ensure that officers represent the Force professionally and appropriately on social networking and video sharing sites.

### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to all Police Officers, Police Staff, Special Constables and volunteers who use social networking and video sharing sites to represent the Force.

All Staffordshire Police Force- wide pages on social networking and video sharing sites will be created, managed and maintained by the Web Communications Team.

All neighbourhood social networking and blog websites will be set up by the Web Communications Team to ensure corporacy and will be managed by officers on that neighbourhood who will adhere to Force procedures. Support and guidance can also be provided by local communication staff.

## **4. Social Networking Pages**

### **4.1 Force approach**

The Force approach to developing social media sites will be based on the Force's organisational structure of the following three levels:

- Corporate level
- Local Policing Team level
- Neighbourhood / Individual team / department level

### **4.2 Corporate pages**

All Staffordshire Police corporate pages on social networking and video sharing sites will be created, managed and maintained by the Corporate Communications Department.

These pages can be used to:

- Identify neighbourhood policing teams, where they work and how they can be contacted
- Help identify local priorities, how they can be influenced and what action is being taken to address them
- Create links to relevant sites including the crime mapping website and other local service providers (Community Safety Partnerships, Local Authorities)
- Publicise news stories
- Advertise job vacancies in the Force
- Direct viewers to police videos
- Encourage and display feedback from the public about the site and policing
- Provide messages about crime prevention
- Carry crime prevention material for public use and download
- Link to pages for individual neighbourhood teams
- Seek views from community members on issues affecting them
- Provide links to the more local sites and content

Corporate social networking sites will be given a generic email address, so that all correspondence received via the sites can be monitored.

Personal email addresses must NOT be used for any social media accounts.

#### **4.3 Local Policing Team Pages**

To ensure corporacy, all Local Policing Team social networking sites and blogs will be set up by the Web Communications Team.

These pages / sites will be monitored, updated and maintained by local Communication Managers working closely with Local Authority / Community Safety Partnership communication colleagues.

#### **4.4 Neighbourhood / Department / Officer Social Networking Pages**

To ensure corporacy, all Neighbourhood / Department/ Officer social networking sites and blogs will be set up by the Web Communications Team.

All Neighbourhood / Department / Officer pages must use the allocated email address for the local neighbourhood / department / officer team.

All emails must be monitored and actioned regularly in compliance with the force standards (respond to all emails from the public within 24 hours).

All Neighbourhood social networking pages and blogs should link to the appropriate Staffordshire Police website page. This must be undertaken by the Web Communications Team.

Neighbourhood, Department and Officer pages can be used to:

- Enhance the reputation and accessibility of staff to their communities
- Communicate with the communities we serve
- Provide messages about local policing
- Provide opportunities for increased public engagement
- Justice updates - court results, local ASBOs
- Post videos about neighbourhood/departmental policing
- Gauge impact of police and partnership activity in tackling issues affecting the community
- Seek views from community members on issues affecting them

## **5. Yammer**

Yammer is an example of microblogging – a social media application well suited for business environments such as Staffordshire Police and it is currently used within a number of organisations.

The system is similar to Twitter. However, unlike Twitter, which is used for broadcasting messages to the public, Yammer is used for private communication between staff within the organisation.

Access to a Yammer network is determined by a user's internet domain, so only those with Staffordshire Police email addresses may join the Staffordshire Police Yammer network. Everybody is free to join, and use Yammer via their web browser. A Request For Change (RFC) for access is not required. Anyone with a Staffordshire Police

Force email address will be able to access the system from a work device or home PC.

Yammer has a number of advantages:

- Increased transparency and collaboration between staff
- Immediate so all staff can stay up-to-date on Force projects
- Promotes a more collaborative culture to accomplish goals
- Simple and direct way for staff to ask and answer questions
- Increased participation in discussions
- Less formal and less disruptive than email communications
- Messages can't be forwarded outside the Staffordshire Police Yammer network, which remains private and employee-only
- Employees can follow other employees or themed business areas to keep updated with their activities
- The basic access to Yammer is at no cost to the Force

Officers and staff should be aware that although Yammer has business benefits and security built in, it is hosted by a third party over the internet and therefore the confidentiality and integrity cannot be assured. It should be assumed that all content (text, photos, videos, links) posted to the Yammer site is not in the control of the Force. Therefore, there is potentially risk that information could end up in the public domain and can be potentially seen by anyone.

Whilst the advantages of introducing Yammer within the Force are significant, all those who use it must adhere to the following guidelines:

- Individuals are responsible for maintaining their own Yammer profile and employees are encouraged to update their own 'What are you working on' status with work related topics.
- Staff should not use their status to publish personal information, as all employees are able to see all updates.
- Employees can update their profile with their job title, location etc, and also upload a photograph of themselves for their profile – only photographs of the specific employee can be used.

- Employees are encouraged to set up new groups to bring people with similar work roles together for conversations. Employees should not set up new communities to connect with external groups.
- Suggested updates can include, for example; “currently working on new project. Does anybody have any experience of this topic?” or “Attending NPIA meeting, will keep you updated on outcomes”.
- Employees should refrain from uploading files into Yammer, as these should be shared via email and shared folders. Files uploaded into Yammer are open to everybody. Employees are able to upload useful links into Yammer.
- The use of Yammer should not be used for critical incidents or on-call issues.
- Yammer should not replace the Force intranet MySPI as an avenue for communication, but be used to support it.
- Links to Yammer from the Force sites will also link to the Force internet and email acceptable use policy.

The Corporate Communications Department and Professional Standards will have access to all sites to monitor them. Comments by staff will not be pre-moderated, but social pressure regulates what is posted and limits conversation to appropriate topics. Users can be suspended by other users, and must re-verify their email address to un-suspend their account. Former employees are locked once they no longer have access to a valid company email address.

For enquiries regarding this policy, please contact the Web Communications Team on extension 2270.