

# Online Engagement Policy

## **1. The Purpose of Online Engagement**

By engaging on-line in social networks, Healthwatch Rutland aims to keep people informed about consultations and surveys and anything that affects their health and social care services, thus amplifying their voice. Although we will be using a range of engagement channels to do this, including the Healthwatch Rutland website, Healthwatch Rutland will also use social networks to extend the reach of the project and encourage use of the resources that will be hosted on the Healthwatch Rutland website.

Healthwatch Rutland paid staff will be responsible for operating this policy. However, even though only staff will be able to access social media accounts to post, volunteers should be aware of this policy when replying to posts, or tagging or sharing content with the Healthwatch Rutland accounts.

## **2. Aim**

The aim of this policy is to ensure that:

- Engagement with individuals, communities and promotion of Healthwatch Rutland through the use of social media is maximised.
- A consistent and corporate approach is adopted and maintained in the use of social media
- Healthwatch information remains secure and is not compromised through the use of social media
- Staff operate within existing policies, guidelines and relevant legislation
- Healthwatch Rutland's reputation is not damaged or adversely affected
- Service users viewing Healthwatch social media channels are not abused, threatened or discriminated against
- Healthwatch core values are maintained

## **3. Social Media**

Social media is increasingly used to reach a wider audience, particularly audiences who may not access traditional media. All Healthwatch Rutland social media content should be up to date and accurate.

Healthwatch Rutland will use a range of social media outlets to communicate its core messages and engage with individuals and organisations about health and social care. This includes, but is not limited to, Facebook and Twitter.

## **4. Risk Assessment**

The following risks have been identified:

- Damage to the reputation of Healthwatch Rutland

- That Healthwatch Rutland posts online give a false impression that Healthwatch Rutland has exceeded its statutory role. For example, by giving advice on social or health care issues rather than passing on information or signposting clients. Also, that Healthwatch Rutland are perceived as campaigning inappropriately or not remaining impartial when necessary
- Virus or other malware (malicious software) infection from infected sites
- Disclosure of confidential information
- Social engineering attacks (this is the act of manipulating people into disclosing confidential material or carrying out certain actions. Individuals fraudulently claiming to be a business or client often conduct social engineering)
- Civil or Criminal action relating to breaches of legislation
- Breach of Safeguarding
- Abuse or discrimination

In light of these risks, Healthwatch Rutland will monitor and regulate the use of social media sites regularly to ensure that such use does not damage Healthwatch Rutland, its employees, partners or the people it serves.

## 5. Procedure

Users must ensure that they use social media sensibly and responsibly, in line with this policy. They must ensure that their use will not adversely affect Healthwatch Rutland or its business, nor be damaging to Healthwatch Rutland's reputation and credibility or otherwise violate any Healthwatch Rutland policies. They should:

- Be aware of and recognise of their responsibilities identified in this Social Media Policy
- Remember that they are personally responsible for the content they publish on any form of social media
- It shall be considered a breach of acceptable conduct to post any confidential information or intellectual property of Healthwatch Rutland obtained during the person's work, including information relating to finances, research, development, marketing, service users, operational methods, plans and policies
- Never give out personal details such as home address and telephone numbers
- Ensure that any personal or sensitive information is handled in line with the Healthwatch Rutland's Data Protection Policy
- Be aware of safeguarding issues, as social media sites are often misused by offenders. Safeguarding is everyone's business – if you have any concerns about other site users, you have a responsibility to report these to your Line Manager
- Social media sites are in the public domain and it is important to ensure that you are confident about the nature of the information you publish. Permission must be sought if you wish to publish or report on meetings or discussions that are meant to be private or internal to Healthwatch Rutland
- Responses from the public on the Healthwatch Rutland website and social media pages will be regularly moderated (at least weekly) to ensure that any inappropriate messages/posts from the public are removed from the website/social media page.

(See section 8 Moderation). Inappropriate content includes anything defamatory, personal or profane. If there is any doubt as to whether to delete a post, the CEO is to be approached and in their absence the Chair of the Board

- Don't cite details of service users, partners or suppliers without their approval
- Don't use insulting, offensive or racist language or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable in the workplace
- Ensure all content is polite, professional, appropriate, accurate and spell checked

## 6. Content

The following is a guide to the content of any online communication from Healthwatch Rutland. If any doubt exists, the CEO or Chair of the Board should be approached to confirm whether information should be shared on the Healthwatch Rutland website or social media accounts.

### *Do*

- Post/share information about Healthwatch Rutland projects, surveys and activities
- Post/share information about local health and social care services
- Post/share reports from recognised national bodies
- Post/share surveys and information from other Healthwatches, recognised charities, government bodies and health and social care providers and commissioners

### *Don't*

- Engage in conversations on social media platforms, if a question is asked, refer the person to the [info@healthwatchrutland.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchrutland.co.uk) email address for a response
- Post/share anything of a specifically political, religious or legal nature
- Support any campaign (information can be shared with the public regarding health or social care campaigns – but it must be clear that Healthwatch Rutland does not engage in campaigning)
- Use the site/tool for personal gain or to solicit business for personal gain
- Express personal views
- Post/share materials considered to be defamatory or to the detriment of Healthwatch Rutland and/or the public perception of the organisation

## 7. Administration

The username and passwords to access Healthwatch Rutland online profiles will be held securely in the office. The only people authorised to access the Healthwatch Rutland website management tools are the Office Manager, the CEO and the Board Member with responsibility for IT. The only people authorised to access the Healthwatch Rutland Facebook and Twitter accounts are the Office Manager and the CEO.

## 8. Moderation

The aim of moderating the HWR website and social media posts is to monitor items of feedback and public comment against a set of 'good practice' or 'acceptability' principles. In the case of the HWR website the technology allows for 'pre-moderation' whereby all comments can be checked before they go live. In the case of social media such as Twitter and Facebook, moderation activity is necessarily conducted after posts have been made, due to the nature and limitations of the media.

### ***Good Practice Principles***

Moderation should be conducted professionally with a common-sense approach, taking care that the following types of comment are disallowed:

- Personal attacks
- Threats or discussion of illegal activity
- Comments that are racially or sexually inflammatory
- Advertising or self-promoting
- Use of lewd language
- Comments that are irrelevant or out of context

Where website feedback and posts are found to be unacceptable in reference to these principles, then the moderator may seek to reword the comments and seek the author's approval before publishing. Where that approval is not forthcoming, or where the author has not left contact details, then HWR will decline to publish the item of feedback.

Where Social Media posts are found to be unacceptable in reference to these principles then the moderator will remove the post immediately.

Moderation is conducted in the first instance by the Office Manager or the CEO of HWR. The Chair shall have the final word in deciding the suitability of any post after application of the Good Practice Principles.

#### *Revision history*

V2.1 published 29/8/17 containing additional material regarding moderation of feedback; predominantly in newly added section 8