



Date	Version	Approval
November 2024	1	Board meeting

### 1. WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Internet-based websites and applications that allow users to create, publish and share content or to participate in social networking.

### 2. WHY IS THERE A NEED FOR POLICY?

Table Tennis Ireland has a responsibility to provide governance, guidance on social media best practice and advice to staff on expectations and responsibilities around the management of TTI social networks. This policy provides guidance to TTI staff on their responsibilities in respect of the use of social media. It ensures we have agreed rules of engagement around social media management internally.

### 3. PURPOSE OF THIS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to advise how TTI uses social media in keeping with the Government's policy of openness and transparency. The policy facilitates staff to share information on events, competitions, or other Table Tennis relevant information externally with members and the public, using social networking platforms as communication tools. We have a social media presence on a number of platforms. Social media can include text, audio, video, images, podcasts, livestreaming, and other multimedia communications. Examples of TTI social media platforms include X, Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, and LinkedIn. We use our social media accounts to provide a wide range of information to members and stakeholders and we intend to continue to build our audience on these platforms.

## **4. SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY**

4.1 TTI's Social Media Goals are to provide information to members and the public on the sport, promote Table tennis on the Island of Ireland and enhance the sport's profile to a broad range of public audiences. TTI also aims to monitor feedback and breaking news and to promote transparency and openness in our public-facing communications. We also aim to develop and expand the exposure of Table Tennis in Ireland by promoting and developing the sport nationwide. TTI is committed to developing a vibrant table tennis community on the island of Ireland and aims to enhance participation at all levels while championing inclusivity and diversity within the sport.

### **4.2 Social Media Use**

TTI's main corporate accounts are managed by the Office Staff based in Irish Sport HQ, Dublin. Followers of TTI Social Media platforms would expect to see event information and occasional live coverage of events as well as curated content (photos, videos) from TTI Staff, contractors and volunteers working with communities and clubs around the country. Other communications from TTI include important updates from on upcoming events and real-time activities and alerts about newly published content on our website. Other practical information on services is available through the TTI website.

### **4.3 Who We Follow**

If you follow us on social media, we will not automatically follow you back.

### **4.4 Replies and Direct Messages**

In general, TTI's social media accounts will be used to disseminate information and will not be used to respond to queries. Requests for further information should be submitted directly to [info@tabletennisireland.ie](mailto:info@tabletennisireland.ie). We ask members and the public not to include private or personal information when contacting us via social media. We will also sign-post the public towards the 'Contact' page on our website. Likes or retweets from our accounts do not signify endorsement.

### **4.5 Offensive replies/comments**

Abusive, threatening, inappropriate or spam posts or comments will be deleted and will result in followers being blocked and reported directly to the social media platform itself.

### **4.6 Availability**

Social networks may occasionally be unavailable and we accept no responsibility for lack of service due to their downtime.

## 5. PUTTING THE POLICY INTO PRACTICE

The following is a guide to best practice for social media accounts and activity.

**5.1 Be thoughtful when posting.** Social media accounts should adopt a less formal and more conversational tone compared to official press releases or other communications. This approach is in order to entice users to read and engage with your content.

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**5.2 Be responsive and open.** Staff are encouraged to bear in mind that the audience is likely to actively monitor social media from several sources on a regular basis and to communicate directly with the account holder. To ensure uniform communications, a consistent message across all of our platforms is important. If in doubt about the position of TTI on certain issues, please direct your query to the CEO of TTI.

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**5.3 Be discrete and use good judgement.** Remember not to say anything on social media that we would not say in any other public forum.

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**Be considerate and uphold TTI's reputation.** Do not post or share anything which breaches copyright or that could be construed as advertising or promoting a commercial company (exceptions include where you are acknowledging an existing partnership, e.g. with an event co-hosted by an Local Sports Partnership, LSP). Take into account cultural sensitivities and avoid posting anything that could be considered offensive. Do not post content or engage in public arguments which could damage the good name and reputation of TTI.

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**5.4 Do no harm.** Be respectful and civil in tone, objective and impartial in substance. Maintain professionalism: personal opinions should not be expressed at any time.

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**5.5 Do not respond to abusive replies**

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**5.6 Be aware.** It is important to remember that anything put on social media has a digital footprint even if deleted later.

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**5.7 Be constructive.** Feedback and responses are good, but online argument is not advised.

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**5.8 Do not use copyrighted images or resources which are not in the public sphere without authorisation.**

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**5.9 Be aware of relevant legislation when posting any material.** This includes laws governing data protection (GDPR), freedom of information (FOI), copyright, equal status, etc.

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## 6. Security Management

**6.1** All TTI social media accounts, including YouTube, must be established by the TTI Head Office. Staff with direct access to TTI Facebook and Instagram accounts should turn on higher privacy settings as their personal accounts' privacy is directly linked to the TTI Facebook Page and Instagram account access. Access to social media accounts will be recorded centrally, reviewed and revised by TTI Head Office.

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### **6.2 Authorisation**

Staff assigned to post information on TTI social media sites are authorised by the CEO of TTI. When TTI staff are assigned social media responsibility, they will be provided with training on best practice use of each social media platform.

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### **6.3 Removal of Staff Access to Social Networks**

When authorised staff leave TTI the staff member's access to TTI relevant social networks must be removed and new passwords generated. The CEO will delete them as an authorised user on the TTI social media content management tool. Staff members with direct access to a Facebook Page or LinkedIn page will be removed as an admin/editor/advertiser/analyst. The CEO will have admin/password access to all TTI social media accounts at all times.

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### **6.4 Remember the Do's and Don'ts**

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Those who post content onto TTI's social media sites should be aware that they are representing the organisation in doing so and are formally publishing such content. What is presented on the site reflects on TTI. It is therefore important to ensure that the same caution is exercised as with any other official correspondence or publication, namely:

a. Consideration of the TTI Standards and Behaviors – any posts should be in accordance with the relevant legislation, circulars and codes of TTI.

- b. Confidentiality – no confidential material should be posted.
- c. Respect - be respectful of others on social media. Do not engage with trolls or engage in arguments.
- d. Circumspection – take time to consider your post. Be aware of the potential reputational risk which could arise in the event of inappropriate posts.
- e. Certainty – Do not post anything unless you are certain of its validity and truthfulness.
- f. Capacity – If you are commenting on work related matters, as an employee of TTI, you should not be commenting in a personal capacity. Further, no comment should be made on issues relating to the policy or functions of TTI.
- g. Corrections – If you get it wrong please correct your error immediately and let the CEO of TTI know.

## 7. TERMS OF SERVICE

**7.1** Social media sites have their own terms of service and those posting content need to acquaint themselves with the terms and conditions associated with their use. In some cases, the site will claim control and ownership over everything you have uploaded or disclosed. Those charged with uploading material need to ensure that the TTI does not inadvertently surrender ownership.

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**7.2** Copyright and Intellectual Property. -Those uploading content onto social media sites need to ensure that there are no copyright or intellectual property restrictions on doing so. This applies to music and video files in particular but could also include image files and text-based data. Permission may also be required to upload material obtained by TTI from third-parties. The terms and conditions of a social media site could result in the surrender of copyright once data is posted onto the site. This could result in TTI's material being used by others without compensation.

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**7.3** Security and Viruses. -Those uploading files onto a social media site need to be aware that certain files can contain viruses or malware. Distributing those files could inadvertently damage the reputation of TTI and result in complaints from site users. Those charged with uploading files onto social media sites should obtain the advice of the ICT unit on the security implications (who is this?). Staff who notice a potential security breach of any social network belonging to TTI should report it immediately to the CEO.

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**7.4** Privacy. -There should be no expectation of privacy on the Internet. Those posting content onto social media sites need to be aware of the site's privacy policy and should

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verify that there is nothing in that policy that would militate against the use of the site by TTI.

**7.5 Confidential, Proprietary or Sensitive Data** Confidential, proprietary or sensitive data should not be posted onto social media sites. Those posting content should not disclose information or make commitments unless they are authorised to do so.

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**7.6 Permanency Information** posted onto social media sites is likely to be permanently available and may indeed be published on other websites later. Deleting information is unlikely to remove it entirely as there could be multiple copies on the Internet. Accordingly, discretion needs to be used when posting content onto social media sites.

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## **8. REVIEW AND UPDATE**

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This policy will be reviewed and updated periodically or when necessary to ensure that any changes to Table Tennis Ireland's business practices are properly reflected.

**Date Policy Passed by Board of Directors:**

**Date of Review:**

## **Appendix I: FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS**

### **X**

X is a 'micro-blogging' platform which allows users to post and exchange short messages (up to 140 characters in length) and converse publicly with other users via a mobile phone or web browser. X allows users to share links to online information, publish photographs and share other media such as video. X is a privately-owned company. Apart from direct messages exchanged between users, all messages (or "tweets") are public and visible to all for review, comment and sharing. "Follow" option Those who manage the TTI's X sites

should ensure that the “follow” option is used with discretion. There should only be a requirement to follow another X account if: - there is an advantage for TTI in doing so - the account being followed is genuine - the account being followed does not post content that could be deemed inappropriate. In general, it could be of advantage for TTI X sites to follow the X accounts of other bodies e.g., State agencies, community groups etc. The “Retweet” feature TTI X accounts may occasionally be asked to re-tweet (i.e. retransmit) content from other X users. Material should only be re-tweeted if: - there is an advantage for TTI in doing so - the material is appropriate for retransmission

### **Facebook**

Facebook is a popular free social networking website that allows registered users to create “pages”, upload photos and videos, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. It is a privately-owned company. The site includes public features such as:

- a. Marketplace - allows members to post, read and respond to classified ads.
  - b. Groups - allows members who have common interests to find each other and interact
  - c. Events - allows members to publicise an event, invite guests and track who plans to attend
  - d. Pages - allows members to create and promote a public page built around a specific topic
  - e. Presence technology - allows members to see which contacts are online and chat
  - f. Within each member's personal “page”, there are several key networking components. The most popular is arguably the Wall, which is essentially a virtual bulletin board. Messages left on a member's Wall can be text, video or photos. Another popular component is the virtual Photo Album. Photos can be uploaded from the desktop or directly from a cell phone camera. There is no limitation on quantity, but Facebook staff will remove inappropriate or copyrighted images. An interactive album feature allows the member's contacts (who are generically called "friends") to comment on each other's photos and identify (tag) people in the photos.
  - g. Another popular profile component is Status Updates, a microblogging feature that allows members to broadcast short X-like announcements to their friends. All interactions are published in a newsfeed, which is distributed in real-time to the member's friends.
- “Like” feature

Using the “like” feature on Facebook should be approached with caution. For example, clicking a “like” link beneath a video on someone else's Facebook site initiates the following actions: It will be noted beneath the video that you liked it. A story will be posted to your Wall (timeline) that you liked the video. The person who posted the video will get a notification that you liked his or her video. Discretion needs to be exercised when selecting the “like” feature as it is a form of endorsement. Facebook also allows a user to “like” an advertisement. If that option is selected, anyone who is a “friend” of the site will be notified that site owner likes a particular advertisement. This could be seen as an endorsement of a particular brand or product. “Friends” feature Facebook has a feature that allows “friends” to link to a site. Adding a “friend” could be interpreted as endorsing what that “friend” stands for. Furthermore, on the Internet, it is difficult to know if a “friend” is a genuine person or not. It is recommended that the “friends” feature be avoided unless there are compelling reasons for doing otherwise.

### **Instagram**

Instagram allows users to “follow” other accounts (creators, public figures, businesses, or individuals). Instagram also shows its users who viewed your Stories. Staff should not be viewing Stories which are deemed inappropriate when logged into the TTI Instagram account. Similar to Facebook, caution should be used when following other Instagram accounts. Similarly to Facebook, the “like” feature should be approached with caution and the same guidance of account engagement followed.

### **LinkedIn**

LinkedIn Company Pages are administered by staff with authorised access. Admins on the TTI LinkedIn Company Page can “invite” personal connections to “Follow” the Page and this should be done with caution

### **YouTube**

YouTube is a popular video-sharing Web site. It is owned by Google. You Tube and Copyright issues To legally upload copyrighted content to YouTube you need a broadcast license from the copyright owner. Also, when you upload a video to YouTube (even if you own it), you grant to YouTube a nonexclusive, worldwide, perpetual license to freely sublicense, re-distribute, re-publish, monetize, and do whatever they may want to with the video. Accordingly, care needs to be taken when uploading