

Social Media Policy and Procedure Document – 6 February 2021

From Party Website

Code of Conduct: Social Media Policy

All codes of conduct and NEC statements form part of the agreed relationship between individual Labour Party members and set the minimum code of conduct expected by the Party of all its members.

National Executive Committee Statement

A starting point for all our actions as members of a party and a movement is to treat all people with dignity and respect. This applies to all our dealings with people, offline and online. Everyone should feel able to take part in discussion about our party, country and world. We want to maximise this debate, including critical discussion, as long as it does not result in the exclusion of others.

Abusing someone online is just as serious as doing so face to face. We stand against all forms of abuse and will take action against those who commit it. Harassment, intimidation, hateful language and bullying are never acceptable, nor is any form of discrimination on the basis of gender, race, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

Any member found in breach of the policies will be dealt with according to the rules and procedures of the Labour Party.

We wish to build a diverse movement that reflects the whole of society, so should always consider how our actions and words may limit the confidence or otherwise exclude either those less knowledgeable than ourselves or those already under-represented in politics. Those with privilege, whether due to their volume of experience, party position or status in society should have regard to how their actions may be felt by those in different circumstances to themselves.

It is perfectly possible to have vehement disagreements without descending into personal abuse, shaming people or exhibiting bullying behaviour. Forcefully made points and criticisms of the political views of others are totally legitimate, personal attacks are not. Debates amongst party members should be comradely, acknowledging that whatever our diverse views, we are one party with shared goals. Derogatory descriptions of the positions of others should be avoided.

Anonymous accounts or otherwise hiding one's identity for the purpose of abusing others is never permissible.

The use of sexualised language or imagery, and unwelcome sexual attention or advances are not acceptable, nor is the publishing of others' private information without their explicit permission.

We should not give voice to those who persistently engage in abuse and should avoid sharing their content, even when the item in question is unproblematic. Those who consistently abuse

other or spread hate should be shunned and not engaged with in a way that ignores this behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to challenge abuse and to stand in solidarity with victims of it. We should attempt to educate and discourage abusers rather than responding in kind.

We encourage the reporting of abusive behaviour to the Labour Party, administrators of the relevant website or social media platform, and where appropriate, to the police. This is a collective responsibility and should not be limited to those who have been subjected to abuse.

Trolling, or otherwise disrupting the ability of others to debate is not acceptable, nor is consistently mentioning or making contact with others when this is unwelcome.

Principles for the Labour Party's use of Social Media

1. We are direct, confident and proud in what we have to say – we speak boldly and with clear intention.
2. We are clear about our position and our policies, and will give our members and supporters the language and tools to disseminate these.
3. Collectivism is at the heart of what we do. Our members and supporters are crucial to all our achievements and their contributions, from door knocking to online activism, are valued and acknowledged.
4. We seek to break down the wall that creates 'us' and 'them'. When we say 'we' that means the whole movement and those who share our values, not an exclusive group.
5. We want debate and discussion to flourish on our channels and will encourage feedback wherever appropriate.
6. We make legitimate criticisms based on policy and political actions, never making personal attacks.
7. We use accessible language and avoid jargon that could exclude or alienate.
8. We put the stories and experiences of the public first. We prioritise the issues that affect people in their everyday lives, rather than providing news for insiders.
9. We are inventive and innovative with our digital strategy and that means experimentation. We need people to be open-minded to change and encourage us to offer the best digital experience possible – even when that means trial and error.
10. We know that not everyone will agree with us. Constructive criticism is welcome, but we want to create a welcoming space for our supporters, so if comments become abusive we will report them.

Member's Pledge

In joining the party, every member agrees to our Member's Pledge, which you can read in full below. Members agree to act within the spirit and rules of the Labour Party, which can be read in full in our rule book, and our codes of conduct – all of which can be found below. These rights and responsibilities are of the utmost importance and are reviewed regularly by the NEC; the Labour Party's ruling body.

The member's pledge: *I pledge to act within the spirit and rules of the Labour Party in my conduct both on and offline, with members and non-members and I stand against all forms of abuse.*

I understand that if found to be in breach of the Labour Party policy on online and offline abuse, I will be subject to the rules and procedures of the Labour Party.

Rules and Codes of Conduct

Every person is entitled to feel safe from harm and prejudice, which the Labour Party's codes of conduct enforce. Below are the Labour Party's codes of conduct that all members agree to adhere to, as well as information regarding provisional membership and the complete Labour Party rulebook. If you have any questions regarding the welfare of members, supporters or members of the public, or would like to make a complaint to the party, you can get in touch below.

Barrow & Furness CLP on Social Media

Websites:

CLP Official website: <https://www.furnesslabour.co.uk/>

DASA Official website: <https://www.dasalabour.org.uk/>

Facebook Pages:

CLP Page: <https://www.facebook.com/BarrowandFurnessLabourParty>

DASA Page: <https://www.facebook.com/LabourDASA/>

Ulverston & RF Page: <https://www.facebook.com/Ulverston-and-Rural-Furness-Labour-Party-1721419881409881/>

Barrow Borough Councillors Page: <https://www.facebook.com/BBLabourCouncillors/>

Facebook Groups:

CLP Members Private Group :

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/BarrowandFurnessCLPMembers/>

DASA Members Private Group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1578076695562829/>

Instagram:

CLP: <https://www.instagram.com/furnesslabour/>

Twitter:

CLP: <https://twitter.com/barrowclp>

Barrow Borough Councillors: <https://twitter.com/bcouncillors>

Procedures

Ownership:

The CLP shall own all websites, social media pages/groups and email addresses. Domains should be registered to Barrow & Furness Constituency Labour Party at 22 Hartington Street. If this isn't the case domains and emails should be transferred to the CLP.

Overview:

All CLP online platforms should help campaign and highlight the CLP and National Party message. Communications should be clear, and fit with the current campaign message as agreed by the Campaign Forum and the Social Media Officer.

Roles:

Admins: The CLP Vice Chair (members), Secretary & Social Media Officers should be admins on all CLP online platforms. The Vice Chair (Members) and Secretary will be purely administrative roles, including checking membership of those on member only pages/groups and not deal with the day to day running of platforms. The CLP SM Officer will be in control of all online platforms following set procedures contained in this document. There will be up to two other volunteer admins on each platform that report to the SM Officer and deal with the management of the platforms and getting a clear, concise Labour message out to the world.

The SM Officer reports to the CLP EC and works within campaign teams to deliver our message.

Branches are responsible for their own online platforms but as CLP members follow the same procedures as the CLP.

Moderators: Any number of moderators on social media are allowed. They report to the SM Officer and main admins on each platform. Moderators look after the day to day admin duties of pages/groups to make sure all content is within Party Rules on social media and conduct.

Security:

All platforms will have passwords stored securely in line with current Party Policy with access shared by CLP Vice Chair (Members), Chair, SM Officer only with a backup on the CLP Office computer.

Admins of particular platforms should have passwords available to them for that platform. Moderators will have no access to passwords.

All passwords are not to be shared outside the above people. Passwords will be changed after each AGM or when a new Officer or admin is appointed. Accessing a platform if not a delegated Officer/Admin is against CLP rules and will be dealt with according to Labour Party disciplinary procedure.

Social Media:

- **Daily posting and engagement:** Admins should post clear, joined up messages across social media and are managed by the Communications and Social Media Officer.
- **Daily customer service:** Admins can reply to questions as they come in or pass on the enquiry to the appropriate Officer. If in any doubt let the Social Media Officer deal with it

- **Strategy and planning:** Will be in line with the CLP communication strategy and campaign teams. The Communication and Social Media Officer will pass down this to admins.
- **Crisis response:** If there is any crisis then this should be reported directly and straight away to the Social Media Officer. The Officer will then take it to the appropriate EC Officer to deal with.
- **Social media training:** Regular training will be given to admins and occasional training to members in using Social Media.

Complaints:

All complaints about content should be directed to the admin team.

The admin team will look into the matter, discuss and make a team decision and communicate the decision to the complainant. If the matter involves another member the admins will mediate to try and sort the matter in an amicable way. Safeguarding concerns will be taken into consideration at all times. All communications will be considered confidential.

If the complainant feels the matter is not resolved they should then write to the CLP Secretary to take the matter to the CLP Executive Committee.

If the matter is not resolved within the CLP then the matter can be taken to the National Complaints team.

Behavioural Issues of Party Members:

If a Party member acts in any manner that breaks the Party social media rules they will be written to by an admin (after consulting with the other admins) and warned about their behaviour. The communication will say why they are being contacted, asked to curtail that behaviour, and given notice of next steps if they carry the behaviour on.

If the member breaks the social media rules again within 12 months of the first warning they will be banned for 30 days from that platform. This will be communicated to them by the admin team.

If after a 30 day ban the member carries on with the behaviour, within a 12 month period, a lifetime ban will be put in place. This will be communicated to them by the admin team.

All communications will be signed off by the admin team and dated and logged with the CLP Secretary who will keep accurate records of all communications. These records will be kept for 2 years and then deleted.

If the member wants to appeal a decision, they can write to the CLP Secretary, or a trusted EC Officer if the Secretary is involved in the matter and the EC will decide if the decision will stand. No decisions should be made without getting both sides of any dispute.

The member can take up the matter with the National Complaints team if they are unhappy with the outcome of any decision. At this point it becomes a National Party rather than CLP matter.

Behavioural Issues of Members of the Public:

Members of the public will be treated with the same respect and under the same standards as Party members. If they act in any manner that breaks the Party social media rules they will be written to by an admin (after consulting with the other admins) and warned about their behaviour. The communication will say why they are being contacted, asked to curtail that behaviour, and given notice of next steps if they carry the behaviour on.

If the person breaks the social media rules again within 12 months of the first warning they will be banned for 30 days from that platform. This will be communicated to them by the admin team.

If after a 30 day ban the member carries on with the behaviour, within a 12 month period, a lifetime ban will be put in place. This will be communicated to them by the admin team.

All communications will be signed off by the admin team and dated and logged with the CLP Secretary who will keep accurate records of all communications. These records will be kept for 2 years and then deleted.

If the member wants to appeal a decision, they can write to the CLP Secretary, or a trusted EC Officer if the Secretary is involved in the matter and the EC will decide if the decision will stand. No decisions should be made without getting both sides of any dispute.

The member can take up the matter with the National Complaints team if they are unhappy with the outcome of any decision. At this point it becomes a National Party rather than CLP matter.

Officer and Admin behaviour

All officers and admins representing the CLP will follow the Party Social Media Policy and treat everyone with respect and consideration as laid out in the members pledge.

Officer's and Admins can express personal opinions on private member groups and it shall be a given that this is the case unless expressly stated otherwise. If commenting as the representative of the CLP they should use the page to do this and be certain that they are representing the views of the CLP.

All Members

CLP members should at all times follow the National Party Social Media Policy and behave as a representative of the CLP and the wider Party.

Appendix 1

CLP Members Social Media Pledge

All members agree to abide by the following pledge when engaging with others on CLP

social media sites:

1. I pledge to act within the spirit and rules of the Labour Party in my conduct both on and offline, with members and non-members, and I stand against all forms of abuse.
2. I will treat all people with dignity and respect.
3. I will not harass, intimidate, use hateful language or bully others.
4. My actions and words will not limit the confidence or otherwise exclude others.
5. I will comradely debate with party members acknowledging our diverse views and shared goals.
6. I will make legitimate points and criticisms of the political views of others but I will not make personal attacks.
7. I will not use anonymous accounts or otherwise hide my identity for the purpose of abusing others.
8. I will not use sexualised language or imagery or engage in unwelcome sexual attention or advances.
9. I will not publish others' private information without their explicit permission.
10. I will not give voice to those who persistently engage in abuse.
11. I will challenge abuse and stand in solidarity with the victims of it.
12. I will attempt to educate and discourage abusers rather than responding in kind.
13. I will report abusive behaviour.
14. I will not troll, or otherwise disrupt the ability of others to debate.
15. I will not mention or make contact with others when this is unwelcome.
16. I understand that if found to be in breach of the Labour Party policy on online and offline abuse, I will be subject to the rules and procedures of the Labour Party.

Appendix 2

Ten Types of Cyberbullying

1. Exclusion

Exclusion is the act of leaving someone out deliberately. Exclusion exists with in-person bullying situations but is also used online to target and bully a victim. For example, you might be excluded/uninvited to groups or parties while you see other members being included, or left out of message threads or conversations that involve other members.

2. Harassment

Harassment is a broad category under which many types of cyberbullying fall into, but it generally, refers to a sustained and constant pattern of hurtful or threatening online messages sent with the intention of doing harm to someone.

3. Outing/Doxing

Outing, also known as doxing, refers to the act of openly revealing sensitive or personal information about someone without their consent for purposes of embarrassing or humiliating them. This can range from the spreading of personal photos or documents of public figures to sharing an individual's saved personal messages in an online private group. The key is the lack of consent from the victim.

4. Trickery

Trickery is similar to outing, with an added element of deception. In these situations, the bully will befriend their target and lull them into a false sense of security. Once the bully has gained their target's trust, they abuse that trust and share the victim's secrets and private information to a third party or multiple third parties.

5. Cyberstalking

Cyberstalking is a particularly serious form of cyberbullying that can extend to threats of physical harm to the person being targeted. It can include monitoring, false accusations, threats, and is often accompanied by offline stalking. It is a criminal offense and can result in a restraining order, probation, and even jail time for the perpetrator.

6. Hijacking

Hijacking is when a bully uses your social networking accounts to post inappropriate content with your name. It can be harmless when friends write funny posts on each other's profiles but has potential to be incredibly harmful. For example, a bully posting racial/homophobic slurs through someone else's profile to ruin their reputation.

7. Masquerading

Masquerading happens when a bully creates a made up profile or identity online with the sole purpose of cyberbullying someone. This could involve creating a fake email account, fake social media profile, and selecting a new identity and photos to fool the victim. In these cases, the bully tends to be someone the victim knows quite well.

8. Dissing

Dissing refers to the act of a bully spreading cruel information about their target through public posts or private messages to either ruin their reputation or relationships with other people. In these situations, the bully tends to have a personal relationship with the victim, either as an acquaintance or as a friend.

9. Trolling

Trolling is when a bully will seek out to intentionally upset others by posting inflammatory comments online. Trolling may not always be a form of cyberbullying, but it can be used as a tool to cyberbully when done with malicious and harmful intent. These bullies tend to be more detached from their victims, and do not have a personal relationship.

10. Flaming

This type of online bullying constitutes of posting about or directly sending insults and profanity to their target. Flaming is similar to trolling but will usually be a more direct attack on a victim to incite them into online fights.