

Friends of MV Freedom

Media Policy

1. Summary

This policy is the guiding document that Trustees will rely upon to shape and manage the way Friends of MV Freedom (The Charity) interacts and engages with “The Media”. It is intended to guide, instruct and support all members of the Charity on how our relationship with the media is managed. There is an expectation that all members of the Charity will comply with the guidance and instructions contained within this policy

2. Background

- I. The Reputation of the Charity is one of its most precious assets and it is incumbent on all members to protect and enhance our reputation. The Charity has a high profile within the community and amongst our clients, donors and supporters.
- II. A key factor in building, maintaining and enhancing our reputation and profile is a successful and professional relationship with the Media.
- III. Most people have had little or no experience in dealing with the media and whilst there are many positives from engaging with them there are also a number of pitfalls.
- IV. This policy seeks to provide a clear framework that will enable the Charity and its members to navigate the complexities of a successful media relationship.

3. The Media

The term media is a catchall and in the context of this policy refers to

- I. Local and National Newspapers, both printed and digital
- II. National and local radio
- III. Television stations
- IV. Social media including Twitter, Instagram and Facebook
- V. The Website and the broader world wide web
- VI. Local publications such as Parish Magazines, Church Newsletters and other organisations in house material
- VII. Magazines and Periodicals
- VIII. In short, the media refers to any spoken printed or digital medium that shares news, stories or information.

4. Media Strategy

- I. The Charity will adopt a positive and proactive approach to the Media.
- II. The Charity will seek to share as much information as possible with the aim of promoting the Charity, informing people of our activities, seeking support and donations, advertising our events and services and responding to questions about what we do.
- III. We will be open, honest and straightforward when dealing with the media.

5. Control of Information

- I. It is important that the Charity has a co-ordinated and managed approach to any information that it releases or comments that it makes.
- II. Any planned media release should be made by or with the authority of the Board of Trustees. This will ensure that the information is in line with the Charities aims, objectives and values.
- III. This authority can be delegated by Trustees for example to the Fundraising lead, The Secretary or to a nominated member.
- IV. Any responses to request for information should be cleared by at least one Trustee and if time permits by the board of Trustees.
- V. The majority of information that the charity wishes to release will be “slow time” and so this authorisation process should not inhibit information release.
- VI. Some information released by Trustees will for various reasons be for restricted circulation or internal purposes only. Trustees will make this clear to members or recipients so that the information is not circulated outside of the charity or intended recipients
- VII. As a general rule individual members should not be making unauthorised statements or releases to the media (see special circumstances in paragraph 7 of this policy)
- VIII. When organising a specific event or function part of the planning process should be to include a specific media plan.

6. Information Content and Standards

- I. The information that the Charity releases or comments it makes should relate directly to the aims, objectives and values of the charity.
- II. The information released or comments made by the Charity should comply with the following standards:
 - ✓ It should not be discriminatory in any way including on the grounds of age, nationality or ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status or family status
 - ✓ It should not be overtly political or partisan
 - ✓ It should reflect the views of the charity and not personal preferences or agendas of an individual
 - ✓ It should not damage or harm the charity or its reputation.
 - ✓ It should be careful not to take sides on contentious issues such as local politics or local pressure groups.
 - ✓ It should wherever possible support and promote the ethos of inclusivity and promoting access to the sea for those living with disability.
 - ✓ It should be conscious and aware of using language appropriate to current thinking on disability and inclusion.
 - ✓ It must take account of and comply with the Charity’s responsibility under the General Data Protection Regulations to protect and safeguard personal information.

7. Individual Comment.

- I. There will be occasions when individual members of the charity will come into contact with media outlets, for example when approached at an event by a local reporter. This is an opportunity to promote the charity and it would be unrealistic to expect the member to make no comment.
- II. If a member does make a comment it should reflect the aims, objectives and values of the charity and should comply with the standards set out in paragraph 6 of this policy.

8. Social Media

- I. This is an area that almost all members of the charity will come into contact with. Comments made on personal social media accounts and platforms should make it clear that the member is commenting in a personal capacity and not as an official spokesperson for the Charity.
- II. Comments that relate to or impact on the Charity should comply with the standards in paragraph 6 of this policy
- III. The Charity has an “official” Facebook presence and Website platform. There is an editorial criterion for Facebook, and it should be read in conjunction with this policy.
- IV. Part of the role of the Facebook Editor is to feed the account with current, interesting and timely posts. This should be done in a way that complies with paragraph 6 of this policy.
- V. Trustees have a responsibility to make it clear to the Editor of Facebook what material should not be posted for public consumption.
- VI. The Charity’s Website is a valuable platform for sharing information. To ensure a consistent and managed approach all information posted on the Website will be routed through a “Single Point of Contact” nominated by the Trustees

Adopted by Trustees on 3rd December 2020

Reviewed on 14 July 2022 by Stephen Evans