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Rotherham Allotment Alliance Ltd

Press and Media Policy

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1. Policy Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to define the roles, responsibilities and relationship within the RAA for working with press and the media.
- 1.2. It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, it provides guidance on how to deal with issues that may arise when dealing with the media.

2. Key Aims

- 2.1. The RAA is accountable to its Shareholders for its actions and this can only be achieved through effective two-way communications. All mediums for communication are crucially important in conveying information to the community so the RAA must maintain positive, constructive media relations and work with them to increase public awareness of the services and facilities provided by the RAA and to explain the reasons for particular policies and priorities.
- 2.2. It is important that the press have access to the RAA and its Board Members and to background information to assist them in giving accurate information to the public. To balance this, the RAA will defend itself from any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts using other channels of communication if necessary.

3. The Legal Framework

- 3.1. The RAA's adopted Standing Orders and Directors Code of Conduct should be adhered to.
- 3.2. It is necessary to deal with requests from press and media in a professional manner and provide factual responses based on the facts as known at the time.

4. Contact With The Media

- 4.1. The ASA and Board Directors should always have due regard for the long-term reputation of the RAA in all their dealings with the media.
- 4.2. Confidential documents, with the exception of approved Minutes, reports, papers and private correspondence should not be leaked to the media. If such leaks do occur, an investigation will take place to establish who is responsible and the appropriate action taken.
- 4.3. There are a number of personal privacy issues for the ASA and Board Directors that must be handled carefully and sensitively. These include the release of personal information, such as home address and telephone number; in all these and similar situations, advice must be taken from the ASA (or Chairperson) before any response is made to the media.
- 4.4. All formal requests for comment regarding any matter should be directed to the ASA in the first instance. If unavailable, the Chairperson should be contacted.
- 4.5. When responding to approaches from the media, the ASA or Chairperson are authorised to make contact with the media. All responses to the press should be drafted by the Chairperson with the assistance of the ASA for accuracy.
- 4.6. Statements made by the Chairperson and the ASA should reflect the RAA's opinion. If the RAA does not have an official position on the matter raised, this should be stated as RAA current position.
- 4.7. Other Directors can communicate with the media but must ensure that it is clear that the opinions given are their own and not necessarily those of the RAA. However, they must always maintain that they speak as individuals and not on behalf of RAA in line with Standing Orders and adherence to the Code of Conduct.



5. Attendance Of Media At Raa Board Meetings

- 5.1. Any request by Media to attend a Board meeting of the RAA should be formally submitted to the RAA via normal contact through the ASA.
- 5.2. Any such request will be considered by Officers and arrangements made for media attendance.
- 5.3. There may be agenda items of a confidential or sensitive nature which would preclude press/public attendance for the particular item/s.
- 5.4. Consideration of the following points may be required.
 - 5.4.a film, photograph or audio recording of a meeting;
 - 5.4.b use any other means for enabling persons not present to see or hear proceedings at a meeting as it takes place or later;
 - 5.4.c Report or comment on the proceedings in writing during or after a meeting or orally report or comment after the meeting.

6. Press Releases

- 6.1. The purpose of a press release is to make the media aware of a potential story, to provide important public information or to explain the RAA's position on a particular issue. It is the responsibility of the ASA and Directors to look for opportunities where the issuing of a press release may be beneficial.
- 6.2. There may, from time to time, be a need to release a press statement in response to a press/media story. The ASA along with the Chairperson (or nominated Board member) will prepare the press release. Dependant on the seriousness of the situation a Board decision may be prudent.
- 6.3. The ASA or any Director may draft a press release, however they must all be issued by the ASA after consultation with the Chairperson (or nominated Director or Board) in order to ensure that the principles outlined in section three are adhered to, that there is consistency of style across the RAA and that the use of the press release can be monitored.



Policy Updates

This Press and Media policy was adopted by RAA at their meeting held on 12th June 2023. Minute reference: 262/06/23.