

NUNTHORPE & MARTON PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND REPRESENTATION POLICY



Charity Registration Number: 523396

Policy Owner: Board of Trustees

Approved by: Board of Trustees

Approval Date: [15th August 2026

Review Date: 15th August 2027

Version: 1.0

1. Purpose

The purpose of this Public Speaking and Representation Policy is to establish a clear and consistent framework for individuals representing Nunthorpe & Marton Playing Fields Association (NMPFA) when speaking publicly or communicating on behalf of the charity.

NMPFA recognises that effective public communication is important to:

- promote the charity's purposes and public benefit;
- communicate its activities, achievements and future plans;
- engage with members, users, residents and the wider community;
- maintain constructive relationships with stakeholders;
- support fundraising and grant applications;
- promote participation in sport, recreation and community activity; and
- protect and enhance the reputation and public standing of the charity.

The policy is intended to ensure that public statements made on behalf of NMPFA are accurate, appropriate, consistent with the charity's purposes and in the best interests of the charity.

2. Regulatory and Governance Framework

This policy has been developed with regard to relevant Charity Commission guidance applicable to charities in England and Wales.

In particular, trustees must act within their powers, act in good faith and only in the interests of the charity, make sufficiently informed decisions, take relevant factors into account and properly manage conflicts of interest.

Trustees are also responsible for ensuring that the charity's activities are properly governed and comply with its governing document and charity law.

Where public speaking involves political or campaigning matters, NMPFA will comply with Charity Commission guidance CC9. A charity may campaign in furtherance of its charitable purposes, but it

must not have a political purpose or undertake political activity unrelated to its charitable purposes. A charity must not be used as a vehicle for an individual's personal or party-political views.

NMPFA will also ensure that safeguarding considerations are incorporated into public events and communications where appropriate. Charity trustees retain overall responsibility for safeguarding even where responsibility for particular activities is delegated.

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- trustees;
- officers of NMPFA;
- employees;
- volunteers;
- section representatives;
- coaches and team officials where they are representing NMPFA;
- contractors or consultants specifically authorised to speak for NMPFA; and
- any other person formally authorised to represent the charity.

It applies to public speaking and representation including:

- public meetings;
 - community meetings;
 - council meetings;
 - presentations;
 - interviews;
 - radio and television appearances;
 - podcasts;
 - conferences;
 - charity and sporting events;
 - fundraising events;
 - stakeholder meetings;
 - grant or funding presentations;
 - speeches;
 - presentations to schools, clubs or community organisations; and
 - statements made through NMPFA's official social media or website.
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4. Authorised Spokespersons

The Board of Trustees will determine who is authorised to speak formally on behalf of NMPFA.

Normally, authorised spokespersons will include:

1. The Chair of Trustees;
2. The Vice Chair;
3. The Secretary;
4. another trustee specifically authorised by the Board; or

5. another person expressly authorised by the Board for a particular purpose.

Section representatives may speak about their own activities where this is within their authority, but should not make commitments or statements on behalf of the wider charity unless authorised to do so.

Where there is uncertainty about whether an individual is authorised to speak for NMPFA, the matter should be referred to the Chair or Board of Trustees.

5. Speaking on Behalf of NMPFA

Anyone speaking on behalf of NMPFA must:

- act in the best interests of the charity;
- remain within the authority given to them;
- accurately represent the charity's position;
- distinguish fact from personal opinion;
- avoid making commitments that they do not have authority to make;
- avoid making promises concerning expenditure, contracts, facilities, funding or future projects unless authorised;
- respect confidentiality;
- avoid defamatory, discriminatory, abusive or offensive comments;
- comply with safeguarding requirements;
- declare relevant conflicts of interest;
- maintain professional standards; and
- protect the reputation of NMPFA.

Trustees must remember that their responsibility is to act in the charity's interests rather than their own personal interests or those of another individual or organisation.

6. Personal Views

Individuals representing NMPFA are entitled to hold and express their own personal views.

However, when speaking in an official capacity, individuals must clearly distinguish personal opinions from the official position of NMPFA.

For example:

"This is my personal view and does not represent the position of NMPFA."

should be used where appropriate.

NMPFA's name, logo, facilities, communication channels or official position must not be used to promote an individual's personal political, commercial or other interests without appropriate authorisation.

7. Political and Public Policy Matters

NMPFA is a non-party-political charity.

NMPFA will not endorse political parties or candidates.

Individual trustees, members, volunteers and representatives must not present their personal political opinions as the official position of NMPFA.

Where NMPFA engages with local or national government, elected representatives, councils or public bodies, such engagement must be directly connected with the charity's purposes and interests.

Examples may include:

- planning matters affecting NMPFA facilities;
- sport and recreation provision;
- community facilities;
- access to funding;
- local infrastructure;
- transport and parking;
- environmental matters affecting the playing fields; and
- policies affecting community sport and recreation.

Where NMPFA campaigns or makes representations on such matters, the Board should ensure that the activity furthers the charity's purposes and is an appropriate and proportionate use of charitable resources.

This approach reflects Charity Commission CC9, which permits campaigning where it furthers a charity's purposes but does not permit a charity to have a political purpose or undertake unrelated political activity.

8. Public Meetings and Council Meetings

Where NMPFA is invited to attend a public meeting, council meeting, community forum or similar event, the nominated representative should, where practicable:

1. understand the purpose of the meeting;
2. establish NMPFA's agreed position beforehand;
3. identify any potential conflicts of interest;
4. obtain relevant information;
5. avoid speculation;
6. clearly distinguish established facts from proposals;
7. avoid committing NMPFA to expenditure or action without authority; and
8. report significant matters back to the Board.

Where a matter is controversial or potentially reputationally sensitive, the Chair should normally approve the key messages before the meeting.

9. Media Enquiries

Media enquiries concerning NMPFA should normally be referred to an authorised spokesperson.

Where an unauthorised individual receives a media enquiry, they should explain that they are not authorised to provide an official comment and refer the enquiry to the appropriate NMPFA spokesperson.

Where immediate comment is required, the spokesperson should provide only information that is:

- accurate;
- verified;
- within their authority; and
- appropriate for public release.

If information cannot be confirmed, the spokesperson should say so rather than speculate.

10. Social Media and Online Communications

The principles of this policy apply equally to:

- Facebook;
- Instagram;
- X;
- LinkedIn;
- YouTube;
- websites;
- community forums;
- podcasts;
- WhatsApp or similar groups where an individual is acting in an official capacity.

Official NMPFA accounts should only be operated by authorised individuals.

Trustees and volunteers should take care when commenting on NMPFA-related matters through personal accounts, particularly where their position as a trustee or representative is publicly known.

Personal social media activity must not create the impression that a personal opinion is the official position of NMPFA.

11. Confidentiality

Information obtained through a trustee, employee or volunteer role must not be disclosed publicly where it is confidential or where disclosure could:

- harm NMPFA;

- breach data protection requirements;
- compromise negotiations;
- prejudice contractual arrangements;
- breach an individual's privacy;
- compromise safeguarding;
- damage an ongoing investigation; or
- otherwise be contrary to the charity's interests.

Particular care must be taken concerning children, young people and vulnerable individuals.

12. Safeguarding

Public speaking and communications involving children, young people or adults at risk must comply with NMPFA's safeguarding policy.

Individuals must not publicly disclose personal information about children, young people or vulnerable adults without appropriate authority.

Names, photographs, personal circumstances or safeguarding matters must not be discussed publicly unless there is a legitimate and authorised reason to do so.

NMPFA recognises that trustees retain overall responsibility for safeguarding and must ensure that appropriate policies, procedures and risk controls are in place.

13. Conflicts of Interest

Any person speaking on behalf of NMPFA must consider whether they have a personal, financial or other interest that could conflict with the interests of the charity.

Examples include:

- involvement with another organisation affected by NMPFA's decision;
- a personal financial interest;
- a family member's interest;
- a business relationship;
- a contractual relationship; or
- another loyalty that could reasonably affect, or appear to affect, impartiality.

Trustees must declare relevant conflicts and ensure that they are properly managed and recorded.

The Charity Commission's current CC29 guidance requires conflicts to be identified, declared, managed and recorded. In appropriate circumstances, a conflicted trustee should withdraw from the relevant discussion and decision-making process.

14. Accuracy and Evidence

NMPFA representatives should take reasonable steps to ensure that factual statements are accurate.

Particular care should be taken when discussing:

- charity finances.
- membership numbers.
- grants.
- fundraising.
- planning applications.
- development proposals.
- contracts.
- legal matters.
- safeguarding.
- complaints.
- personnel matters.
- allegations concerning individuals or organisations; and
- future projects.

Where figures or information may have changed, the latest approved information should be used.

If a representative does not know the answer to a question, it is acceptable to say:

"I don't have that information available at present, but I will ensure that the matter is referred to the appropriate person."

15. Complaints and Controversial Issues

Representatives should remain professional when responding to criticism, complaints or challenging questions.

They should:

- listen.
- avoid becoming confrontational.
- acknowledge legitimate concerns.
- avoid personal criticism.
- avoid speculation.
- provide factual information where available.
- explain the appropriate complaints process; and
- refer serious matters to the Chair or Board.

Individual disagreements must not be allowed to become personal disputes conducted through public forums using NMPFA's name.

16. Commitments and Authority

No individual speaker may commit NMPFA to:

- expenditure;
- contracts;
- employment;
- procurement;
- grants;
- loans;
- donations;
- changes to facilities;
- planning commitments;
- changes to membership arrangements; or
- other legally or financially significant obligations

unless they have the appropriate delegated authority.

Significant decisions remain matters for the trustees in accordance with the charity's governing document and agreed delegation arrangements.

The Charity Commission states that trustees must act within their powers and make decisions in the charity's best interests.

17. Public Speaking at NMPFA Events

Where NMPFA organises or hosts a public event, the event organiser should consider:

- the purpose of the event;
- who will be speaking;
- safeguarding requirements;
- accessibility;
- health and safety;
- public liability considerations;
- political neutrality;
- appropriate use of NMPFA's facilities;
- confidentiality;
- photography and filming;
- alcohol-related considerations where applicable; and
- emergency arrangements.

Speakers should be briefed where necessary regarding the purpose of the event and the expectations contained within this policy.

18. Use of NMPFA Name and Branding

NMPFA's name, logo, branding, website, social media accounts and other official communication channels must only be used for authorised charity purposes.

Individuals must not imply that NMPFA endorses:

- a political party;
- political candidate;
- commercial product;
- private business;
- individual;
- campaign; or
- organisation

without appropriate authority from the Board.

19. Recording Significant Public Statements

Where a significant public statement is made on behalf of NMPFA, particularly where it relates to a contentious, strategic, financial, legal or reputational matter, an appropriate record should be retained.

The record may include:

- date;
- event or meeting;
- spokesperson;
- subject;
- key statement;
- agreed NMPFA position;
- supporting evidence; and
- any follow-up action.

This supports good governance and enables the trustees to demonstrate how significant matters were considered.

The Charity Commission recommends that significant trustee decisions are properly recorded so that the charity can subsequently demonstrate how decisions were reached.

20. Breach of Policy

A breach of this policy may result in:

- withdrawal of authority to speak for NMPFA;
- additional training or guidance;
- formal review by the Board;
- disciplinary action where appropriate;
- referral under another NMPFA policy; or
- referral to an appropriate authority where required by law.

The response will be proportionate to the seriousness of the breach.

21. Responsibility

The Board of Trustees has overall responsibility for this policy.

The Chair, or another trustee delegated by the Board, is responsible for managing day-to-day issues concerning public representation.

All trustees, employees and volunteers have a responsibility to understand and comply with the policy when representing NMPFA.

22. Review

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and whenever there is:

- a significant change in charity law or Charity Commission guidance;
- a significant change to NMPFA's activities;
- a significant public communications issue;
- a serious incident or complaint; or
- a material change to NMPFA's governance arrangements.

The Board will approve any amendments.

23. Trustee Approval

This policy was considered and approved by the Board of Trustees of Nunthorpe & Marton Playing Fields Association.

Chair: _____ Chris Foggin _____

Signature: _____ CF _____

Date: _____ 15th August 2026 _____

Policy Review Date: ____ Annually _____