**Media Handling Procedures**

**Almshouse Association Procedures Template**

1. **Introduction**[Your charity name] Trustees and staff should be made aware of any publicity that you may be undertaking whether on your own or with The Almshouse Association. The media play an important part in explaining our work and services to the wider public to build more awareness of the almshouse movement and encourage external support. An increased profile, however, can also trigger criticism and it is important to be ready should things go wrong.   
     
   That is why it is necessary to have internal procedures for dealing with the media, whether good or bad. The [your charity name] and The Almshouse Association need to keep a consistent message that aligns with our websites, news releases, media interviews and social media output.
2. **Media responsibilities** 
   1. **CEO Responsibilities**

The Chief Executive of [your charity name] has overall responsibility for media issues and will approve all internal material before it is sent to any media or designate an alternate at times of absence. Similarly, ALL media calls should be directed to the Chief Executive in the first instance or a designated alternate at times of absence.

* 1. **The Chief Executive or designated member of staff will:**
     1. Ensure that relevant trustees and staff are briefed on any media enquiry that might impact on them.
     2. Manage the media, together with the Chief Executive of The Almshouse Association if needed and applicable, in the event of an incident occurring.
     3. May choose to liaise with the Chief Executive of The Almshouse Association to assist with any news releases, proactive and reactive media statements; comments or quotes, answers to media enquiries, social tweets or similar.
     4. Decide on the appropriate media position to take with a relevant trustee or an employee, volunteer or supported person in their care, to ensure the right communication is given to the press.
     5. Sign off any news releases, proactive and reactive media statements; comments or quotes, answers to media enquiries, social tweets or similar.
     6. Approve any social and website media copy.
     7. Be responsible for issuing a holding statement (if necessary) before immediately responding to an incident that has attracted press interest.
  2. **Trustee and Staff Responsibilities -** Trustees and employees will:
     1. Inform the [your charity name] CEO or designate of any issues which might create negative or positive interest from the media – however small they may seem.
     2. Inform the CEO if they have been approached by anyone from the media in connection with their work. They need to remember that their comments – particularly on their own social media – could be taken as the view of the charity.
     3. Uphold the position the charity is taking with any media story.
     4. Give no interview or comment to the media on behalf of the charity without prior consent or discussion with the CEO/designate/The Almshouse Association if applicable.
     5. Make themselves available for media training should they be asked.
     6. Adhere to GDPR regulations and prior consent of residents.

1. **Procedure for handling media enquiries -** Anyone receiving an enquiry from the mediashould:
   1. Ask the journalist the nature of the enquiry and when they need the information.
   2. If applicable, explain that they are not the best person to deal with the request but that they will refer the journalist to the CEO and arrange for the CEO to call the journalist.
   3. Importantly, be sure to take the name, number and/or email address of the caller.
   4. Be friendly and helpful but remain polite and firm.
   5. Be careful of being pressured into conversation you might regret!
2. **Door stepping -** In the event of an immediate breaking news story, journalists can ‘doorstep’ a junior person who can be caught unaware. The words ‘no comment’ can be interpreted negatively so it is best for them to reassure the journalist that every effort will be made to ensure someone is in contact with them as soon as possible.
3. **Social Media** - Dealing with online media through platforms such as Twitter needs to be handled with special care because negative comment can spiral out of control instantly. Please see the Charity’s Social Media Policy for clear guidelines on social media use.
4. **Confidentiality -** All trustees and employees have a duty of confidentiality to their residents. Unauthorised disclosure of personal information about them, or about matters relating to them, could result in a complaint to the Charity Commission.

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