

# Parish Council IT Policy

*(For small parish councils – aligned with NALC / SLCC / PKF Littlejohn and AGAR Assertion 10)*

## 1. Purpose

This policy explains how the Parish Council uses IT and digital systems safely, lawfully, and responsibly. It applies to all councillors and the Parish Clerk.

The policy supports good governance, compliance with data protection legislation, and the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR), particularly Assertion 10.

## 2. Who This Policy Applies To

This policy applies to: - All councillors - The Parish Clerk - Council-owned IT equipment - Personal devices used for council business

## 3. Responsibilities

- The Parish Council is the data controller for all personal data it holds.
- The Parish Clerk manages day-to-day IT arrangements.
- Councillors and the Clerk must follow this policy when using IT for council business.

## 4. Email and Digital Accounts

- Council business must be carried out using a council email address hosted on an authority-owned domain.
- Personal or free email accounts should not normally be used for council business.
- Passwords must be kept secure and not shared.
- Access to council systems must be removed promptly when a councillor or employee leaves office.

## 5. Acceptable Use

IT systems must be used: - Only for legitimate council business - In line with the councillors' Code of Conduct - In a way that protects council information and personal data

Users must not: - Share council information with unauthorised persons - Install unauthorised software on council devices - Use council IT for unlawful or inappropriate purposes

## 6. Personal Devices (BYOD)

- Personal devices may be used for council business where necessary.
- Devices must be protected by a password, PIN, or biometric security.
- Care must be taken when accessing council information on public or unsecured networks.

## 7. Data Protection and Security

- The council will comply with UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Personal data must be handled lawfully, fairly, and securely.
- Devices should be locked when not in use and kept up to date with security updates.
- Any actual or suspected data breach must be reported immediately to the Parish Clerk or, if appropriate, the Chair.

## 8. Website and Accessibility

- The council will maintain a website to support transparency.
- The website will meet WCAG 2.2 AA accessibility standards where reasonably practicable.
- Online documents should be accessible and reviewed periodically.

## 9. Breaches and Review

- Failure to follow this policy may result in action by the council.
- This policy will be reviewed at least every two years or sooner if required.

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**Adopted by the Parish Council:** 13<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Minute reference:** Item 9 (page 53)

**Next review due:** January 2028