



ECCLESFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

Serving the Community since 1894

INFORMATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Equipment

The IT equipment (computers, scanner and printers), associated hardware and software are the property of Ecclesfield Parish Council. As the authorised user the Clerk is responsible for its safe keeping and appropriate use.

Staff must not attempt to modify or alter the hardware without the permission of the Council or in an emergency situation the Chairman of Ecclesfield Parish Council. Similarly, staff must not attempt to modify, delete or alter the set up of the Windows environment or any software loaded on the council's computer.

Staff should not install any software at all, without permission of the council.

Staff will not make illegal copies of the Council's software for use by him/herself or third parties, or in any way violate the Council's software licence agreements.

Only the Clerk and other members of staff or a Councillor designated for the purpose, eg in a case of the clerk being on long term sick leave, will use the Parish Council's computers, printers, and other equipment.

The computer(s) will only be used for the purpose of Ecclesfield Parish Council business both in terms of production and storage of documents.

Faults

In the event of any hardware or software fault staff should seek advice from the Council's appointed IT Support contractor. Report the fault in the first instance to the Clerk or in their absence the Chairman of Council.

Acceptable use of the internet from the Ecclesfield Parish Council computer

Intentional use of the computer to access, transmit or retrieve any material or communications that are obscene, pornographic, or sexually explicit; of a discriminatory or harassing nature or which are derogatory to any individual or group; or are threatening in nature is prohibited.

Staff should not download files, including application and games that are not connected with work for Ecclesfield Parish Council. Any sites which require registration or payment for services must not be accessed without due authority of the Council.

Use of Email

The use of email to exchange correspondence requires the same professional standards as other forms of communication. Employees/Councillors should not send or forward mail which is defamatory or offensive for whatever reason.

In order to protect the Parish Council from viruses, e-mail attachments which might contain macros (word processor and spreadsheet files) or applications, should not be opened if they are from a sender whom the member of staff does not recognise or trust, simply delete.

Data Protection

Staff must not include in the text of e-mails to be sent, or in files attached to them, sensitive personal data without appropriate protection in order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and GDPR 2018.

Email addresses should be treated as confidential and care taken that private e-mail addresses are not wrongly circulated. Email to multiple addresses outside of Councillors and the member of staff should be sent as blind copy, (bcc).

Passwords

The Parish Council's computer will be password protected and the password will only be shared with members of staff and the IT support contractor. (The IT Contractor would have signed a confidentiality agreement when appointed)

Back up of files and folders

Staff will back-up all electronic files and folders to the Council's external hard drive on a weekly basis.

Relinquishment of Information upon termination of employment

When any member of staff ceasing to be employed by the council, they will relinquish all IT equipment owned by Ecclesfield Parish Council within a period of 7 days following the termination date/leave date whichever is the soonest.

No files or folders will be tampered with or destroyed prior to being passed to the Council.

Non-Compliance

Indications of non-compliance with the provisions of this Policy will be investigated, as appropriate.

Subject to the findings of any such investigation, non-compliance with the provisions of this Policy will lead to appropriate disciplinary action, which could include dismissal on the grounds of gross misconduct. Furthermore, publication of some materials may not only amount to a disciplinary offence, but also a criminal offence, in which case the issue will be reported to the police for them to take appropriate action.

Acknowledgement

Staff to Ecclesfield Parish Council must receive a copy of these guidelines and sign to acknowledge receipt and that they have been read and understood.

I have received a copy of this IT policy and acknowledge that I have read and understood them and agree to abide by its provisions:

Signed Date

Adopted by Council October 2022

Review date October 2024