

Billingborough Parish Council Information Technology Policy

1. Introduction

Billingborough Parish Council recognises the importance of effective and secure information technology (IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications. This policy outlines the guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email by council members, **employees, volunteers, and contractors.**

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who use Billingborough Parish Council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

Billingborough Parish Council's IT resources and email accounts are to be used for official council-related activities and tasks. Limited personal use is permitted, provided it does not interfere with work responsibilities or violate any part of this policy. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

4. Device and software usage

The laptop, including software and any applications, purchased by the Council for the Clerk, is for Parish Council work related tasks. Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

5. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential Billingborough Parish Council data should be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data loss, and secure data destruction methods should be used when necessary.

6. Network and internet usage

Billingborough Parish Council does not provide any network or internet connections. The Clerk will use his/her private internet connection for work and will only log in to recognised internet connections. Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is prohibited.

7. Email communication

Email accounts provided by Billingborough Parish Council are for official communication only. Emails should be professional and respectful in tone. Confidential or sensitive information must not be sent via email unless it is encrypted. Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

8. Password and account security

Billingborough Parish Council users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords should be strong and not shared with others. Regular password changes are encouraged to enhance security.

9. Mobile devices and remote Work

Billingborough Parish Council has provided a Sim, (07415 842591) for the Clerk to use in her own dual sim phone. Councillors use their own mobile devices. The phones should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authorisation.

10. Email monitoring

Billingborough Parish Council reserves the right to monitor email communications to ensure compliance with this policy and relevant laws. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

11. Retention and archiving

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

12. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the designated IT point of contact for investigation and resolution. Report any email-related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator (the Clerk) immediately.

13 Training and awareness

Billingborough Parish Council will provide regular training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. All employees and councillors will receive regular training on email security and best practices.

All Councillors are required to complete a GDPR Security Compliance checklist.

14. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be made to address emerging technology trends and security measures.

15. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact the Clerk. All staff and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of Billingborough Parish Council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Billingborough Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.