



Reviewed & Approved: 24 June 2025 (CM 25/49)
Review by: June 2029 or earlier if required
Based on the Practitioner's Guide Template 2025, ref 5.122

1. Introduction

Winkfield Parish Council recognises the importance of effective, reliable and secure information technology (IT) and email systems in supporting its business, operations and communications.

This policy sets out the responsibilities and expectations for the appropriate use of IT resources and email systems by councillors, employees, volunteers and contractors.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all users of Winkfield Parish Council IT resources, including but not limited to:

Computers and mobile devices
Networks and internet access
Software and applications
Data and information systems
Council-provided email accounts

3. Acceptable Use of IT Resources and Email

Council IT resources and email accounts are provided for official council business. Limited personal use is permitted provided that it:

- Does not interfere with work duties
- Does not incur additional cost
- Does not breach this policy or any other council policy

All users must:

- Act ethically and responsibly
- Respect copyright and intellectual property rights
- Not access, create or distribute inappropriate, offensive or illegal content

4. Device and Software Usage

Where possible, authorised devices, software and applications will be provided by Winkfield Parish Council for work-related activities.

The unauthorised installation of software (including personal software) on council devices is strictly prohibited due to security risks.

5. Data Management and Security

All sensitive and confidential information must be:

- Stored securely using approved systems
- Transmitted using approved secure methods

Regular backups should be undertaken to protect council data, and secure data disposal methods must be used when data is no longer required.

6. Network and Internet Usage

Council internet and network access must be used responsibly and primarily for official business.

Downloading, storing or sharing copyrighted material without permission is prohibited.

7. Email Communication

Council-provided email accounts must be used for official council correspondence only.

Users must ensure that:

- Emails are professional, courteous and appropriate
- Confidential or sensitive information is not sent by email unless encrypted
- Suspicious links or attachments are not opened

Users should verify the sender before clicking on links or opening attachments to avoid phishing or malware.

8. Password and Account Security

Users are responsible for the security of their IT accounts.

Passwords must:

- Be strong and unique
- Not be shared with others

9. Mobile Devices and Remote Working

Council-issued mobile devices must be protected by passcodes and/or biometric security.

When working remotely, users must apply the same security standards as when working in the office.

10. Email Monitoring

Winkfield Parish Council reserves the right to monitor email usage to ensure compliance with this policy and legal obligations.

Monitoring will be carried out in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

11. Retention and Archiving

Emails and electronic records must be retained and archived in line with legal and regulatory requirements.

Users should regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain system efficiency and organisation.

12. Reporting Security Incidents

Any actual or suspected IT or email security incidents must be reported immediately to:

- The Clerk
- The Council's IT administrators (Telanova)

Prompt reporting will help minimise risk and enable investigation and resolution.

13. Training and Awareness

Winkfield Parish Council will provide guidance, training and resources to support:

- IT security awareness
- Email safety and best practice
- Data protection and privacy compliance

Councillors and staff will receive training as appropriate.

14. Compliance and Consequences

Failure to comply with this IT and Email Policy may result in:

- Suspension or withdrawal of IT access
- Further action as deemed appropriate by the Council

15. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if:

- Legislation changes
- Procedures or technology change

16. Contacts

- **Staff:** Contact the Council's IT administrators
- **Councillors:** Contact the Clerk

All users share responsibility for safeguarding Winkfield Parish Council's IT systems and data.