



Wimblington & Stonea
Parish Council

Serving the community since 1894

Policy Document: IT, Email and Internet Policy

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Any queries or requests for amendments should be addressed to:

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Introduction

The Purpose of this document is to define and describe the IT, Email and Internet Policy that has been adopted by Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council.

This policy document will be reviewed by members of Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council and updated or amended where necessary.

Overview

Wimblington Parish Council promotes the use of internet and electronic mail to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's functions.

However, these facilities must be used responsibly and lawfully.

Use of Email

1. The use of email to exchange correspondence requires the same professional standards as other forms of communication.
2. Be aware that agreements made by email may have the same status as letters or formal contracts.
3. In order to protect from viruses, email attachments which might contain macros or applications, should not be opened if they are from an unknown source, they should be deleted.
4. Best practise is that councillors should have a dedicated email address for the purpose of Council business.
5. Emails sent to councillors should be treated as confidential, and not forwarded on, or shown to others without the express permission of the sender.
6. Private email addresses are to be treated as confidential and care must be taken, that they are not wrongly circulated when sending emails to multiple people, to avoid this always make use of the blind copy address field.
7. Sensitive personal data should not be included in the text of emails sent, nor in files attached to them, unless the files are password protected and the password is provided to the intended recipient via a separate channel.
This is to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
8. Emails that are sent by the Parish Clerk or Parish Councillors regarding Council business to external email addresses should include the Wimblington Parish Council disclaimer.

Email Disclaimer

This email and its attachments are confidential and are intended for the named recipient only. If this has come to you in error, please notify the sender immediately and delete this email from your system. You must take no action based on this nor must you copy or disclose it or any part of its contents to any person or organisation. Statements and opinions contained in this email may not necessarily represent those of Wimblington Parish Council. As a public body, the Council may be required to disclose this email [or any response to it] under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, unless the information in it is covered by one of the exemptions in the Act. This email message has been checked for the presence of computer viruses; however, we advise that in-keeping with good IT practice the recipient should ensure that the email together with any attachments are checked for viruses. We cannot accept any responsibility for any damage or loss caused by software viruses. In line with latest GDPR please see our Privacy Notice at:

https://wimblington-pc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Privacy_Statement_Nov_2024.pdf

Internet

Material from the Internet should not be used without checking that it is from a reputable source and that it is not restricted in anyway by copyright.

Parish Council Website

1. The parish council website is supported by an external hosting company (Chadwick Designs) and is updated by 1 designated councillor. Clerk & Chairman to also have access when needed.
2. Each user has their own password.
3. The Parish Council website must be backed up on a regular basis to safeguard against failure of the hosting company.
4. Information posted on the website should be strictly controlled by the Parish Council.
5. Disclaimer: Every effort is made to ensure the information on the website is accurate and up-to-date, although there can be no guarantee of this. The Council will not be held responsible for any loss, damage or inconvenience caused as a result of inaccuracy. If you discover any errors, inaccuracies or out of date information, we would be grateful if you would inform us by e-mail clerk@wimblington-pc.gov.uk

Council Laptop

1. The Council laptop should not be used to access offensive material.
2. The Clerk is responsible for ensuring the Council laptop is kept good order.
3. Information held on the Council laptop must be backed up on a regular basis.
4. The council laptop must be protected by a password.

Social Media

1. Councillors are at liberty to set up Social Media accounts but should ensure they are clearly identified as personal and do not in any way imply that they reflect the Council 's view. Councillors should at all times present a professional image and not disclose anything of a confidential nature.
Comments of a derogatory, proprietary or libellous nature should not be made and care should be taken to avoid guesswork, exaggeration and colourful language.
2. Wimblington & Stonea Parish Council will not tolerate any forms of cyberbullying or any other kind of harassment to its Staff, Volunteers or Councillors, and in all instances, will contact the police.
Some cyberbullying activities could be considered a criminal offence under a range of different laws including Protection from Harassment Act 1997.
For further information and help please refer to the following link.

<https://www.askthe.police.uk/view-category/?id=44c7e112-6ad2-eb11-bacb-000d3ad61986>

Disclaimer

Hard copies of this document are considered uncontrolled. For the latest version of this document, please refer to:

<https://wimblington-pc.gov.uk/policies/>