

Asby Parish Council IT Policy

1. Introduction

Asby 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 and the Clerk, and any other applicable persons associated with the parish council.

2. Scope

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

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

Asby 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, or any other proper practices. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and must not access inappropriate or offensive content.

4. Device and software usage

Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by Asby Parish Council for 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 Asby 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

Asby Parish Council's network and internet connections should be used responsibly and efficiently for official purposes. Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is prohibited.

7. Email communication

Email accounts provided by Asby 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 by other means before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

8. Password and account security

Asby Parish Council users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords should be strong, not shared with others and not re-used for multiple applications. Regular password changes are encouraged to enhance security, along with multifactor authentication where possible.

9. Mobile devices and remote work

Any mobile devices provided by Asby Parish Council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication. When working remotely, users should follow the same security practices as if office based.

10. Email monitoring

Asby 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, and avoid retention of unnecessary information that would contravene GDPR.

12. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the Clerk for investigation and resolution. Report any email-related security incidents or breaches to the Clerk immediately.

13. Training and awareness

Asby Parish Council will provide training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates, as deemed to be required.

14. Compliance and consequences

Breach of this IT Policy may result in the suspension of IT privileges and further consequences as deemed appropriate.

15. Policy review

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

16. IT-related enquiries or assistance

Clerk and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of Asby Parish Council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Asby Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment, that mitigates risk and supports the parish council's functions and business.

This policy was adopted at a meeting on 07th May 2026, (minute reference XX) and will be reviewed in a minimum of two years, or sooner should legislation dictate.

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