Warndon Villages Parish Council

IT Policy

Introduction

Warndon Villages 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.

Scope

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

IT resources and email

Warndon Villages Parish Council IT resources and email accounts are to be used solely for official council-related activity. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

Device and software usage

Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by Warndon Villages Parish Council for work-related tasks. Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential Warndon Villages Parish Council data is to 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.

Document Management

Warndon Villages Parish Council user accounts give access to Microsoft Office 365 facilities (Word, Excel, Powerpoint etc) for use for Council work purposes.

User accounts give access to the Sharepoint where Council deposits its core documents.* Users can deposit relevant documents into any of the document folders which are accessible by all councillors and the Clerk.

**the majority of these documents will be publicly accessible and will be posted to the website for public information by the Clerk.*

Public documents (see above) may be downloaded / viewed and / or retained in personal storage media (laptop, tablet, USB).

Documents of a sensitive/confidential nature (internal Council dissemination and not for public viewing) should either be viewed in the Sharepoint or if necessary, downloaded to secure storage media (USB or similar). They may not be retained on a personal PC/laptop.

At the end of a councillor's term of office, any documentation of a sensitive/confidential nature must be deleted from storage media.

Email communications

Email accounts provided by Warndon Villages 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.

All Parish Councillors and employees are assigned a WVPC email account. Users are obliged to:

- use the account for all internal Council communications
- use the account for communications with external parties (City and County Councils, residents, contractors and other)
- log into their account regularly to keep up to date with ongoing business - at least twice weekly
- be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware and verify the source before opening any attachments and clicking on links

Users may not:

- divert Council communications to private email accounts
- conduct Council business through private email accounts - either with other councillors or with external parties

These practices contravene the confidentiality provision of the Data Protection Act and Council's own policy on DP and FoI. Please refer to this policy in conjunction with our communications protocol.

At the end of a Councillor's term in office all Council communications will remain securely within that councillor's designated account which will be closed and archived.

Warndon Villages 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.

Mobile devices and remote Work

Mobile devices provided by Warndon Villages Parish Council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication.

Password and account security

Warndon Villages 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.

All WVPC accounts are securely managed and accessed by MultiFactorAuthentication (MFA) or 2FactorAuthentication (2FA).

Reporting security incidents

All suspected e-mail security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the Clerk (designated IT point of contact) for investigation and resolution.

Training and awareness

Warndon Villages Parish Council will provide any necessary training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates.

Help and Support

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact Warndon Villages Parish Council's IT managers: **DandD Network Services**.

The Council's ICT support contract gives access to their Helpdesk where problems with software / hardware or email accounts can be referred.

Call the support line: **0330 606 2650**

Email the support line**: support@dandd.org.uk**

All staff and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of Warndon Villages Parish Council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Warndon Villages

Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.

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