

# **Irnham Parish Council IT Policy**

## **1. Introduction**

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

Irnham Parish Council has no paid staff. Councillors use their own equipment to access Parish Council emails and where necessary store Parish Council related documents. Irnham Parish Council owns a laptop computer and printer for use by councillors. A volunteer Clerk also uses their own equipment to produce documents and store Parish Council financial details. Parish Council data is backed up on Microsoft OneDrive.

This policy outlines the guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email by council members.

## **2. Acceptable use of IT resources and email**

Irnham Parish Council IT resources and email accounts (xxx@rnham.org) are to be used for official council-related activities and tasks. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

## **3. Device and software usage**

Where essential and possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by Irnham parish council for work-related tasks.

Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

## **4. Data management and security**

All sensitive and confidential Irnham 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.

## **5. Email communication**

Email accounts provided by Irnham 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.

## **6. Password and account security**

Irnham 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.

## **7. Retention and archiving**

Emails ([xxx@irnham.org](mailto:xxx@irnham.org)) should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

## **8. 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.

## **9. Training and awareness**

Irnham Parish Council will endeavour to make councillors aware of any best practice and where appropriate provide training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates.

## **10. Compliance and consequences**

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

## **11. 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.

All councillors are responsible for the safety and security of Irnham Parish Council's use of IT and email accounts. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Irnham Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.

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