

East Halton Parish Council Email, Internet and Social Networking Sites Policy

The Email, Internet and Social Networking Sites Policy was adopted by Full Council at its Meeting held on 4 August 2023.

Email

All email correspondence should be dealt with in the same professional and diligent manner as any other form of correspondence.

Any email that is sent will be identifiable as coming from the Council, therefore in particular, nothing must be sent of a sexual or racist nature, junk mail, chain letters, cartoons or jokes from the Council email addresses.

Using a Council email address to send inappropriate material, including content of a sexual or racist nature, is strictly prohibited and may amount to gross misconduct.

Should the Council receive any offensive or inappropriate content via email you should inform the Clerk of this as soon as possible so that they can ensure that it is removed from the system.

All emails should only be seen by the person intended. Particular care should be taken when sending confidential information that the email has been correctly addressed, marked 'Confidential' and not copied in to those not authorised to see the information. Sending confidential information via email without proper authorisation will be treated as misconduct.

Internet use

Employees with access to the internet on Council-owned devices should use that access responsibly. Excessive personal use during working hours will be treated as misconduct. From time to time the Council may block access to sites which it considers inappropriate but whether or not a specific site has been blocked, employees must not use the internet to view or download offensive or sexually explicit material. Any attempt to do so may, depending on the circumstances, amount to gross misconduct leading to dismissal.

Employees must not download any software, plug-ins or extensions on to Council owned devices unless this is first cleared by The Clerk. Nor must employees use Council-owned devices to download music, video or any other entertainment content.

Firewalls and anti-virus software may be used to protect the Council's systems. These must not be disabled or switched off without the express authorisation of The Clerk.

Social media

An employee's behaviour on any social networking or other internet site must be consistent with the behaviour required of employees generally. Where it is possible for users of a social media site to ascertain who you work for, then you should take

particular care not to behave in a way which reflects badly on the Council.

Inappropriate or disparaging comments about the Council, colleagues or the Parish is not acceptable. Because social media interactions can be copied and widely disseminated in a way that you may not be able to control, the Council will take a particularly serious view of any misconduct that occurs through the use of social media.

You must not operate a social media account or profile that purports to be operated on or on behalf of the Council without express permission to do so from The Clerk.

August 2023

To be reviewed September 2024