Upton upon Severn Town Council -

# Information Technology Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all employees and Councillors using Upton upon Severn Town Council information technology systems and internet have a clear understanding of what is permitted. This will ensure the appropriate use of the Council's equipment, safeguarding the security of its IT systems and data and assisting compliance with any relevant legislations.

## Use of computer equipment in the Council office/Memorial Hall

To control the use of the Council's computer equipment the following apply:

- Only authorised employees will have access to the Council's computer equipment.
- Employees and Councillors are personally responsible for the protection of Council data and information which they use and access as part of their roles.

Individuals must not:

- Leave their user accounts logged in at an unattended and unlocked computer.
- Perform any unauthorized changes to the IT systems or information.
- Access or attempt to access data which they are not authorised to use or access.
- Connect any unauthorized device to the Council's network or IT systems.
- Store Council data on any unauthorised equipment.
- Give or transfer Council data or software to any person or organisation outside of the Council without permission from the Town Clerk.

Employees are responsible for their own workstations and equipment which should be kept in good condition.

All computers must be password protected using a strong password, consisting of at least eight letters, must include at least one upper case letter, a number and special character. Passwords must be kept secure.

Employee used computer equipment should remain on Council premises unless permission is received from the Town Clerk for it to be used elsewhere such as home working.

## Use of computer equipment for remote working

Employees and Councillors should seek authority from the Town Clerk before equipment is removed from the office.

Computer equipment must be kept in the boot of a vehicle during transportation and must not be left unattended in the vehicle.

Computer equipment should only be retained outside of the office for the agreed time period of working from home/remotely. The remote location will be the employee's home address unless otherwise agreed by the Town Clerk.

Employees working from home must be logged in to the Council's system at all times of their working hours.

This policy must be complied to when working from home.

Internet access on Council owned equipment

Council employees are provided with internet access to enable them to carry out their job roles. The occasional use of the Council's internet is permitted for personal use by an employee if kept to reasonable limits and must not obstruct the productivity of the Council and if carried out during official lunch breaks.

The equipment services and technology the employees use as part of their job are the property of Upton upon Severn Town Council. The Council reserves the right to review any use of the internet, email and any data that employees write, send or receive via Council online connections.

Use of Council emails

The Town Council email address is provided to employees to use in order to carry out their job roles.

The Town Council emails should be restricted to council related work only. All data that is written, sent or received through the Council's computer systems is part of official records and therefore information contained in email messages should be accurate, appropriate, ethical and legal.

Employees must use the dedicated Town Council email address for all Town Council business. Private email addresses must not be used for Council business.

The following are not acceptable:

- Forwarding Council confidential messages or information to external locations.
- Disturbing, spreading or storing images, text or materials that are illegal or could be considered discriminatory, offensive, obscene, threatening, harassing, intimidating or disruptive to any employee or other person.
- Communicating unsolicited personal views on social, political religious or other non-Council related matters.

Employees and Councillors must regularly delete or archive emails when they are no longer required. Emails should not be kept for longer than they are required. All employees and Councillors should be aware and alert to the attributes of spam and phishing emails and should not reply to them.

Emails sent must have an appropriate disclaimer relating to the use of the information within the emails.

Email messages should only be sent to those for whom they are relevant and must not be used as a substitute for face-to-face communication. Or for the exchange of gossip.

All devises used to access the Council's emails should be password protected, and care should be taken so that they are not left unattended or could be read by unauthorised individuals.

Use of internet on council equipment

Employees should not access personal email mailboxes from Council owned equipment.

The following are deemed unacceptable:

- Visiting illegal or fraudulent sites.
- Using the internet to send offensive or harassing materials to other users.
- Revealing confidential information about the Council in a personal online posting, upload or communication.
- Publishing defamatory and/or knowingly false information about any aspect of the Council in any format.

Social media

Social media should only be used in accordance with Upton upon Severn Town Councils Social Media Policy.

General

When using the Council's IT equipment and software, the following is not permitted:

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing or threatening messages, images or other content.
- Using the Councils time and resources for personal gain.
- Violating copyright law.
- Failure to observe licensing agreements.
- Sending or posting messages or materials that could damage the Council's image or reputation.
- Sending or posting messages that defame or slander the Council or other individuals.

Breaking the law or any part of Upton upon Severn Town Council's IT Policy will result in disciplinary action.

Support and Security

Employees should not interfere with the everyday running of the Council's IT systems, unless asked to do so.

If any issues or problems arise with Council IT equipment employees or Councillors should contact our IT support contractor.

Employees should ensure that windows updates are installed regularly and no later than 48 hours after the notice is seen.

As part of risk management, Upton upon Severn Town Council maintains insurance on IT equipment provided to employees.

Any loss or damage to equipment should be reported as soon as possible to the Town Clerk.



**Review Date:** Each year during the Annual Meeting of the Town Council