

HARTINGTON UPPER QUARTER PARISH COUNCIL

Information Technology Policy

1. Introduction

Hartington Upper Quarter 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.

2. Scope

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

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

Hartington Upper Quarter Parish Council IT resources 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. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

4. Device and software usage

Authorised devices, software and applications may be provided by Hartington Upper Quarter 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 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

Hartington Upper Quarter 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 Hartington Upper Quarter Parish Council are for official communication only. Emails should be professional and respectful in tone.

Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening attachments or clicking on links.

8. Password and account security

Hartington Upper Quarter 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.

9. Mobile devices and remote work

Mobile devices provided by Hartington Upper Quarter Parish Council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication.

10. Email monitoring

Hartington Upper Quarter 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.

12. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the Clerk for investigation and resolution.

13. Training and awareness

Hartington Upper Quarter Parish Council will provide necessary training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns and technology updates.

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 annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be made to address emerging technology trends and security measures.

16. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact the Parish Clerk.

17. Conclusion

All staff and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of the Parish Council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT Policy, Hartington Upper Quarter Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.

(End)