

Chetnole and Stockwood Parish Council

IT POLICY

1. Introduction

Chetnole and Stockwood 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 Chetnole and Stockwood Parish Council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

Chetnole and Stockwood Parish Council's IT resources and email accounts 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

Where necessary, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by Chetnole and Stockwood Parish Council for work-related tasks.

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

Chetnole and Stockwood 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 Chetnole and Stockwood 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 and clearly marked as private and confidential.

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

8. Password and account security

Chetnole and Stockwood 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. Email monitoring

Chetnole and Stockwood Parish Council reserves the right to monitor council email communications to ensure compliance with this policy and relevant laws. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

10. Retention and archiving

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements.

11. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the Parish Clerk for investigation and resolution. Report any email-related security incidents or breaches to the Parish Clerk immediately.

12. Training and awareness

Chetnole and Stockwood Parish Council will provide training and resources as necessary to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. Any employees and councillors will receive necessary training on email security and best practices.

13. Compliance and consequences

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

14. 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.

Employees and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of Chetnole and Stockwood Parish Councils IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Chetnole and Stockwood Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.