BURGHILL PARISH COUNCIL

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY POLICY

1. Introduction

Burghill Parish Council recognises the importance of effective and secure Information Technology (IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications.

This policy sets out the Parish Council's approach to the use of information technology (IT) resources to ensure data security, operational efficiency, and compliance with legal and regulatory obligations, including the General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who use Burghill Parish Council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts including members, employees, volunteers, and contractors.

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

The Clerk is issued with a Council-owned laptop and printer for official use. This must be used for Parish Council business only. Any user must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content. Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

Where personal IT equipment is used for Parish Council business every effort should be made to ensure the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords should be strong and not shared with others. Regular password changes are encouraged to enhance security. Users must not share login credentials or access rights with unauthorised individuals.

4. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential Burghill 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. Network and internet usage

Burghill 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.

6. Email communication

Email accounts provided by Burghill 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. Users must be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Users should verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links. Emails should not be forwarded to personal accounts.

7. Password and account security

Burghill 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.

8. Mobile devices and remote Work

Any mobile devices provided by Burghill Parish Council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication. When working remotely, users should follow the same security practices as if they were in the office.

9. Email monitoring

Burghill 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.

10. Retention and archiving

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Users should regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

11. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the designated IT point of contact for investigation and resolution. Report any email-related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator immediately.

12. Training and awareness

Burghill Parish Council will provide regular training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. All employees and councillors will receive regular training on email security and best practices.

13. Compliance and consequences

Any 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.

15. Contacts

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

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

Adopted at the Parish Council meeting on Tuesday 10th March 2026