



# EMAIL AND USE OF DIGITAL MEDIA POLICY

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Spaldington Parish Council will hereinto be known in this policy as 'the Council'

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- i. The Council promotes the use of internet and electronic mail to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's functions. However, these facilities must be used responsibly and lawfully.

## 2. EMAIL ADDRESSES OF COUNCILLORS AND COUNCIL STAFF

- i. All Councillors and Council staff must use the designated Council email address for all Council administration and Council business.
- ii. No use of personal email addresses should be used for any Council business by any Councillors or Council staff or Council volunteers
- iii. The email address for all Council staff and Councillors should be as follows:  
[cllrXXXXspaldingtonpc@gmail.com](mailto:cllrXXXXspaldingtonpc@gmail.com) (e.g. [cllrashtonspaldingtonpc@gmail.com](mailto:cllrashtonspaldingtonpc@gmail.com))
- iv. The only exception to the use of the name in the email address is for the Clerk. This email address will be as follows  
[spaldingtonpc@gmail.com](mailto:spaldingtonpc@gmail.com)
- v. The email should be accessed by a password of which only the user of the email knows. Passwords should not be shared with any other Councillor or Council Staff.
- vi. If the user of the account is minded that the password has (or is likely to have been) disclosed to a third party, then the user of the account should immediately make the Clerk aware and confirm that they have changed the password at their earliest opportunity.
- vii. The only exception to sharing password to an email account that the clerk uses. The Clerk shall ensure that the Chair of the Council is aware of the email account password as to ensure business continuity in the absence of the Clerk.
- viii. The user of all Council email addresses must accept that while all Councillors and staff have an 'expected right to privacy' the email account actually belongs to the Council. The Council reserves the right to inspect the email account of any staff or Councillors if it is considered appropriate and has a legitimate cause. In any circumstances where it is considered appropriate, the decision must be formally agreed at a Council meeting and minuted.
- ix. The exception to this is where the Police or any other statutory authority have formally requested access under provisions of Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Provisions Regulations Act where the authority are investigating a criminal offence. In these situations, the Police or statutory authority will ask the clerk for access who will seek advice from NALC or SLCC or any other advisory body they see fit. This advice and the decision for access will be noted and minuted at the next full Council meeting.



### 3. USE OF EMAIL

- i. The use of email to exchange correspondence requires the same professional standards as other forms of communication. You should not send or forward mail which is defamatory or offensive for whatever reason. Any email or electronic message that the Council deems to be below the professional standard expected, the Council will ask the Clerk to fully investigate the issue and bring the details to the Council at the next meeting.
- ii. If the email exchange under investigation involves the Clerk, the Chair shall seek advice from NALC to ascertain the most appropriate way forward.
- iii. All external emails must include the Council Name, the senders name and contact details.
- iv. E-mail that is sent to external addresses should include the standard Council disclaimer. (shown in annex A)
- v. Junk mail is a hazard of internet life and efforts should be made to isolate it at source, if not it should be deleted immediately and no attachments should be opened. It is important to keep virus protection up to date.
- vi. In order to protect from viruses, email attachments which might contain macros (word processor and spreadsheet files) or applications, should not be opened if they are from a sender whom you do not recognise, simply delete.
- vii. The Staff and Councillors must be aware that agreements made by email have the same status as letters or formal contracts.
- viii. It is recommended that e-mails are retained for no more than twelve months before they are deleted. Those containing important material should be saved to a separate folder or placed in an electronic storage mechanism
- ix. Only electronic storage devices from known sources can be used Council equipment. Staff and Councillors should be aware that opening data via any electronic storage device bypasses the security checks for viruses.

### 4. CONTENT OF EMAIL AND DATA PROTECION

- i. Staff and Councillors of the Council must not include in the text of emails to be sent, or in files attached to them, sensitive personal data without appropriate protection in order to comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and General Data Protection Regulations 2018.
- ii. Email to multiple addresses outside of Council addresses should be sent as blind copy, (bcc).

### 5. ACCESS OF INTERNET ON COUNCIL EQUIPMENT

- i. Do not download any material that you suspect may contain a virus.
- ii. Do not use material from the Internet without checking whether it is restricted by copyright or licensing laws.



## 6. WEBSITE

- i. The website is updated by the Clerk who monitors the up-loads content prior to it being put onto the website.
- ii. No Councillor or member of staff should access offensive material using Council facilities.
- iii. Computer games or personal software must not be loaded onto Council equipment.
- iv. Each user of Council electronic equipment is responsible for ensuring that the content of their computer is kept clean and for reporting any faults to the Clerk.

## 7. SOCIAL MEDIA

- i. Social media must not be used for personal purposes whilst at undertaking Council business unless you are uploading current Council events news to the Council Facebook page.
- ii. The separate Social Media policy should be read in conjunction with this policy

## 8. ANNEX A

**EMAIL DISCLAIMER** - This is to be included in all Council emails.

- **Content** - All emails may be subject to recording and/or monitoring in accordance with relevant legislation. Councillor emails are sent in an individual capacity and may not reflect the views of Spaldington Parish Council
- **Addresses** - The email you have received (including attachments) is private and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom it is addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, please notify the Council of the error in transmission and delete the email from your system.
- **Legal Commitment** - Nothing in this email message amounts to a contractual or other legal commitment on the part of Spaldington Parish Council unless confirmed by a communication signed on behalf of the Council.
- **Virus Checking** - Spaldington Parish Councillors use **GOOGLE MAIL** for our email service. This message has been checked for all known viruses but Spaldington Parish Council does not accept any liability for viruses transmitted via this e-mail and it is your responsibility to scan the e-mail and attachments (if any).
- **Confidentiality** - The information in this message is confidential and may be legally privileged. It is intended solely for the addressee. Access to this message by anyone else is unauthorized. If you are not the intended recipient, any disclosure, copying, or distribution of the message, or any action or omission taken by you in reliance on it, is prohibited and may be unlawful. Please immediately contact the sender if you have received this message in error.