

Protocol on the Use of IT by Members

1 Introduction

The Council provides Councillors with a computer* to facilitate the performance of their duties as Councillors. The Council is committed to the development of e-democracy and will be working over the coming years to increase the range of information which is available to Councillors electronically and to enable Councillors to conduct more of their business remotely. The use of these computers can make Councillors much more effective, but there are risks associated with such use. This protocol sets out the conditions on which such computers are provided, in order to minimise those risks both to the Council and to individual Councillors.

Each Councillor is required to sign a copy of this protocol as a condition of being provided with the computer and must comply with the terms of this protocol. For this purpose, “computer” means the computer provided to the Councillor by the Council together with any equipment, software or materials provided for use with the computer.

2 Security for the Computer

- (a) The computer is insured by the Council and to meet the terms of the insurance, the Councillor shall accept responsibility for the safe-keeping of the computer.
- (b) The Councillor shall make reasonable arrangements for the safe-keeping of the computer.

3 Use for Council Business

- (a) The computer is provided to the Councillor specifically to facilitate the discharge of the Councillor’s functions as a Councillor. The Councillor must therefore not use the computer in any manner which will prevent or interfere with its use for that purpose.
- (b) Accordingly, the Councillor must not:
 - (i) misuse the computer in such a manner as to cause it to cease to function
 - (ii) install any equipment or software.
- (c) The Councillor must:
 - (i) Ensure that the computer is maintained in a working condition;
 - (ii) Report any faults promptly to the appropriate officer of the Council;
 - (iii) Provide regular access as required to Council officers to service, maintain and repair the computer.

- (d) The Council provides the computer together with ancillary equipment and materials required for the Councillor's functions as a Councillor. Accordingly, the Council may decline to provide further equipment or material beyond a certain allowance where the use of such equipment or material appears to the Council to be intended for private** (non-Council) use.

4 Use for Private Purposes

- (a) The Councillor may use the computer for private purposes but may not permit family members to use the computer if this would breach the Government Connect requirements. Private use is limited to use of the computer and software as it is supplied for Council purposes. Games etc. are not to be played on the computer or software downloaded from the Internet and installed on it.
- (b) The Council is prohibited from publishing any material of a party-political nature. If the Councillor uses the computer for the preparation of any material of such nature, he/she must make it clear that such material is published in a private capacity and not by or on behalf of the Council, and that no costs have been incurred by the Council as a consequence of its publication;
- (c) The Council has obtained the necessary software licenses for the use of the computer by the Councillor in a private capacity, but not for any non-Council business use of the computer. If the Councillor wishes to use the computer for any non-Council business use, it is the Councillor's responsibility to obtain any necessary software licences.
- (d) The Council accepts no responsibility for such private use of the computer or any loss, costs or liability which the Councillor or any other person may suffer as a result of the use of the computer.

5 Bringing the Council into Disrepute

- (a) The Councillor shall not use the computer, or permit its use, in any manner which may bring the Council or the Councillor into disrepute and the Councillor's attention is drawn to the requirements of the Code of Conduct set out in the Council's Constitution.
- (b) Specifically, where the Council provides websites for Councillors, the Council reserves editorial control of such websites and the right to remove or require the removal of any material which is unlawful, defamatory or likely to cause offence or bring the Council into disrepute.

6 Inspection and Audit

The Council reserves the right to inspect the computer at any time. The Councillor is required to give Council officers access at any reasonable time for such inspection and audit, which may be undertaken remotely and without notice to the Councillor. Councillors are advised that the computer includes a history file which records its use, and particularly any websites which it has accessed.

7 Costs

- (a) The Council will meet the cost of providing the computer.

- (b) Each Councillor is responsible for his/her own electricity bill. When turned on, the computer consumes about the same amount of electricity as a 100 Watt light bulb.
- (c) If the Councillor wishes to make use of the computer for private email or internet access, he/she should take out a personal subscription to an Internet Service Provider. Any such telephone time will then be on the Councillor's own telephone bill and will not be reimbursed by the Council.
- (d) The Council will meet the cost of insuring the computer.

8 Return and Recovery of the Computer

- (a) The computer remains the property of the Council.
- (b) The Council reserves the right to require the Councillor to return the computer at any time and the right to recover the computer from the Councillor.
- (c) The Councillor is required to return the computer to the Council upon ceasing to be a Councillor.

9 Confidentiality of Council Information

- (a) The Councillor will use the computer in accordance with the Council's Information Security Policy.
- (b) The Councillor is responsible for ensuring the continued security of any confidential information which he receives, including the security of any storage of such information on the computer. The Councillor is reminded of his/her obligations under the Council's Code of Conduct for Councillors not to disclose such confidential information to any third party.
- (c) If any of this information is personal information relating to individuals, the unauthorised processing or disclosure of such information is prohibited under the Data Protection Act and the Councillor is responsible for ensuring that there is no such unauthorised disclosure from the computer.
- (d) As a result of high profile losses of personal data, the Department of Work and Pensions introduced Government Connect. This creates a secure network between Government bodies to mitigate the risk of losing confidential data. Every Council has been required to connect to the secure network and prior to connection they have been required to complete a code of connection. The code of connection is a mandatory set of security guidelines which specify the security requirements a Council must and should have in place.

As part of the Council's commitment to comply with the Government Connect Guidelines, the computer has been encrypted and secured with a single password.

(e) Government Connect and hence the Council's policy forbids Council equipment being taken abroad.

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(f) Information sent to the Councillor's computer will be restricted to level 0 and level 1, which means that no commercially sensitive or personally identifiable information will be sent.

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The Councillor will need to accept responsibility for the data held on the devices according to the terms of the data protection act ie.

- *Appropriate technical and organisational measures shall be taken against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data and against accidental loss or destruction of, or damage to, personal data.*

By signing this document, the Councillor will accept and abide by the information security policy on Personal and Confidential data which is set out at Appendix A.

10 Restriction of Use

The Council reserves the right to restrict the use of the computer if it has reason to believe that the use of the computer is likely to offend any provision of the Protocol. In particular, the Council reserves the right to:

- (a) remove or disable any software or equipment;
- (b) remove any information stored on the computer.

* Computer – being a generic term for Laptop or iPad

** Private Usage – Non-Council use

On receipt of this Council computer, I commit to work electronically and abide by the terms of this policy set out above and at Appendix A.

Signed by the Councillor on receipt of a Council computer : -

Councillor :

Date :

Personal & Confidential Data

User Responsibilities

These guidelines are intended to help you ensure the security of personal and confidential data.

When using the Council's data you should comply with the following guidelines.

1. All personal & confidential data should be kept in a secure filing system, or a secure ICT system.
2. All paper files shall be secured in accordance with clear desk policy.
3. All electronic data shall be secured in accordance with ICT Security policy.
4. Do not download personal data from ICT systems.
5. No personal data contained within paper files is to be taken offsite.
6. No personal data is to be copied to CD's or USB devices or any other form of removable media.
7. No personal data is to be sent by email.
8. No personal data is to be stored on laptops, PDA's or any other mobile device.
9. Any print outs containing personal data are to be shredded when no longer required.
10. If you need to access personal data when offsite, do so using the secure remote access facilities.
12. If you need to hold personal data on a laptop or other mobile device, liaise with ICT Services, who will arrange for it to be properly encrypted.
13. If you need to send personal data offsite, liaise with ICT Services who will arrange for it to be transferred by secure ftp or encrypted email.