IT and Email Policy

Adopted 5th August 2025 Minute 103.25b

1. **Introduction**
   Tisbury 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 Tisbury Parish Council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data and email accounts.

3. **Acceptable use of IT resources and email**
   Tisbury 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 not access inappropriate or offensive content.

4. **Device and software usage**
   Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by Tisbury 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 Tisbury Parish Council data must be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data loss, and secure data destruction methods must be used when necessary.

6. **Network and internet usage**
   Tisbury 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 Tisbury 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 or password protected.

   Caution should be taken with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. The source should be verified before any attachments are opened or any links are clicked.

8. **Password and account security**

   Tisbury Parish Council users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords must 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 Tisbury Parish Council must 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.

10. **Email monitoring**

    Tisbury 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 must be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Unnecessary emails should be reviewed and deleted regularly to maintain an organised inbox (see the Council's Information and Data Protection Policy).

12. **Reporting security incidents**

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

13. **Training and awareness**

    Tisbury Parish Council will provide training and resources to inform 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.

14. **Compliance and consequences**

    A breach of this IT and Email 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 Clerk on clerk@tisbury-pc.gov.uk.

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