

OCCOLD PARISH COUNCIL

IT POLICY

1. Introduction

Occold 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.

Occold Parish Council is a small parish council and cannot manage to provide all councillors with a laptop. The Clerk has an Occold Parish Council laptop

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who use Occold Parish council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

Occold Parish Council 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 possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by Occold Parish Council for work-related tasks. Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns. Software, especially security updates must be installed as soon as possible.

5. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential Occold 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. Occold Parish Council use a company called 3it for backup and security for the Parish Clerk laptop.

6. Network and internet usage

Occold 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. Editing and revisions to online documents will be strictly limited to Occold Parish Council staff and where possible documents will be rendered Read only or offered as a PDF version outside the office.

7. Email communication

Email accounts provided by Occold 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. Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links. All Parish Council emails should be @occold-pc.gov.uk

8. Password and account security

Occold 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. Mobile devices and remote Work

Mobile devices provided by Occold 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.

10. Email monitoring

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

12. 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 Chairman of the Council and if the Parish Clerk 3it contact.

13. Training and awareness

Occold 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.

14. Website compliance

[Occold Parish Council](#) is .gov.uk domain. Occold Parish Council will ensure that the files uploaded to this website is accessibility compliant and that the website itself is WCAG2.2AA compliant and will be reviewed regularly.

15. Compliance and consequences

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

16. 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.

17. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact the Parish Clerk who will arrange for appropriate support

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

Adopted: 2nd March 2026, review annually.