

## **Buckland Parish Council**

### **Information Technology, Email and Internet Policy**

Buckland Parish 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.

#### **Use of Email**

- (i) The use of email to exchange correspondence requires the same professional standards as other forms of communication.
- (ii) Be aware that agreements made by email may have the same status as letters or formal contracts.
- (iii) 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 an unfamiliar sender; they should be deleted.
- (iv) Junk mail is a hazard of internet life and efforts should be made to isolate it at source; junk mail should otherwise be deleted without opening any attachments.
- (v) E-mail that is sent to external addresses should include the standard Buckland Parish Council disclaimer.

#### **Data protection**

- (i) Sensitive personal data should not be included in the text of emails sent, nor in files attached to them, unless the files are password protected and the password is provided to the intended recipient via a separate channel. This is to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- (ii) Email addresses should be treated as confidential and care taken that private email addresses are not wrongly circulated. Parish Updates, issued to members of the village email group are distributed using the blind copy addressee field.

#### **Internet**

- (i) Material should not be downloaded to the Council laptop if there is any suspicion that it may contain a virus.
- (ii) Material from the Internet should not be used without checking whether it is restricted by copyright or licensing law.

#### **Website**

The parish council pages of the village website are supported by an external hosting company and updated by the Clerk. The Clerk stores a backup of the village website on a regular basis to safeguard against failure of the hosting company.

#### **Computers**

- (i) The Council laptop should not be used to access offensive material.
- (ii) The Clerk is responsible for ensuring the Council laptop is kept clean and for reporting any unresolved faults to Council.
- (iii) Information held on the Council laptop is backed up using Dropbox Pro that allows access to information that has been deleted within the previous 30 days.
- (iv) The data held on the Council laptop is backed up, with the benefit of password protection, to a stand-alone hard drive once every 30 days and stored offsite.

#### **Social media**

Social media for work purposes should be used only with the permission of Council.

**Adopted : 9<sup>th</sup> January 2017.**

**Next review date: September 2018.**

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