

Weedon Parish Council

Information Technology Policy

Adopted: 19 May 2026

Reviewed: 15 September 2026

Weedon Parish Council

Information Technology Policy

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Weedon Parish Council (the “**Council**”) recognises the importance of effective and secure information technology (IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email; it applies to all Parish Councillors (“**Councillors**”), the Parish Clerk (“**Clerk**”) and any other employees, volunteers, and contractors (described as “**workers**” or “**users**”).

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 This policy covers all forms of information and communication technologies including Council-owned devices, email systems, websites, cloud storage, third-party platforms, and personal devices used for Council business. As a small authority, the Council acknowledges that Councillors and the Clerk may use their own personal devices. Everyone must adhere to this policy to maintain digital security.
- 2.2 This policy ensures the Council meets the requirements of the 2025 Practitioners’ Guide - Assertion 10: Digital and Data Compliance, and follows laws such as:
 - Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR
 - Freedom of Information Act 2000
 - Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities; and
 - Website Accessibility Regulations 2018

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Clerk is responsible for managing and enforcing this policy, ensuring IT resources are used appropriately and securely.
- 3.2 Councillors and any other workers are responsible for complying with the policy and reporting any breaches or incidents immediately.
- 3.3 External IT support providers and contractors must adhere to the standards set out in this policy when handling Council information.

4. Acceptable Use of Council-Provided Devices and Email

Any Council-provided devices and Council-owned email accounts are to be used for official Council-related activities and tasks only. Limited personal use is permitted, provided it does not interfere with work responsibilities or violate any part of this policy. Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns. The Clerk is provided with a Council email address which is to be used solely for the purpose of conducting Council business (parishclerk@weedonbucks.org.uk).

5. Personal Devices and Email

Where personal devices and email accounts are used to carry out Council business and work-related tasks, all users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Users must ensure that any electronic device which they use to access an email address used Council business is secured (or that the email account is secured) using a password or PIN and that this is not shared with any other person. All such devices must have up-to-date operating and suitable anti-viral software running.

6. Email Communication

All emails relating to Council business should be professional and respectful in tone. Confidential or sensitive information must not be sent via email unless it is encrypted. Users must be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware and must verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content. All users must comply with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy and its Communications Policy.

7. Email Access

The Council reserves the right to check email communications to ensure compliance with this policy and relevant laws. Emails received by the Clerk, Councillors or other workers relating to Council business (including from personal email accounts) may be disclosed following a request under the Data Protection Act 1998 or under the UK GDPR or in the course of legal proceedings.

8. Network and Internet Usage

Staff and Councillors must ensure they use a secure and trusted internet connection and do not leave devices unattended in public or shared spaces. Devices must be locked when not in use and must not be shared with unauthorised personnel.

9. Data Management and Security

All sensitive and confidential data should be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data loss, and the Council's Retention of Documents Policy must be followed.

Councillors and workers must not disclose confidential Council information to any unauthorised person, either during or after their term of office or employment.

10. Incident and Reporting and Cyber Security

Any data breach, loss of equipment or suspected cyber incident must be reported immediately to the Clerk (or the Chair of the Council if it relates to the Clerk) who will investigate and determine whether the breach needs to be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The Council will follow procedures outlined in its Data Protection and Information Policy. All Councillors and workers must remain vigilant against phishing attempts and other online threats.

11. Training and Awareness

The Council will source and offer training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates and users should engage in training on email security and best practices. Staff and Councillors are encouraged to familiarise themselves with National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) guidance on staying safe online.

12. Compliance and consequences

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

13. 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.

14. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact the Parish Clerk:

Mrs Ruth Millard,
32 Campbell Close, Linden Village, Buckingham, MK18 7HP
Tel 01280 814739
email parishclerk@weedonbucks.org.uk.

The Clerk, all Councillors and workers are responsible for the safety and security of the Council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT Policy, the Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.
