

BURGHCLERE PARISH COUNCIL

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Email Policy

Burghclere Parish Council has adopted a Code of Conduct that aims to promote and maintain high standards by its members whenever they are acting as a representative of the Council, such as when entering in to email communication with others.

This document sets out the Parish Council's policy for the use of emails for Parish Council business, including matters relating to its role as Trustee to the Pinder Recreation Trust. The requirements of this policy extend to the Clerk as an employee of the Parish Council.

The use of personal email addresses is discouraged, and Councillors should only use the @burghclerepc.com email address they are provided with when representing the Parish Council. However, should using a personal email address be unavoidable, then the contents of this policy should still be adhered to.

The policy will be approved and reviewed annually at a meeting of the Parish Council. All new Councillors and employees will be provided with a copy.

Individuals are responsible for complying with the requirements of this policy, as follows:

- Access to email accounts will be restricted to individual users and must not be shared accounts.
- The access of each user is controlled by means of their own password, which must be kept confidential and not disclosed elsewhere.
- Care should be taken not to leave a device that is connected to a Parish Council email address unattended or unlocked.
- The Clerk or Chairman must be informed immediately should there be any suspicions of data breaches or hacking.
- The use of the Parish Council's email for personal purposes is not permitted.
- Email is not a secure method of transmission - it should not be assumed that any email communication is secure or private. Users should take this into account particularly when emailing confidential or sensitive information.
- Hoax and/or suspect emails should not be opened or forwarded but instead be deleted. These should be immediately reported to the Clerk or Chairman if there is cause for concern.
- Recipients of abusive or threatening emails related to the business of the Parish Council must immediately inform the Clerk or Chairman.

Approved 1st February 2021

- Proprietary data and confidential information belonging to Burghclere Parish Council must be treated in accordance with the requirements of the Standing Orders. Confidential information shall include personal data relating to any individual that is not already in the public domain.

The following email activities may breach the Parish Council's 'Code of Conduct' and/or may prompt further action:

- Sending or forwarding any material that is obscene, defamatory, inappropriate, or hateful, or which is intended to annoy, harass, or intimidate others.
- Sending or forwarding any material that is seen to be promoting unlawful discrimination of any kind.
- Sending or forwarding emails which are likely to damage the reputation of the Parish Council.
- Sending emails that are unrelated to Parish Council activities or soliciting non-Parish Council business for personal gain or profit.
- Intentionally interfering with the normal operation of the Parish Council's email system, including the propagation of computer viruses.

Freedom of Information

On the receipt of a Freedom of Information or Subject Access Request it may be necessary for a member of staff to be given access to the individual email account a Councillor has been allocated. In this case, the Councillor will be informed if this is necessary to allow the Council to fulfil the request.

Approved during a meeting of Burghclere Parish Council held on: 1st February 2021

Approved 1st February 2021