

KINGSTON SEYMOUR PARISH COUNCIL

Information Technology Policy

Adopted 11th May 2026

1. Purpose

This policy sets out how Kingston Seymour Parish Council members and staff should use IT resources to ensure security, compliance with UK data protection law, and effective working practices.

This policy should be read along with the council's Electronic Communications and Social Media policies for a full view of the use of technology in support of Parish Council activities and goals.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- The Parish Clerk or councillors accessing council information via personal devices.
- The Parish Clerk or councillors using council-issued IT devices.
- Any contractors or volunteers with access to council IT resources.

It covers use of:

- Council documents stored in an approved local or cloud solution.
- Devices used to access council data (council-owned or personal).

3. Responsibilities

- The Parish Council is the data controller and responsible for compliance with data protection legislation.
- The Clerk acts as the primary system administrator for council IT systems.
- All councillors and users must follow this policy to ensure suitable protection of council data.

4. Acceptable Use

- IT resources provided/used in line with this policy must only be used for parish council business.
- Users must not share council data via unapproved platforms or storage solutions.
- Cloud accounts must only be accessed via official council accounts.

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5. Personal Devices (*Bring Your Own Device – BYOD*)

- Personal devices may be used to access council documents and cloud services provided:
 - Devices are kept up to date with security patches.
 - A PIN, password, or biometric lock is enabled.
 - Anti-virus/anti-malware software is installed, active and up to date.
 - Devices must not be shared with family members when logged into council accounts.
- If a device is lost or compromised, the Clerk must be notified immediately.

6. Council Provided Devices

- Any devices provided by the council are for council business only.
- They must be password-protected and set to auto-lock after 5 minutes of inactivity.
- Any provided laptop(s) must not be used by unauthorised persons.
- Data must be stored in the council's cloud solution, not on the local hard drive, wherever possible.
- The council reserves the right to audit and review any parish council devices on an annual basis to ensure compliance with this policy, confirm data is stored appropriately, and check that security measures remain effective. Reviews will be proportionate, respect personal privacy, and focus only on council-related use.

7. Cloud Services

- The council may provide access to an approved cloud solution for storing and sharing official documents.
- Users must not download council documents to unapproved locations (e.g., personal Dropbox, USB sticks).
- Access must be protected by strong passwords and, where available, multi-factor authentication (MFA).

8. Security & Data Protection

- Users must protect council data in line with UK GDPR and the council's Information and Data Protection Policy.
- Confidential or sensitive data must not be shared outside the council without proper authorisation.
- Devices accessing council data must not be connected to unsecured Wi-Fi networks when handling sensitive information.

9. Incident Reporting

- Any suspected data breach, loss of device, or cyber incident must be reported immediately to the Clerk.
- The Clerk will escalate incidents to the Chair and take advice from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) or National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) if required.

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10. Monitoring & Review

- The council reserves the right to audit compliance with this policy.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if legislation or guidance changes.

11. Acknowledgement

All councillors, staff, and users accessing council data or IT systems must confirm that they have read, understood, and agree to follow this policy.

Adopted by Kingston Seymour Parish Council 11th May 2026