

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND INTERNET USAGE POLICY FOR STAFF

1. The Council encourages electronic communications with local, national and international organisations, as an efficient and cost-effective means of communication.
2. The council recognises that access to professional information by email, fax or through web sites is a necessary requirement of the job of the Town Clerk and other staff and is permitted.
3. The Council recognises that reasonable use of email facilities to communicate brief personal non-offensive messages is acceptable and is a privilege that the Council is prepared to allow, but the amount of time spent must not be abused or the privilege will be removed.
4. Staff and users are expected to use technology in a courteous, reasonable and responsible manner. The following activities are not acceptable and anyone found to be involved in them may face disciplinary action. In certain instances, the matter will be considered to be gross misconduct:
 - Receiving, sending or displaying offensive messages or pictures
 - Using obscene language
 - Improper use of email and faxes
 - Damaging computer, computer systems or computer networks
 - Violating copyright laws
 - Using other's passwords and identities, except where permission has been given by the Town Clerk in which case the reason for the decision should be recorded in writing
 - Trespassing in other's folders, works or files, except for work held on the main file server.
 - Intentionally wasting limited resources
 - Employing the system for commercial purposes
 - Employing the system for illegal activities
 - Downloading any commercial software without the prior consent of the Town Clerk.
5. It is a requirement of the Council and the duty of all staff to avoid deliberate use of the Council's internet connections and technology for inappropriate personal use. Staff should immediately alert the Town Clerk of any suspect material found stored on any computer or elsewhere on the premises.
6. The computer equipment and software must be used as installed. Staff and users may not install/uninstall, delete or change anything on

Council computers. Any requirements for changes/modifications should be authorised by the Town Clerk.

7. The Council uses a virus checker on the computers. Staff are prohibited from loading disks or other removable storage media that have not been virus checked by the system. The Council also has the responsibility not to distribute viruses. Consequently items dispatched over the internet must be checked to ensure that they are virus free. The final responsibility for virus checking will always remain with the user.
8. Access to chat rooms, gaming or auction sites is not permitted on Council computers.
9. Staff are prohibited from revealing or publicising proprietary, confidential or personal information via the internet that they have not been specifically authorised to do so. Such information includes but is not limited to:
 - Financial information not already publicly disclosed through authorised channels.
 - Client information
 - Operational information
 - Information provided to the Council in confidence or under a non-disclosure agreement
 - Computer and network access codes and similar or related information that might assist unauthorised access
 - Legal proceedings
 - Information that might provide an external organisation with a business advantage
 - Computer programs
 - Databases and the information contained therein.

I have read the above policy and agree to abide by these instructions. I will discuss any concerns with the Town Clerk.

Signed.....Dated.....

Review: Biennially. Next review: March 2020