



Long Stratton Town Council

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Computer and telephone misuse policy

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R Buck, Town Clerk

Purpose

This document formalises how Information Communication Technology (ICT) and associated equipment should be used by those that are working for/ on behalf of Long Stratton Town Council 'the Council'. The Council uses its computer network, software packages and the internet (including e-mails), to further the efficiency of its business and to provide the best service possible to its customers, partners and the public. Any disruption to the use of these facilities will be detrimental to the Council and may result in actual financial loss. This Policy sets out how the Council intends to regulate the use of these facilities.

1. Scope

Computer equipment, software, data access and services provided by the Council for use in conducting Council business is supplied on the following terms and conditions as set out below.

2. General

3.1 These conditions of use may be modified from time to time in response to changing circumstances of an operational, legislative or technological nature.

3.2 Periodic checks may be made through Internal Audit or the Council's Data Protection Officer (Town Clerk) to ensure compliance with these conditions. Passwords must be disclosed to the Town Clerk in a named envelope to be kept in a locked drawer.

3. Ownership

4.1 The computer equipment, software, data access and services provided are the property of the Council. The equipment shall be recorded in the inventory of IT equipment and software, which is maintained by the Town Clerk. They are provided for the duration of your employment with the Council.

4.2 At the end of that period services provided will be terminated and computer equipment and software must be returned to the Council in full working condition.

4.3 If equipment has been lost or damaged whilst on loan, a charge may be made for its replacement or repair.

5 Installation

5.1 The equipment, software and services will be prepared for your use by the Council's appointed IT service provider.

5.2 The Council will be responsible for supplying the equipment and any leads necessary to operate the equipment.

6 Training

6.1 It is the responsibility of the Town Clerk to ensure that every member of staff working on the Council's Systems has been given sufficient training to use the same.

7 Use of Computer Equipment, Software and Services

7.1 The equipment, software and services are provided for use in respect of the Council's business. In making use of the facilities provided you are required to comply with the Council's policy and guidelines with respect to the use of ICT. These include, but are not limited to:

7.1.1 Financial Regulations

7.1.2 The Information Security Policy

7.1.3 The Internet Code of Practice

7.1.4 The Council's Personnel Policies and Procedures

7.1.5 GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation)

7.2 The relevant policies will have been supplied to you, and are available from the Town Clerk. If you cannot find a policy, ask the Town Clerk.

7.3 Private use of the ICT facilities provided is allowable within the guidelines indicated above.

7.4 The Council accepts no liability for any consequences (including financial or other loss) which may arise through private use of the facilities provided. You should also note that the security of private information and data is your responsibility. You are advised that simply deleting files does not permanently remove them from a computer.

7.5 Access to the Internet may be provided by the Council. You should be aware that the Internet contains potentially offensive material.

7.6 The Council accepts no liability for any offence, injury or consequences that may result from your use of the Internet and its associated facilities. See section 8 for more detail.

7.7 You are also reminded of your responsibility of probity (see section 9 below).

8 Legal Implications

8.1 The Council must comply with all UK legislation with respect to the use of ICT. In using the Council's facilities you must do likewise. You may be held personally liable for any breach of current legislation and any future legislation that may be enacted:

8.2 Examples of current legislation include, but are not limited to:

8.2.1 Data Protection Act 1998 (the Act) and other regulations

8.2.2 General Data Protection Regulations

8.2.3 Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988

8.2.4 Computer Misuse Act 1990

8.2.5 Obscene Publications Act 1959

8.2.6 Freedom of Information Act 2000

8.3 It is your responsibility to ensure that your use of any personal information complies with the provisions of the Data Protection legislation.

8.4 The transmission of personal information contained within electronic mail or as an attachment to electronic mail is also subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act.

8.5 Personal information must not be sent over the internet without consent.

8.6 Printed reports must be disposed of with regard to the sensitivity of the information concerned and all material making reference to personal data must be disposed of in accordance with the Council's policies and procedures.

8.7 All recordable media (e.g. diskettes, magnetic tapes, recordable CDs and DVDs) must be returned to the Town Clerk for disposal.

8.8 Please also be aware that no unauthorised disclosure of information is permitted and all requests for access to personal data must be referred to the Town Clerk.

8.9 The use, or possession, of unlicensed copies or "pirated" versions of software is illegal and is expressly prohibited under the Copyright Designs and Patents Act and the Council's policy.

8.10 The use of equipment must be in compliance with all relevant legislation.

8.11 For specific guidance, please contact the Town Clerk.

9 Computer Security

9.1 The Information Security Policy must be complied with at all times in compliance with the following.

9.2 User responsibilities – Users take ownership of the equipment that they have. They are responsible for ensuring it is maintained, used correctly and not damaged. If damage does occur this must be reported to the Town Clerk as soon as practically possible with an explanation as to how damage has occurred. Information concerning the Council's computer security arrangements and access methodologies must not be divulged to unauthorised persons.

9.3 Passwords – All Council owned equipment must be protected with passwords. All passwords are to be held in a sealed envelope by the Town Clerk.

9.4 Removable Media – all removable media where practically possible, should be checked for viruses. Any media presented to the Council must come from a reliable source. Where a virus is suspected / detected, the matter must be reported to the Town Clerk immediately. Until virus repair is affected, an infected PC must not be used. Virus repair and any other necessary modifications to handle any eventualities of software repair must be undertaken only by or under the guidance of staff of the Council's appointed IT service provider.

9.5 Security Incident Definition – If there is a breach of security in any form, the Town Clerk must be informed as soon as practically possible. The Town Clerk will then decide what course of action needs to be taken if any.

9.6 Software or programs (including screen savers and wallpaper) must not be downloaded from the Internet or installed from removable media. This includes programs or software available for trial purposes or those that are free of charge. No software can be loaded onto the Council's ICT equipment, except by the Council's appointed IT service provider.

9.7 Data stored on portable IT equipment must be backed-up on a regular basis. A network connection will be provided to facilitate this. 9.2.9 The data on networked PCs should only be saved to designated areas on the network. Data must not be saved onto the C: drive of any PC.

9.8 Where information is kept on portable media, such as memory sticks, then such media must be kept securely when not in use.

9.9 Where stolen equipment and/or software are recovered; or where it is suspected that equipment or software have been tampered with, they must returned to the Council's appointed IT service provider for testing prior to re-use.

10 Risk Management and Insurance

10.1 As part of its risk management and risk financing arrangements, the Council maintains insurance on the equipment provided to you, including cover against the perils of theft, accidental damage, malicious damage and fire.

10.2 All computer equipment must be secured from theft or unauthorised use as far as is practical.

10.3 If you travel with a laptop or other equipment, it should not be left in an unattended vehicle unless there is no other option, in which case it should be secured out of sight in the boot. There is no insurance cover for losses arising from unlocked vehicles, hotel rooms or other unsecured situations. Therefore, you should be especially careful when taking a laptop away from Council offices, as you will be liable for any such loss.

10.4 Any loss of, or damage to, the equipment should be reported as soon as possible to the Town Clerk in the first instance and any criminal damage should be reported to the Police.

10.5 Any loss of personal data as the result of loss or theft of equipment shall be reported to the Council and Information Commissioners Office (ICO)

11 Internet Access and Electronic Mail

11.1 Internet access, electronic mail, electronic diaries and associated services may be made available for your use in connection with Council business.

11.2 The policy for Acceptable use of the Internet (7 above) must be adhered to at all times.

11.3. You will be provided with an official Council electronic mail address. You are requested to monitor and manage your electronic mail and calendar on a regular basis, preferably daily.

11.4 While the corporate electronic mail system is provided primarily for official business, personal use is permitted provided it complies with the Council's policies and guidelines, and such use does not hamper or conflict with official business.

11.5 In accordance with the Telecommunications (lawful business practice) Interception of communications regulations, the Council may lawfully view and monitor all email created, sent, forwarded, received or saved on the corporate email system without prior notice, and reserves the right to do so. You are therefore advised to think carefully before the facilities provided are used to communicate personal or sensitive information. The nature and content of electronic mail should be considered carefully and treated in the same way you would conventional mail.

11.6 The Council, through the Town Clerk may also lawfully view and monitor all internet access, and reserves the right to do so.

11.7 You are reminded that Council facilities may only be used for lawful purposes. Viewing or transmission of any material which may be regarded as offensive or in violation of any UK law or legislation is not permitted. Such material may include copyright material, material judged to be threatening, pornographic, obscene or sexually explicit and material protected by trade secret.

12 Probity

12.1 All officers and members are reminded that you are bound by the National Code of Local Government Conduct and that the general principles contained within the Code also apply to specific instances, such as the use of the Internet, shared folders and email. You should ensure that your conduct accords with the requirements of the National Code and that of the Council and South Norfolk District Council's Code of Conduct. Other people who work in council offices will be expected to act in a manner that complies with these codes.

12.2 Any allegations of breach of the Code will be referred to the Town Clerk for investigation.

13 Support

13.1 Any computer equipment or software problems which occur should be reported to the Town Clerk during normal working hours.

13.2 No support will usually be provided outside of normal working hours.

13.3 In the event that the equipment suffers a complete hardware malfunction, The Council will be responsible for putting the equipment back to the condition in which it was first supplied. The Council will also reinstate, in so far as is reasonable and possible, information and data secured from the most recent back-up.

14 Consumables

14.1 The Council will provide consumable items such as paper and toner cartridges for printers.

15 Health and Safety

15.1 In the interests of health and safety, you are advised to adhere to the following recommendations for the safe use of personal computer equipment:

15.1.1 Sit in a chair that gives you good back support to avoid backache, position the screen in front of you to avoid twisting regularly to look away from the screen to reduce eye strain

15.2 If you have been provided with a "laptop" computer, you should avoid using it on a low table or on your lap as both of these positions will increase strain on your neck and lower back.

15.3 If you have any concerns relating to the safe use of your computer equipment, please contact the Town Clerk as Health and Safety Officer.

15.4 The Town Clerk as line manager should ensure a workplace assessment is carried out annually or sooner if the need arises.

16 Data Use

16.1 Any data that is available to be accessed must only be used for the Council's purposes and must not be transferred to any third party or other employers without the explicit agreement of the Town Clerk.