

MICHELDEVER PARISH COUNCIL

IT POLICY

June 2025

Introduction Micheldever Parish Council recognises the paramount importance of utilising information technology (IT) judiciously and securely to enhance our business operations, communications, and overall efficiency. This policy serves as a comprehensive guide outlining the rules and responsibilities that govern the appropriate use of the council's IT resources, encompassing all stakeholders, including council members, employees, volunteers, and contractors.

Scope This policy extends its applicability to all individuals who utilise the Micheldever Parish Council's IT resources, encompassing a wide range of devices, networks, software, applications, and digital storage. The policy specifically addresses access to .gov.uk email addresses and any digital storage infrastructure within the council's domain.

Utilising IT Resources: Maximising Efficiency When employing IT resources for official council purposes, it is imperative to maintain a strict balance between personal and professional usage. Any interference with council responsibilities should be strictly avoided. It is crucial to adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and refrain from accessing or sharing inappropriate or offensive content.

Device and Software Usage: Authorised Resources Where feasible, Micheldever Parish Council will provide authorised devices, software, and applications for our work. However, it is important to note that installing software on an authorised device, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

Data Management and Security: Safeguarding Sensitive Information Our sensitive and confidential data holds utmost importance, necessitating the implementation of secure storage and transmission methods. Regular data backups are essential to prevent data loss, and appropriate data destruction methods should be employed when necessary.

Network and Internet Usage: Responsible Digital Citizenship Downloading, using or sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is strictly prohibited. It is a criminal offence that can result in an individual or organisation being sued for unauthorised use.

Email Communication: Official Communication Only Our email accounts are exclusively designated for official communication purposes. It is imperative to utilise email signatures and maintain a professional and respectful tone in all

emails. Caution should be exercised when opening email attachments or clicking on links to mitigate the risk of phishing and malware threats.

Password and Account Security: Protecting Personal Information The security of our passwords and accounts is paramount. It is crucial to adopt strong and unique passwords and regularly review and update them to ensure their effectiveness. As responsible users, we are all responsible for safeguarding our accounts and passwords. Strong passwords are essential, and we kindly request that you refrain from sharing them with others.

Mobile Devices and Remote Work If you have a mobile device provided by the Micheldever Parish Council, please ensure that it is securely configured with a passcode or biometric authentication.

General Security Our primary objective is to protect your IT resources. Should you detect any security breaches or incidents, we kindly request that you promptly report this via clerk@micheldever-pc.gov.uk. Furthermore, we are committed to providing comprehensive information on IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and the latest technological advancements. Micheldever Parish Council will regularly offer access to resources to facilitate your ongoing informed decision-making.

Compliance and Consequences Breaching this IT policy may result in the suspension of your IT privileges, and we may take appropriate actions as necessary. We will regularly review this policy (at least annually) to ensure its continued relevance and effectiveness. Accordingly, we will update it to align with the latest technological trends and security measures.