

# MIDDLE CLAYDON PARISH COUNCIL

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## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT) POLICY

### 1. Purpose

This policy defines how Middle Claydon Parish Council manages its use of information technology, in line with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities (2015) and the 2025 edition of the Practitioner's Guide. It ensures the council's digital operations are transparent, secure and compliant with data protection laws.

### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who use Middle Claydon Parish Council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

### 3. Governance and Oversight

Middle Claydon Parish Council's IT resources and email accounts are to be used for official council-related activities and tasks. Limited personal use is permitted, provided it does not interfere with work responsibilities or violate any part of this policy. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

### 4. Device and software usage

Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by Middle Claydon Parish Council for work-related tasks.

Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly prohibited due to security concerns.

### 5. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential Middle Claydon Parish Council data should be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data loss, and secure data destruction methods should be used when necessary.

## **6. Network and internet usage**

Middle Claydon Parish Council's network and internet connections should be used responsibly and efficiently for official purposes. Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is prohibited.

## **7. Email communication**

Email accounts provided by Middle Claydon Parish Council are for official communication only. Emails should be professional and respectful in tone. Confidential or sensitive information must not be sent via email unless it is encrypted.

Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before opening any attachments or clicking on links.

## **8. Password and account security**

Middle Claydon Parish Council users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and passwords. Passwords should be strong and not shared with others. Regular password changes are encouraged to enhance security.

## **9. Mobile devices and remote Work**

Mobile devices provided by Middle Claydon Parish Council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication. When working remotely, users should follow the same security practices as if they were in the office.

## **10. Email monitoring**

Middle Claydon Parish Council reserves the right to monitor email communications to ensure compliance with this policy and relevant laws. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Data Protection Act and GDPR.

## **11. Retention and archiving**

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

## **12. Reporting security incidents**

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the designated IT point of contact for investigation and resolution. Report any email-related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator immediately.

### 13 Training and awareness

Middle Claydon Parish Council will arrange, when required, training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates.

### 14. Compliance and consequences

Breach of this IT and Email Policy may result in the suspension of IT privileges and further consequences as deemed appropriate.

### 15. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be made to address emerging technology trends and security measures.

### 16. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact the Parish Clerk.

All staff and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of Middle Claydon Parish Council's IT and email systems. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, Middle Claydon Parish Council aims to create a secure and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.

VERSION HISTORY					
Version	Approved by	Date	Description of Change	Author	
1.0	Full Council	9 March 2026	New document	CJ	
PREPARED BY	Carole Jackman	TITLE	CLERK	Date	Jan 2026