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Author: Town Clerk

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ICT POLICY

1.0 Purpose of the Policy

1.1 Kingswood Town Council recognises the importance of effective and secure information technology (IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications.

1.2 This policy outlines guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email by council members, employees, volunteers, and contractors.

2.0 Scope

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

3.0 Acceptable use of IT resources and email

3.1 Kingswood Town 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.

4.0 Device and software usage

4.1 Where possible, authorised devices (Laptops, phones and IPads), software, and applications will be provided by Kingswood Town Council for work-related tasks. All councillors have the opportunity to request the provision of a devise while they are a town councillor.

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

5.0   Data management and security

5.1   All sensitive and confidential Kingswood Town Council data should be stored and transmitted securely using approved methods. Backup of data is undertaken by Cloudy IT the council's IT provider. They also have the ability to recover lost data and can also destroy data, in accordance with GDPR.

6.0 Network

6.1   Kingswood Town Council's network should be used responsibly and efficiently for official purposes. Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper authorisation is prohibited.

7.0   Email communication

7.1   Official email accounts are provided by Kingswood Town Council and 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 to the official email account and is clear that it is for the recipient only.

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

8.0   Password and account security

8.1   Kingswood Town 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. Ipads and laptops have a function that enables face recognition.

9.0   Mobile devices and remote Work

9.1   Mobile devices provided by Kingswood Town Council should be secured with passcodes and/or biometric authentication. All devices must be returned to the town clerk when the individual ceases to be associated with Kingswood Town Council.

10.0   Email monitoring

10.1   Kingswood Town 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.

11.0   Retention and archiving

11.1   Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox. When a councillor ceases to be a councillor they will be denied access to their email account and therefore there is no need to delete any data on their device.

12.0   Reporting security incidents

12.1   All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the designated IT point of contact for investigation and resolution (town clerk who will refer all matters to Cloudy IT). Report any email-related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator immediately.

13.0   Training and awareness

13.1   Kingswood Town Council will provide training and resources to educate users about IT security best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. All employees and councillors will receive training on email security and best practices.

14.0   Compliance and consequences

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

15.0   Policy review

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

16.0   Contacts

16.1   For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact the town clerk.

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