

# **ALREWAS PARISH COUNCIL INTERNET, E MAIL AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

## **1 Introduction**

As all councillors and employees of Alrewas Parish Council are using a council attributable e mail address there should be an agreed understanding of the use and limits of this provision.

As employees also use Council provided telephones the Policy will apply to them while using such devices in the Council's name.

## **2 Proposed Policy**

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Protect the reputation of Alrewas Parish Council by avoiding the misuse of its e mail system and its name. This could include, but not be limited to, potential defamation of others, breach of privacy, breach of confidentiality, breach of data protection legislation, access to and or circulation of inappropriate web-based materials, emails or social media posts
2. Minimise the risk of the introduction of viruses and other malware which could impact on the efficiency of the work of the Council and the security of information held by it

The Parish Council provides telephones (for employees) and e mail addresses for Councillors and employees for legitimate use while undertaking council business only.

All councillors and employees are expected to follow this policy at all times when using e mail, social media or the internet for Council business.

### **1 E mail usage**

Users of Council email addresses should follow the procedures below when using e mail in the course of Parish Council business:

1. E mails should use polite language and not be offensive or discriminatory
2. No emails should bring the Council into disrepute
3. An e mail signature must be used which clarifies that the message is sent from a councillor or employee of the Council
4. Councillors/employees should not circulate confidential material beyond those who need to receive the information. They should be very careful when forwarding an e mail trail
5. The circulating of offensive, indecent or obscene material or anything which breaches the Equal Opportunities Policy or Information Commission regulations should not be undertaken
6. Councillors/employees should not allow those not eligible to use a council e mail address to log on to their Parish Council e mail system or to have access to their password

### **2 Internet/Social media usage**

1. The Council does not formally engage with Social Media
2. Councillors/employees should not engage in discussions on social media in a way that suggests that they are speaking on behalf of the Council unless authorised by a Council meeting to do so.
3. Councillors/employees should not upload or post any link to material which may be considered derogatory, abusive or defamatory

4. Councillors/employees should not make posts which contain material relating to Council business, especially confidential matters

### **3 Matters for concern**

If the usage by any councillor or employee of the Council e mail system or the internet gives concern, councillors should report this in the first instance to the Clerk, who will inform the Chair of the Council and carry out an investigation. If the complaint is about the Clerk the councillor should contact the Chair or Vice Chair of the Council, who will undertake an investigation.

### **4 Complaints by members of the public**

If the usage by any councillor or employee of the Council e mail system or the internet causes concern to a member of the public they should report this in the first instance to the Clerk, who will inform the Chair of the Council and carry out an investigation. If the complaint is about the Clerk the member of the public should contact the Chair or Vice Chair of the Council, who will undertake an investigation.

### **5 Review of the Policy**

The Policy will be reviewed annually by the Clerk and reapproved by a full Council meeting.

Kathryn Powell

Clerk

July 2019

Approved 9 September 2019