



**EAST WOODHAY PARISH COUNCIL**  
**EMAIL USE POLICY**  
**Approved March 2025**  
**Next Review Date: May 2027**

**1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all members and employees of the Parish Council use email in a professional, responsible, and secure manner. This policy outlines acceptable practices for the use of email in the course of council-related business and aims to protect the council's data, reputation, and resources.

**2. Scope**

This policy applies to all members and employees of the Parish Council who have access to the council's email system. It covers the use of both council-issued email accounts.

**3. Acceptable Use**

Council-issued email accounts must be used for official Parish Council business only. Likewise, Parish Council business can only be conducted using Council-issued email accounts, not personal email accounts. No other form of electronic communication (e.g. Whatsapp, text) must be used for formal council business. All communication via email should remain professional and respectful, in line with the Council's values and code of conduct.

**4. Councillors' Email Use**

Every councillor must use the official .gov.uk email addresses issued by the Parish Council for all council-related communication. This ensures that all correspondence is formal and easily identifiable as council business. Councillors should refrain from using personal email accounts for any council-related matters.

- All councillors and EWPC employees are issued with a [.gov.uk](mailto:example@gov.uk) email account when joining the council
- The [.gov.uk](mailto:example@gov.uk) email addresses will be hosted within an internet environment (paid by EWPC)
- [.gov.uk](mailto:example@gov.uk) email addresses will be deleted when a councillor leaves the council i.e. all emails belonging to that individual in their email account will thus be deleted.
- Emails should be retained for the duration required by the council's retention policy and relevant legal obligations. By copying in the Clerk to all formal council-related business, the Clerk takes the responsibility for appropriate retention.

**5. Clerk's Involvement**

The Clerk must be copied in to any formal email communication sent by councillors. This will help ensure compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), as the Clerk is responsible for maintaining records and managing requests for information. The Clerk email

address will not be deleted on change of Clerk but will be transferred over. Email retention is as per the council's retention and disposal policy.

## **6. Confidentiality and Data Protection**

All users must ensure that emails containing confidential or personal data comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other relevant data protection laws. The forwarding of council emails to unauthorised individuals is prohibited without prior approval.

## **7. Prohibited Use**

Please refer to the Councillor Code of Conduct for expectations of behaviour in a public office. Council email addresses must never be used for:

- Sending or forwarding offensive, defamatory, discriminatory, or inappropriate content,
- Illegal activities or unauthorised transactions,
- Spamming or sending unsolicited emails to individuals or groups without permission,
- Sharing the council's email login details with unauthorised parties,
- Personal business or gain.

## **8. Email Security**

Email security will conform to that defined in the cyber security policy, including passwords. Two people can administer email addresses; the Clerk and another nominated councillor.

## **9. Monitoring and Compliance**

Email records may be reviewed in the event of an investigation or audit.

## **10. Training and Support**

All members, officers, and employees will receive training on the appropriate use of email systems and data protection requirements upon taking office. Users should seek support from the Clerk if they have any concerns or need further clarification.

## **11. Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains up-to-date and compliant with any legal or regulatory changes.