

# **Somersham Parish Council**

## **Acceptable use of computers & internet usage policy**

Adopted 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Reviewed 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025

By Personnel and Governance Committee

This policy sets out the correct use of the council's computers, and the internet and email systems. It demonstrates how the organisation will comply with the Computers Misuse Act 1990 and how it will protect its systems and the data on them.

Our computer systems are important to our operation and we therefore wish to clarify how they should be used. We also wish to protect our employees and volunteers from the possible consequences of misuse.

Having such a policy in place helps to protect both the council and the employee; the employee will be aware that browsing certain sites or downloading files is prohibited and that the policy must be adhered to or there could be serious repercussions, thus leading to fewer security risks for the council as a result of employee negligence.

For the avoidance of doubt this policy applies to volunteers as well as employees.

### **Acceptable use of Parish Council owned laptops & computers**

- ***The organisation's computers are for work use only.***

In order to protect work laptops & computers from risks of data exchange, *there must be no exchange of data or programs between the council's computers and employees' own computer without prior written approval.*

All employees are expected to adhere to the Computer Misuse Act 1990. Employees are not allowed to gain or attempt to gain unauthorised access to any computer program or data held in a computer or undertake an unauthorised modification of a computer.

### **Internet usage policy**

This Policy applies to all employees of Somersham Parish Council who have access to computers and the Internet to be used in the performance of their work. Use of the Internet by employees of Somersham Parish Council is permitted and encouraged where such use supports the goals and objectives of the council. However, access to the Internet through Somersham Parish Council is a privilege and all employees must adhere to the policies concerning Computer, Email and Internet usage. Violation of these policies could result in disciplinary and/or legal action leading up to and including termination of employment. Employees may also be held personally

liable for damages caused by any violations of this policy. All employees are required

to acknowledge receipt and confirm that they have understood and agree to abide by the rules hereunder.

## Computer, email and internet usage

- Council employees are expected to use the Internet responsibly and productively. Internet access is limited to job-related activities only and personal use is not permitted
- Job-related activities include research and educational tasks that may be found via the Internet that would help in an employee's role
- All Internet data that is composed, transmitted and/or received by Somersham Parish Councils computer systems is considered to belong to Somersham Parish Council and is recognized as part of its official data. It is therefore subject to disclosure for legal reasons or to other appropriate third parties
- The equipment, services and technology used to access the Internet are the property of Somersham Parish Council and the council reserves the right to monitor Internet traffic and monitor and access data that is composed, sent or received through its online connections
- Emails sent via the council email system should not contain content that is deemed to be offensive. This includes, though is not restricted to, the use of vulgar or harassing language/images
- All sites and downloads may be monitored and/or blocked by Somersham Parish Council if they are deemed to be harmful and/or not productive to business
- The installation of software such as instant messaging technology is strictly prohibited

Unacceptable use of the internet by employees includes, but is not limited to:

- Sending or posting discriminatory, harassing, or threatening messages or images on the Internet or via Somersham Parish Council email service
- Using computers to perpetrate any form of fraud, and/or software, film or music piracy
- Stealing, using, or disclosing someone else's password without authorization
- Downloading, copying or pirating software and electronic files that are copyrighted or without authorization
- Sharing confidential material, trade secrets, or proprietary information outside of the council
- Hacking into unauthorized websites
- Sending or posting information that is defamatory to the company, its products/services, colleagues and/or customers
- Introducing malicious software onto the company network and/or jeopardizing the security of the organization's electronic communications systems

- Sending or posting chain letters, solicitations, or advertisements not related to business purposes or activities
- Passing off personal views as representing those of the organization

If an employee is unsure about what constituted acceptable Internet usage, then he/she should ask his/her supervisor for further guidance and clarification

All terms and conditions as stated in this document are applicable to all users of Somersham Parish Council's network and Internet connection. All terms and conditions as stated in this document reflect an agreement of all parties and should be governed and interpreted in accordance with the policies and procedures mentioned above. Any user violating these policies is subject to disciplinary actions deemed appropriate by Somersham Parish Council.

## User compliance

I understand and will abide by this Acceptable use of Computers & Internet Usage Policy. I further understand that should I commit any violation of this policy, my access privileges may be revoked, disciplinary action and/or appropriate legal action may be taken.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee/volunteer signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date