

Hatley Parish Council
Information Technology (IT) Policy

1. Purpose

This policy defines how Hatley Parish Council (the Council) manages its use of information technology (IT), in line with the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities (2015) and the 2025 edition of the Practitioners' Guide. The Council recognises the importance of effective and secure IT and email usage for its business operations and communications, whilst complying with data protection laws.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all councillors, employees, volunteers, and contractors who access or manage the Council's IT resources, including computers, networks, software, devices, data and email accounts.

3. Governance and Oversight

The Clerk is the Council's designated IT Systems Administrator. The Council is a member of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Association of Local Councils and subscribes to its Data Protection Advice scheme. Section 7(3) of the DPA 2018 states that a Parish Council is not a public authority for the purposes of GDPR and does not need to appoint a Data Protection Officer. The Council shall oversee the implementation of and compliance with this policy

4. Data Protection

All processing of personal data by the Council shall comply with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. All data collection, processing, and subject rights are governed by the council's Privacy Policy, available on the Council website, and all users must familiarise themselves with it. Data must be stored securely and any personal data must be securely deleted when no longer required.

5. Security Controls

Devices, computers, third party accounts or apps used for the Council's business and communications must use password protection, with multi-factor authentication where applicable. Devices and computers should be regularly updated to include anti-malware software. Backups of essential data must be routinely actioned to a secure location.

6. Use of Personal Devices

Councillors and officers may use personal devices for council business only if explicitly authorised and subject to compliance with this policy. Devices must be protected by strong passwords and antivirus software. Council data must be kept separate from personal data.

7. Use of Personal Email Addresses

The use of personal email accounts for council business is strictly prohibited. All council correspondence must be conducted through official email account provided by the Council. Emails from council-owned domains must not be forwarded to personal email addresses. Breaches may result in the suspension of IT privileges and further consequences as deemed appropriate. All council emails will be stored in compliance with the GDPR and Freedom of Information requirements.

8. Training and awareness

All devices must be regularly updated and checked for compliance with this policy. Users will be given training on IT systems, cybersecurity, data handling, and transparency responsibilities, as required.

9. Reporting security incidents

A suspected security breach should be reported to the Clerk and or Chair immediately to allow for investigation and resolution.

This policy was adopted by Hatley Parish Council on 20th January 2026 and will be reviewed annually or following a significant incident or legislative change.

Signed: Chair of the Parish Council

Date: 20.01.26