



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COUNCILLOR IT DEVICE USAGE POLICY

1. Background

- 1.1 Stotfold Town Council, at its meeting on 2nd December 2020 resolved to purchase IT devices for use by its councillors.
- 1.2 This policy aims to establish the appropriate use of the devices and establish proper use of the internet, social media, and emails by councillors.

2. Purpose of device

- 2.1 Stotfold Town Council has provided IT devices to its councillors for use at face-to-face council meetings and virtual council meetings or authorised permitted meetings on behalf of the council.
- 2.2 The device may also be used in the process of conducting councillor business, where authorised to do so, through councillor email and internet access.
- 2.3 SharePoint will be used by the office to share agendas and other council papers with councillors, accessible by each device.
- 2.4 Councillors are expected to check their council email accounts and SharePoint regularly and bring their device to each meeting of the council.
- 2.5 The Council will provide training for appropriate use of the devices, SharePoint and emails if required.
- 2.6 Councillors should note that information stored on or sent from and to the devices will be subject to Data Protection Act 2018 and Freedom of Information Act 2000 requests.

3. Data protection and security

- 3.1 The devices will be for Stotfold Town Council purposes only. Do not set up your personal email address, or any other email accounts, on this device.
- 3.2 Do not link up, download, or otherwise access personal third-party apps or services, including on demand TV and other media streaming services.
- 3.3 You will be provided with a Two Factor Authentication logon to the Council network. The password must not be recorded. If a password is forgotten, please contact IT Support for assistance.
- 3.5 You must not jailbreak your device (modify or remove restrictions to allow access to restricted sites or the downloading of prohibited software), or otherwise hack or tamper with it.
- 3.6 Councillors may access their councillor email from their device. Emails should not be kept longer than they are required, in line with our Information & Data Protection Policy.

- 3.7 Councillors should be aware of the characteristics of spam and phishing emails when using council provided devices, and should not reply to these emails, but add the sender to their email system's Blocked Senders List.
- 3.8 The council is the owner of all Stotfold Town Council information and the contents of Stotfold Town Council systems, together with everything which is created on, transmitted to, received on, or printed from, or stored or recorded on each device, in each case during the course of the council's business or otherwise on the council's behalf, irrespective of who owns that device.
- 3.9 Devices will be distributed to councillors on the agreement that they will be returned to Stotfold Town Council immediately should a councillor's term of office end for any reason.

4. User responsibility

- 4.1 Your device must be transported in a suitably protective case (such as a sleeve or padded backpack).
- 4.2 Handle your device with care and respect. Do not throw, damage, place heavy items on, or intentionally drop your device.
- 4.3 Only approved cleaning materials can be used to clean your device, such as laptop or tablet sprays and cloths.
- 4.4 Do not leave your device logged on and unattended.
- 4.5 Do not keep or leave your device unattended in vehicles.
- 4.6 Keep your device safe and secure at all times. You should know where your device is at all times.

5. Lost, damaged or stolen devices

- 5.1 Stotfold Town Council will adequately insure the device against loss and theft.
- 5.2 If your device becomes lost or has been stolen, report it to a member of staff immediately.
- 5.3 If your device has become damaged, report it to a member of staff and hand the device in to the office.
- 5.4 You must not attempt to carry out repairs to your device.
- 5.5 You must not solicit any individual or company to repair your device on your behalf.

6. Safeguarding and e-safety

- 6.1 Do not tamper with any device belonging to other councillors. Anyone found trying to access another councillor's device or associated content will be subject to disciplinary action.
- 6.2 Do not use your device to take photographs of others without their express permission.
- 6.3 Councillors are expected to abide by the Good Councillor Guide and by the Council's Code of Conduct when acting in an official capacity online, in emails and on social media.

- 6.4 You are strictly forbidden from using your device to create, store, access, view, download, distribute, send, upload inappropriate content or materials.
- 6.5 You are forbidden from using your device to partake in illegal activities of any kind.
- 6.6 Do not use your device to post images, movies or audio to a public facing part of the internet, without the express permission of all individuals imaged/recorded.
- 6.7 Confidential emails and councillor accessible cloud documents must not be shared with anyone outside the council.
- 6.8 The Council reserves the right to inspect the devices for the purpose of monitoring, recording and retaining any incoming and outgoing emails for security reasons and for monitoring compliance with this policy. You must therefore surrender your device upon request by the Town Clerk.
- 6.9 Internet Access Unacceptable Behaviour when using councillor devices
The following is deemed unacceptable use or behaviour:
- Visiting sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or illegal material
 - Perpetrating any form of fraud, or software, film or music piracy
 - Using the internet to send offensive or harassing material to other users
 - Downloading commercial software or any copyrighted materials belonging to third parties, unless the download is covered or permitted under a commercial agreement or other such licence
 - Hacking into unauthorised system, sites or files
 - Publishing defamatory and/or knowingly false information about the council, staff, colleague councillors and/or residents on social networking sites, blogs, wikis, or any online publishing format
 - Revealing confidential information about the council on a personal online posting, upload or transmission; including financial information and information relating to customers, residents, business plans, policies, employees, councillors and/or internal discussions
 - Undertaking deliberate activities that waste council effort or networked resources
 - Introducing any form of malicious software into the council network
- 6.10 Email Usage Unacceptable Behaviour when using councillor emails and council devices
The following is deemed unacceptable use or behaviour:
- Distributing, disseminating or storing images, text or materials that are illegal, or might be considered indecent, pornographic or obscene.
 - Distributing, disseminating or storing images, text or materials that might be considered discriminatory, offensive or abusive, in that the context is a personal attack, sexist or racist, or might be considered harassment.
 - Use of council communications systems to set up personal businesses or send chain letters.
 - Forwarding council confidential messages to external locations
 - Accessing copyright information in a way that violates the copyright.
 - Breaking into the council's or another organisation's system or unauthorised use of a password or mailbox
 - Broadcasting personal views on social, political, religious, or other non-council related matters
 - Transmitting unsolicited commercial or advertising material
 - Undertaking deliberate activities that waste council effort or networked resources.
 - Introducing any form of computer virus or malware into the council's network

7. Personal use

- 7.1 The devices will remain the sole property of the council and as such should not be used for personal use by the councillor.
- 7.2 Councillors should only link their council email address to the device. No personal email addresses should be linked to the device.
- 7.3 Your device is not provided for personal use; it is to be used for Stotfold Town Council-related use only.
- 7.4 Do not grant access to your device to anyone, unless expressly authorised to do so by the Town Clerk.

8. Alternative formats

- 7.1 Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018
- 7.2 Copies of this document in large print (A3 format) or larger font size, or any tables contained within this document in a screen reader accessible format can be made available on request from the council office or by telephoning 01462 730064 or by emailing the Clerk's office enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk

Revision History

Policy Adopted	27 January 2021
Date Reviewed	24 January 2024
Date for Next Review	January 2026