



## **WILMINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Policy for Use of Email for Parish Council Business**

1. Email contact between the public and the Parish Council should normally take place via the Parish Clerk, not the elected councillors. If the Clerk decides to forward a message received on to one or more councillors it should first be redacted to remove personal information, including the sender's email address, unless the sender requests otherwise or is writing in an official capacity. Any messages received by councillors that do more than request factual information should be sent on to the Clerk for action and copies should not be retained.
2. In all email communications (including private messages to friends, relatives etc.) councillors should be careful to avoid giving the impression that their personal views are council policy.
3. From time-to-time councillors may find it helpful to communicate directly with officers of the Borough Council, County Council, Police etc. on Parish Council business. All such communications should be copied to the Parish Clerk.
4.
  - (a) Councillors are free to use any private email account they choose for council-related business but are strongly advised to use a secure cloud-based email system, such as Googlemail. This will ensure that messages are not automatically downloaded to councillors' PCs, tablets or other devices, and thus will make their email secure even if the devices are stolen, lost or damaged.
  - (b) Councillors wishing to separate council-related email from their personal email are advised to use a dedicated account for DPC email only.
  - (c) Councillors who choose to use email systems that require messages to be downloaded to a PC, tablet or other device will be considered personally responsible for the security of the device(s) they use.
5. All email received by the Council's employees using their corporate accounts will be considered the property of the Parish Council.
6. All email messages sent to Councillors are the Councillors' personal property. However, Councillors should not retain messages containing personal information about individuals or confidential information about Council business.
7. Councillors are requested to securely destroy all Parish Council-related emails when they leave the Council, if not earlier, especially private messages between Councillors that contain comments about individuals or organisations or opinions on sensitive local issues.

8. Corporate email addresses will not be issued to councillors, in view of (1) above, to avoid potential misunderstandings of the status of email sent by councillors and to avoid issues relating to the security of passwords.