



BRANSTON PARISH COUNCIL POLICIES

TITLE: Email Policy for Councillors

Introduction

This document describes Branston Parish Council's policy for email etiquette.

Aims and objectives

The objectives of the policy are to ensure that the services made available to councillors and employees are used in accordance with the values, principles and standards of the council.

When to use Email

1. Each councillor will be set up an email account specifically for their work as a parish councillor.
2. The first point of contact for the Parish Council is the Clerk, and it is the clerk that all correspondence for the Parish Council should be addressed. The clerk should deal with all correspondence following a meeting.
3. No individual Parish Councillor should communicate directly with companies/individuals with which the Parish Council has a contractual relationship without the approval of the Council.
4. No individual Parish Councillor should be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of the Parish Council.
5. Emails should not be used to make or influence decisions that should be made at a meeting of the council.
6. The law does not allow councillors to act independently and councillors should make sure that they do not imply that the content of emails represents the opinion or policy of the Council as a whole. As an individual, councillors can think, say and write what they like, but as a councillor their views can only be the view of the whole council.
7. The only person who can author an official email is the clerk who writes on behalf of the Council. Sometimes there will be good practical reason why official emails should be sent or forwarded from a councillor's account. Normally it will be because a councillor has been asked to do so by full council, but if there is any doubt about a councillor's authority to write or send such email, advice should be sought from the clerk.
8. When sending an email, users should only 'cc' and 'bcc' people who really need to be informed. Users should take care when using the 'Reply to All' function as this may be inappropriate, especially if a councillor receives an email as a blind recipient (bcc).
9. Email etiquette construes capitalisation as SHOUTING, so its best to avoid use of upper case in messages.
10. Email is not always the best way to communication information, as email messages can be misunderstood and the volume of email messages people receive can be prohibitive to receiving a meaningful reply as a result of email overload.
11. If councillors or clerk require an immediate action, then emails are probably not the best way to communicate.
12. If you suspect there has been a data breach or your email has been hacked you must inform the Parish Clerk immediately.
13. Time should be set aside on a regular basis for 'housekeeping' in order to delete old or unwanted items from mailboxes. This is essential in order to ensure the efficient operation of the email systems.

Reference no	Version	Document title	Created	Issued by	Authorised by
BPCPolicies	1	Email Policy	20.06.2023	Clerk/RFO	Council