

EAST BEDLINGTON

Parish Council



IT POLICY

Date Of Policy	February 2023
Approving Committee	Full Council
Minute Number	
Policy Version	V1
Date of Next Review	V2 March 2026



1. Introduction

This policy sets out how email communication must be managed by East Bedlington Parish Council to ensure professionalism, transparency, and compliance with legal obligations including UK GDPR, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and the Local Government Act 1972.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Councillors
- Employees
- Contractors and volunteers handling Council information

It covers all Council-issued email accounts and any personal devices used for Council business.

3. Use of Council Email Accounts

- All official Council business must be conducted using Council-issued email addresses.
- Personal email accounts must not be used for Council work.
- Email accounts must not be shared.
- Councillors must check their Council email regularly.

4. Professional Standards

- Emails must be respectful, factual, and aligned with the Code of Conduct.
- Emails may be subject to FOI disclosure and should be written accordingly.
- Councillors must avoid political campaigning or personal commentary in Council emails.

5. Security Requirements

- Strong, unique passwords must be used.
- Multi-factor authentication must be enabled where available.
- Sensitive data must not be emailed unless encrypted or otherwise secured.
- Attachments must be scanned for malware before opening.

6. Data Protection

- Personal data must only be shared when necessary and lawful.
- Emails containing personal data must be deleted or archived according to the Council's retention schedule.
- Personal data must not be stored in email inboxes long-term.

7. Prohibited Use

- Sending offensive, discriminatory, or inappropriate content.
- Forwarding chain emails or unverified information.
- Using Council email for personal business or commercial activity.

8. Monitoring and Compliance

- The Council may audit email accounts where legally permitted.
- Breaches may result in disciplinary action or referral to external authorities.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Clerk and policy review group then approved by Full Council.