

Berkswell Parish Council

Information, I.T. and Equipment Policy (April 2016)

1. Introduction

In order for Berkswell Parish Council to carry out its business efficiently it is required to disseminate information between the:

- Council and the Parishioners
- Berkswell Parish Council staff and Councillors

Berkswell Parish Council is also required to store data that it receives from outside bodies including:

- Letters and communication from and to:
 - Residents
 - Warwickshire Association of Local Councils (WALC)
 - Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC)
 - Other external individuals and organisations
- Tender documents
- Invoices
- Reports
- Other documentation

In order to work efficiently and comply with the Freedom of Information Act (2000), Berkswell Parish Council has to be able to search the Council data quickly and easily. It must, therefore, be able to store its data electronically. In order to comply with the Data Protection Act (1998) it is also important that this data is stored securely.

2. Objective

The objective of this policy is to:

- Identify the best method(s) by which Residents, Councillors and Council employees shall receive and disseminate information
- Identify:
 - The data that Berkswell Parish Council is required to store
 - The data and Information that Berkswell Parish Council is required to disseminate
 - Who should receive it
 - When the information should be disseminated
 - The methods of receiving, storing and disseminating the data and information
 - The Information Technology (I.T.), i.e. the hardware and software including the computer hardware, printers, software, and Internet access required to carry out these processes. (For a more detailed description see Appendix B)
 - Any security required to ensure that the data is secure
- Set out guidelines for Council Staff and Council members to adhere to when using the above mentioned I.T. equipment provided.

3. The Policy

3.1. In order for Berkswell Parish Council to carry out its business efficiently it is required to store data and disseminate information to the various interested parties by the range of means shown in Appendix A.

3.2. In order to carry out this policy the Clerk to the Parish Council will require the hardware, software and other items set out in Appendix B. The I.T. provision for other employees and Councillors will be defined separately. The Council will ensure that the budget is set accordingly

3.3. In order to ensure that Council employees and Councillors use the I.T. facilities of Berkswell Parish Council appropriately, guidelines are set out in Appendix C.

3.4. All users of the Berkswell Parish Council I.T. facilities (including employees and Councillors using Council's e-mail) must receive a copy of the I.T. Use Guidelines and sign to say that they have read and understood them

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Appendix B - Information Technology (I.T.) to be provided by Berkswell Parish Council for the use of the Clerk

The following equipment, software and resources will be provided for the Clerk's use on Parish Council business:

Hardware

Computer

Printer/Scanner

External device: External hard drive for physical backups. Back up to be undertaken every working day.

Software and connectivity

Internet Service Provision - including e-mail and virus protection (McAfee Internet Security is currently installed)

Suitable MS Office software package (Microsoft Office 2016 is currently installed)

Suitable Accounting Software (Excel 2016 is currently used)

External Storage for backup: Google Drive is currently used and physical hard drive

Miscellaneous

Ink for printer

Paper and other necessary stationary

I.T. Training as required

Maintenance/repair as required

Website

To be supported externally and maintained by the Clerk

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Appendix C: Guidelines for Berkswell Parish Councillors and Staff when using the Council I.T. facilities

PURPOSE

Berkswell Parish Council provides Information Technology facilities to employees and Councillors (where they request such facilities) for the purpose of conducting Parish business. It is the intent of this document to establish guidelines for the Councillors and employees when using the computing facilities owned by Berkswell Parish Council.

This policy covers the following:

- General I.T. usage
- Software Licensing Policy
- Usage
- Internet usage
- Security

1. THE SCOPE

1.1. This policy applies to all employees of Berkswell Parish Council to all Councillors using the information technology facilities provided by Berkswell Parish Council

1.2. For the purposes of this document the computing facilities, collectively called "Information Technology (I.T.)" include all:

- Computer-related equipment, including desktop personal computers (PCs), portable PCs (laptops), printers
- Software including purchased or licensed business software applications, Berkswell Parish Council written applications, employee or vendor/supplier written applications, computer operating systems, and any other equipment residing on Berkswell Parish Council owned equipment
- Electronic communications equipment including telephones, voice mail, e-mail.
- Internet and website access
- Intellectual property regarding software design e.g. database, website
- Personal data
- Any other data stored on Berkswell Parish Council equipment

2. THE POLICY

2.1. General I.T. usage

- Berkswell Parish Council I.T. facilities are provided to employees and Councillors for the purpose of conducting Parish business and to facilitate the creation, storage and communication of Parish Council documents and data
- All documents and data are to be stored in an orderly way, organised by subject and date, with appropriate titling/keywords/tags to facilitate future retrieval
- Users of the I.T. facilities are required to ensure that appropriate regular maintenance of equipment is undertaken to ensure its effectiveness in use, and to report any defects to the Council for immediate remedy
- Users of the I.T. facilities are required to comply with this policy and accept that they will not indulge in any dangerous, illegal or an activity likely to bring the Council into disrepute
- Berkswell Parish Council reserves the right to amend this policy at any time without prior notice and to take such further actions as may be necessary or appropriate to comply with changes in I.T. related legislation or laws
- The Parish Council reserves the right, without notice, to limit or restrict any individual's use, and to inspect, copy, remove or alter any data, file or system resource which may undermine the authorised use of any computing facility or which is used in violation of Parish Council rules or policies
- The Parish Council reserves the right to change authorisations and passwords to protect its computing facilities
- No personal data or files are to be stored on Council I.T. facilities
- All I.T. rights are suspended when employment is terminated for any reason

2.2. Software Licensing Policy

- All software used by Berkswell Parish Council must be licensed and details kept in an Asset Register
- Users shall only install software of a type and quality approved by the Council, and must observe the conditions of any licence implied by downloading and using the software

2.3. E-mail usage

- Berkswell Parish Council e-mail facilities are provided to employees and Councillors for the purpose of conducting Parish business and to facilitate communication and the movement of documents
- Berkswell Parish Council does permit a limited amount of personal use of these facilities but does not allow the sending of material that may be considered to be offensive and/or obscene or which may be regarded as sexual harassment

2.5. Security

- All Berkswell Parish Council I.T. equipment must be kept in a secure place at all times
- All Councillors and employees must use passwords to protect any Berkswell Parish Council data on their equipment
- Passwords must be secure and (if recorded) kept concealed and disguised
- The Virus checker must be in constant use and updated on a regular basis

- All software, user data, and settings on employee's computers must be backed up in a way that facilitates restoration with minimum loss and inconvenience

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Signed:.....

Name:.....

Date:.....