

**PROTOCOL ON THE
USE OF FACILITIES
FOR COUNCILLORS**

APPENDIX 1

Guidance on the Use of IT by Councillors

1. Purpose of Guidance

- 1.1 The Council provides Councillors with an allowance towards the costs of providing and maintaining equipment, software or other consumables necessary to allow them to access the Committee Management System and selected other systems. This protocol gives advice on use of computer equipment in order to minimise risks to both the Council and to individual Councillors.

2. Security

- 2.1 Under the terms of the Connectivity Scheme, Councillors are responsible for:

- (i) ensuring that their password and secondary authentication equipment remain accessible only by themselves;
- (ii) abiding by the Council's published ICT policies and standards relating to security of systems and data and remote working;
- (iii) meeting the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and any subsequent Act in relation to exempt and confidential information; and
- (iv) adhering to specific user policies for systems they are given access to.

3. Use of Equipment

- 3.1 Councillors should be mindful of the onus placed upon them under 2 above. They should ensure that any material down-loaded via the Intranet is kept securely at any remote location. Councillors should ensure that if the computer is shared, proper arrangements are made to limit access to materials stored by the member, that fall into exempt and confidential categories. Such material will be routinely endorsed "Restricted".

- 3.2 Councillors should not store or download any material which:

- (i) causes the Council to be brought in to disrepute;
- (ii) contravenes the Access to Information or Data Protection Acts or similar legislation;
- (iii) is illegal or inconsistent with the high standards expected of those in public office;
- (iv) is defamatory; or
- (v) breaches the Council's Code of Conduct (including confidentiality).

- 3.3 If a Councillor uses their computer for the preparation of any material of a personal or political nature, he/she must make it clear that such material is published in a private capacity and not by or on behalf of the Council, and that no costs have been incurred by the Council as a consequence of its publication. Similarly, a Councillor should not express views on any matter relating to the Council without expressly indicating that the views are personal and not those of the Authority.
- 3.4 Councillors should be aware that the internet is a completely unregulated medium and they are not protected in any way from viruses etc.
- 3.5 The Council accepts no responsibility for Councillors' use of IT equipment.

For more information see the Member Connectivity Scheme and related ICT Policies.