

Policy for the use of electronic devices and the procedure for emails

April 26

Owner	John Harrison, Town Clerk
Reviewer	Karen Giddings, Corporate Services Manager
Previous versions	N/A
Templates used/adapted	
Approver	Finance & Governance Committee
Date approved	
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Related policies/procedures	
The policy covers	All Hailsham Town Councillors
Revisions	

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If you require any support in understanding or applying this policy, please contact the Corporate Services Manager. In addition, in line with the Equality Act 2010, we will make reasonable adjustments to remove or reduce disadvantages faced by disabled employees, Councillors, or applicants.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 **Assertion 10** is a new requirement for Parish and Town Councils in the UK, introduced in the 2025 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR).

It focuses on digital and data compliance, requiring councils to have proper governance frameworks for their digital presence and to comply with the **UK GDPR** and the **Data Protection Act 2018**.

Key requirements include:

Having a generic email account hosted on a council-owned domain.

Ensuring all websites meet accessibility standards (WCAG 2.2 AA).

Maintaining up to date accessibility statements and documentation as required by the Freedom of Information Act and the Transparency Code.

Under Assertion 10 the Town Council is no longer allowed to send emails to, or receive emails from, Councillors personal email addresses. Emails can only be sent to a Councillor email address

This Policy establishes the guidelines for all Hailsham Town Council Councillors in the use of Council devices and the correct procedure for communication via email

The Council will ensure the devices are adequately insured

2. Procedure for the use of devices

- 2.1 The Town Council will provide all Councillors with a device, for the use of Town Council business only
- 2.2 On receipt of the device, Councillors must sign to confirm receipt of their device. By signing for the device, the Councillor is agreeing to the Terms and Conditions set out in the Device Policy
- 2.3 Devices must only be used for their intended purpose (Council business) and only for the use of the individual Councillor

3. Damaged devices

- 3.1 Councillors must report to the Town Clerk immediately if the device is lost, stolen or damaged
- 3.2 Councillors must take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the device and data. For example, the device must not be left in an unsecured place or public area and care must be taken that the device is not damaged by spillages. If the device or device equipment is lost, stolen or damaged, because the Councillor did not take

reasonable steps to ensure the safety of the device, then the Councillor may be expected to pay for the cost of a replacement, on a like for like basis (full or part charge)

- 3.3 If the device or the device equipment is either faulty or broken due to wear and tear, Hailsham Town Council will fix or replace the device at no cost to the Councillor

4. Paper Copies

- 4.1 Paper copies of minutes, agendas, reports and other Council documents will not be provided to Councillors who have received and accepted devices

5. Procedure for Emails

- 5.1 Councillors emails must only be used for Council business
- 5.2 Councillors must report any suspicious activity in their email account to the Communications Officer and Uniserve
- 5.3 Councillors must not write or send emails that might be defamatory or incur liability to Hailsham Town Council
- 5.4 Councillors must not distribute any inappropriate content or material via email
- 5.5 Councillors must not open attachments from unknown sources
- 5.6 Councillors must not send offensive or abusive emails to others
- 5.7 Any Councillor receiving inappropriate or offensive emails must report the matter to the Town Clerk
- 5.8 The Official Council disclaimer will be set up on all Councillor emails. This must not be removed or changed

6. Training

- 6.1 Councillors may request training on the use of the device. The training will be organised when possible

7. Return of equipment

- 7.1 All equipment remains the property of the Town Council and must be returned by the Councillor when the Councillor's Term of Office is ended
- 7.2 Council elections – all councillors must return their devices as soon as possible before the elections and the devices will be returned to Councillors if re-elected

8. Technical Support

8.1 For any technical support, please contact Uniserve South East Ltd on 01825 873 008