

Canvey Island Town Council Computer and Information Security Policy

The spread of electronic communications and access to multiple sources of information and access through the internet is an increasingly necessary part of work for everyone. This accessibility brings huge advantages, but also brings risks in its wake that need to be taken into account. Recent events in several employment sectors demonstrate that for the sake of the employer and the employee it is now appropriate to put in place a policy relating to the use of information technology mechanisms.

You are responsible for the security and proper use of your computer hardware, software and data. It is important to understand security concepts and be aware of the policies, procedures, rules and guidelines concerning their use and security. These are described in this leaflet with additional material being circulated from time to time in the future. The policy includes computers and fax.

The Council recognises that reasonable use of e-mail facilities to communicate brief personal non offensive messages is acceptable and is a privilege that the Council is prepared to allow, but the amount of time spent must not be abused or it will be stopped. All computers provided by Canvey Island Town Council are the property of Canvey Island Town Council and shall only be used with the council's best interests in mind. As such, they shall **not** be used for the access or distribution of material considered obscene.

The Council recognises that access to professional information by e-mail, fax or through web sites is a necessary requirement of the job of the Clerk to the Council and other staff and is permitted. Staff and users are expected to use technology in a courteous, reasonable and responsible manner.

The following activities are not acceptable and anyone found to be involved in them may face disciplinary action and in certain instances the matter will be considered to be gross misconduct:

- Receiving, sending, or displaying offensive messages or pictures
- Using obscene, threatening or violent language
- Improper use of e-mail and faxes
- Damaging computers, computer systems or computer networks
- Violating copyright laws
- Intentionally wasting limited resources
- Employing the system for commercial purposes, including gambling
- Employing the system for illegal activities

Be careful when addressing email – know who you are sending to and apply common sense before assuming a message is valid (Mail and news can be forged).

The Council encourages electronic communications with local, national and international organisations. The Council cannot control and is not responsible for the accuracy or content of information gathered over the Internet. Security is maintained by appropriate software, internal computer security settings and passwords.

It is a requirement of the Council and the duty of all staff to avoid deliberate use of the Council’s Internet connections and technology for inappropriate personal use. Staff should immediately alert the Town Clerk of any suspect material found stored on any computer or elsewhere on the premises.

The computer equipment and software must be used as installed. Staff and users may not install / uninstall, delete or change anything on Council computers. Any requirements to change anything should be authorised by the Town Clerk. The Council uses a virus-checker on the computers. Staff are forbidden to load disks that have not been virus checked by the system. This includes but is not limited to ipods, USB keys/sticks, pen drives, data vaults, MP3/media players, Flashcards and PDA’s.

Access to chat rooms and gaming are not permitted on Council computers.

THIS POLICY MUST BE COMPLIED WITH AT ALL TIMES.

I have read the above policy and agree to abide by these instructions.
I will discuss any concerns with the Town Clerk.

Signed

Print Name Date/...../2009

(Staff are issued with two copies of this policy, one to retain and one to sign and return to the Town Clerk.)

Note: This policy has been based on advice from the Society of Local Council Clerks and their understanding of the law and practice at the present time.