South Stoke

1. Introduction

South Stoke Council recognises the importance of effective and secure information technology

(IT) and email usage in supporting its business, operations, and communications.

This policy outlines guidelines and responsibilities for the appropriate use of IT resources and email

by council members, employees, volunteers, and contractors.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who use South Stoke Council’s IT resources, including

computers, networks, software, devices, data, and email accounts.

3. Acceptable use of IT resources and email

South Stoke Council’s IT resources and email accounts are to be used for official council-related

activities and tasks. Limited personal use is permitted, provided it does not interfere with work

responsibilities or violate any part of this policy. All users must adhere to ethical standards, respect

copyright and intellectual property rights, and avoid accessing inappropriate or offensive content.

4. Device and software usage

Where possible, authorised devices, software, and applications will be provided by South Stoke

Council’s for work-related tasks.

Unauthorised installation of software on authorised devices, including personal software, is strictly

prohibited due to security concerns.

5. Data management and security

All sensitive and confidential South Stoke Council’s data should be stored and transmitted

securely using approved methods. Regular data backups should be performed to prevent data

loss, and secure data destruction methods should be used when necessary.

6. Network and internet usage

South Stoke Council’s network and internet connections should be used responsibly and

efficiently for official purposes. Downloading and sharing copyrighted material without proper

authorisation is prohibited.

7. Email communication

Email accounts provided by South Stoke Council are for official communication only. Emails

should be professional and respectful in tone. Confidential or sensitive information must not be

sent via email unless it is encrypted.

Be cautious with attachments and links to avoid phishing and malware. Verify the source before

opening any attachments or clicking on links.

8. Password and account security

South Stoke Council’s users are responsible for maintaining the security of their accounts and

passwords. Passwords should be strong and not shared with others. Regular password changes

are encouraged to enhance security.

9. Mobile devices and remote Work

Mobile devices provided by South Stoke Council should be secured with passcodes and/or

biometric authentication. When working remotely, users should follow the same security practices

as if they were in the office.

10. Email monitoring

South Stoke Council’s reserves the right to monitor email communications to ensure compliance

with this policy and relevant laws. Monitoring will be conducted in accordance with the Data

Protection Act and GDPR.

11. Retention and archiving

Emails should be retained and archived in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements.

Regularly review and delete unnecessary emails to maintain an organised inbox.

12. Reporting security incidents

All suspected security breaches or incidents should be reported immediately to the designated IT

point of contact for investigation and resolution. Report any

email-related security incidents or breaches to the IT administrator immediately.

13 Training and awareness

South Stoke Council will provide regular training and resources to educate users about IT security

best practices, privacy concerns, and technology updates. All employees and councillors will receive

regular training on email security and best practices.

14. Compliance and consequences

Breach of this IT and Email Policy may result in the suspension of IT privileges and further

consequences as deemed appropriate.

15. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its relevance and effectiveness. Updates may be

made to address emerging technological trends and security measures.

16. Contacts

For IT-related enquiries or assistance, users can contact the Clerk or Assistant Clerk.

All staff and councillors are responsible for the safety and security of South Stoke Council’s IT and

email systems. By adhering to this IT and Email Policy, South Stoke Council aims to create a secure

and efficient IT environment that supports its mission and goals.

Adopted by Full Council

13th April 2026