Risby Parish Council

Email Policy for Councillors

1. Each councillor will set up an email account specifically for their work as a parish councillor.
2. The first point of contact for the Parish Council is the clerk and it is to the clerk that all correspondence for the Parish Council should be addressed. The clerk should deal with all correspondence following a meeting. All official correspondence should be sent by the clerk in the name of the Parish Council, using Council letter-headed paper or by e-mail.
3. If an email is sent to a parish councillor, it is the Parish Council's policy to forward it to the clerk. The clerk will then respond to the email in line with the Parish Council's protocol for dealing with correspondence.
4. No individual Parish Councillor should communicate directly with companies/individuals with which the Parish Council has a contractual relationship without the approval of the Council.
5. No individual parish councillor should be the sole custodian of any correspondence or information in the name of the Parish Council.
6. Where correspondence from the clerk to a councillor is copied to another person, the addressee should be made aware that a copy is being forwarded to that other person.
7. Emails should not be used to make or influence decisions that should be made at a meeting of the council.
8. The law does not allow councillors to act independently and councillors should make sure that they do not imply that the content of emails represents the opinion or policy of the Council as a whole. As an individual, councillors can think, say and write what they like, but as a councillor their views can only be the view of the whole council.
9. Email is not a secure medium, therefore it is better to avoid disclosing anything personal or confidential.
10. The only person who can author an official email is the clerk who writes on behalf of the Council. Sometimes there will be good practical reasons why official emails should be sent or forwarded from a councillor's account. Normally it will be because a councillor has been asked to do so, but if there is any doubt about a councillor's authority to write or send such an email, advice should be sought from the clerk.
11. When sending an email, users should only "cc" and "bcc" people who really need to be informed. Users should take care when using the "Reply to All" function as this may be inappropriate, especially if a councillor receives an email as a blind recipient (bcc).
12. Email etiquette construes capitalisation as SHOUTING, so it's best to avoid use of upper case in messages.

This document was updated by Risby Parish Council at the meeting on 2nd July 2026.