

Policy Amendments - 11th May 2026

Policy Name	Amendments made - for approval
Standing Orders	No changes
Financial Regulations	No changes
Data Protection	Rewrite
Social Media and Electronic Communication/IT	Rewrite due to Assertion 10 (AGAR) - combines NALC model policy and existing PC policy
Data Retention	No changes
Health and Safety	Rewrite
Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure	Rewrite due to employment law changes in 2026
Child Protection and Safeguarding	No changes
General Privacy Notice	Rewrite
Grant Awarding	Change of \$137 financial limit
Marking the Death of a Senior National Figure	No changes
Pay Policy Statement	No changes
Street Naming	No changes
Lone Worker	Rewrite
Publication Scheme	No changes
Vexatious and Habitual Complainants Policy	No changes
Sponsorship and Advertising Policy	No changes
Memorial Bench Policy	No changes
Environmental Policy	No changes
Financial Reserves Policy	No changes
Financial Investment Strategy	No changes
Honorary Freedom of the Parish	No changes
Equality Policy	Rewrite
Dignity at Work	New
Subject Access Request Procedure	New

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – Social Media, IT & Electronic Communications Policy (2026)

1. Introduction

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council is committed to ensuring responsible, secure, and respectful use of social media, information technology, and electronic communications. This policy sets out the standards and expectations for councillors, staff, contractors and volunteers in line with legal obligations and best practice.

2. Purpose of the Policy

This policy provides a clear framework for the use of social media, IT systems, and electronic communications. It ensures transparency, protects personal data, promotes respectful engagement and supports the effective operation of the Council.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all councillors, staff, contractors and volunteers using Council IT systems, social media platforms, email or personal devices for Council-related work. It also applies to any digital communication that relates to Council business.

4. Official Council Social Media Channels

The Council operates official social media accounts including a website, Facebook page, and X (formerly Twitter). Only the Communications Officer, Clerk or Deputy Clerk may post on these platforms. No other individuals, including councillors, may post on behalf of the Council.

5. Conduct & Content Standards

All Council communications must be civil, respectful and lawful. Content must not be defamatory, offensive, discriminatory, or infringe copyright. Personal data should not be shared unless necessary and lawful. Political advertising is prohibited.

6. Moderation & Removal of Content

The Council reserves the right to remove any content from its platforms that is obscene, racist, defamatory, threatening, libellous or otherwise inappropriate. Repeat offenders may be blocked. Posts alleging policy or legal breaches will be referred to formal channels.

7. Councillor Use of Social Media (personal vs official capacity)

Councillors must not post on official Council channels. When using personal social media, councillors must make clear they are expressing personal views and not speaking on behalf of the Council. They must avoid predetermination and maintain confidentiality.

8. WhatsApp & Messaging Apps (rules, FOI, predetermination)

WhatsApp must not be used for Council decision-making or discussions that risk predetermination. Staff must not be included in councillor WhatsApp groups. WhatsApp content may be subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. It is not an official communication channel and must not be used to instruct staff or conduct Council business.

9. Community Hub / Third-Party Pages

Councillors must not respond to Council-related posts on third-party platforms such as the Hatfield Peverel Community Hub. Abusive or defamatory content should be reported to group administrators or relevant authorities. Officers may post factual updates with comments disabled.

10. Website Content & Responsibilities

Officers manage the Council website.

11. Email & Electronic Communication

Council email accounts are for Council business. Limited personal use is permitted during breaks. Staff must use Council email accounts; councillors may use personal devices but must use Council email addresses for official correspondence. All emails are subject to FOI and data protection laws.

12. IT & Equipment Use (staff vs councillors, limited personal use)

Staff must use Council-issued devices. Reasonable personal use is permitted during breaks. Devices must be used responsibly, kept secure and maintained in good condition. Councillors may use their own devices for all Council work, subject to security requirements.

13. Use of Personal Devices (BYOD – councillors permitted for all work)

Councillors may use personal devices for all Council work. Devices must be protected with passwords or PINs, kept updated and used in accordance with data protection principles. Confidential data must not be stored locally unless encrypted and access-controlled.

14. Remote & Home Working

Staff and councillors working remotely must ensure secure access to Council systems, avoid public Wi-Fi and protect confidential information. Devices must be locked when unattended and data must be stored securely.

15. Cybersecurity & Passwords (NCSC-aligned)

All users must use strong passwords based on the NCSC's 'three random words' guidance. Devices must be kept updated, protected with PINs or passwords, and configured to lock after inactivity. Council data must not be stored on unsecured devices or services.

16. Monitoring (proportionate, lawful)

The Council may monitor IT and communication systems to ensure compliance with this policy. Monitoring will be proportionate, lawful and limited to what is necessary to protect Council systems and data.

17. Data Protection & Confidentiality

All users must comply with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018. Personal data must be processed lawfully, fairly and securely. Confidential information must not be disclosed without authorisation.

18. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to legislative or operational changes. Last reviewed: May 2026.

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – Subject Access Request (SAR) Procedure (2026)

1. Purpose of the procedure

This procedure outlines how Hatfield Peverel Parish Council handles Subject Access Requests (SARs) in compliance with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018.

2. What counts as a SAR

A SAR is a request from an individual to access personal data that the Council holds about them. Requests can be formal or informal and do not need to mention GDPR or SAR explicitly.

3. How SARs can be received

SARs can be received via email, post, or in person. All requests should be forwarded to the Parish Clerk immediately.

4. Identity verification steps

We must verify the identity of the requester before disclosing any personal data. Acceptable forms of ID include a passport, driving licence, or utility bill.

5. Logging and tracking requests

All SARs must be logged in the SAR Register with the date received, requester details, and deadline for response.

6. Timescales and extensions

We must respond within one calendar month. An extension of up to two additional months may be applied for complex requests, with notification to the requester.

7. Searching for information

Relevant systems and records must be searched thoroughly. Staff should cooperate to locate all personal data relating to the requester.

8. Redaction and exemptions

Before disclosure, data must be reviewed for third-party information or exemptions (e.g., legal privilege, safeguarding). Redactions must be clearly marked.

9. Responding to the requester

Responses must include a copy of the personal data, the purposes of processing, data sources, recipients, retention periods, and information about rights.

10. Refusing a request (with lawful reasons)

Requests may be refused if they are manifestly unfounded or excessive. The requester must be informed of the refusal and their right to complain to the ICO.

11. Record-keeping requirements

A record of all SARs, including responses and decisions, must be maintained securely for audit purposes.

12. Templates: acknowledgement, clarification request, response letter

Template Acknowledgement:

'Thank you for your request. We will respond within one month.'

Template Clarification:

'To help us locate your data, please clarify the nature of your request.'

Template Response:

'Please find enclosed the personal data we hold about you, along with an explanation of how it is used.'

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – Privacy Notice (2026)

1. Who we are

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council is a local authority serving the residents of Hatfield Peverel. We are committed to protecting your personal data and respecting your privacy in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018.

2. The data we collect

We may collect personal data such as your name, address, email address, telephone number and any other information you provide to us in the course of our duties.

3. Why we collect your data (purposes)

We collect your data to provide services, respond to enquiries, manage council operations, maintain records and comply with our legal obligations.

4. Lawful bases for processing

We process your personal data under one or more of the following lawful bases: your consent, to fulfil a contract, to comply with a legal obligation, to protect vital interests, to perform a task in the public interest or for our legitimate interests.

5. Who we share data with

We may share your data with government bodies, service providers, or other third parties where necessary and lawful. We ensure appropriate safeguards are in place.

6. How long we keep data

We retain personal data only for as long as necessary to fulfil the purposes for which it was collected, in accordance with our Data Retention Policy.

7. Your data rights

You have the right to access your data, correct inaccuracies, request erasure, restrict or object to processing and data portability. You also have rights related to automated decision-making.

8. How to exercise your rights

To exercise your rights, please contact us using the details below. We may need to verify your identity before processing your request.

9. How to complain (ICO details)

If you are unhappy with how we handle your data, you can contact the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO):

Website: www.ico.org.uk

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Address: Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF

10. Contact details for the Parish Council

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council

Email: parishclerk@hatfieldpeverelpc.com

Address: Village Hall, Maldon Road, Hatfield Peverel CM3 2HP

Phone: 01245 382865

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – Lone Working Policy (2026)

1. Introduction

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council is committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of all employees, contractors, volunteers, and charity staff. This Lone Working Policy outlines the Council's approach to managing the risks associated with lone working, in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Lone Working Guidance (2024).

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all lone working activities are identified, assessed, and managed appropriately, and that all individuals working alone are supported and protected from avoidable risk.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, and charity staff working on behalf of Hatfield Peverel Parish Council, including those employed by the Council in its role as sole trustee of the Village Hall charity.

4. Definition of Lone Working

Lone working refers to situations where individuals work by themselves without close or direct supervision. This includes working alone in the Parish Council office, from home, in the community, or at the Village Hall.

5. Staffing Context

The Council employs a range of part-time staff with varying working patterns:

- Two part-time officers work in the Parish Council office at set hours. These staff typically overlap, minimising lone working.
- One part-time officer works from home.
- Four part-time waste clearance staff work flexible hours, often alone, and are equipped with mobile phones and PPE.

As sole trustee of the Village Hall charity, the Council also oversees:

- One part-time caretaker working on-site, often alone.
- One part-time worker who splits time between home and the Village Hall.
- One part-time bookings officer working from home.

6. Responsibilities

Council: Ensure appropriate lone working policies and procedures are in place and reviewed regularly.

Parish Clerk: Implement this policy, conduct and review risk assessments, and ensure staff are trained and supported.

Employees/Contractors/Volunteers: Follow procedures, report concerns, and take reasonable care of their own safety.

7. Risk Assessment Requirements

All lone working roles must be assessed for risk. Specific risk assessments will be conducted for:

- Waste clearance activities (including manual handling, environmental hazards and public interaction).
- Village Hall duties (including maintenance and working at height).

Risk assessments will be reviewed annually or when significant changes occur.

8. Lone Working Procedures

- Office-based staff: Lone working is minimal due to set hours and overlapping shifts. Staff must ensure doors are secure and maintain phone access.
- Home-based staff: Must ensure a safe working environment and remain contactable during working hours.
- Waste-clearance staff: Must carry mobile phones and PPE at all times. They are expected to conduct dynamic risk assessments before commencing work.
- Village Hall staff: Must follow site-specific safety procedures, including safe locking/unlocking, reporting hazards, and avoiding high-risk tasks when alone.

9. Communication Expectations

A formal check-in system is not required. Instead:

- All lone workers must be reasonably contactable during working hours.
- Staff should notify the Clerk or designated contact of any changes to expected work patterns.

- Failure to respond to contact attempts within a reasonable timeframe may trigger an escalation procedure.
- In emergencies, staff must contact emergency services and notify the Council as soon as safe to do so.

10. Personal Safety Measures

Lone workers should:

- Be aware of their surroundings.
- Avoid unnecessary risks.
- Trust their instincts and leave situations where they feel unsafe.
- Carry a charged mobile phone at all times.

11. Equipment & PPE

All lone workers will be provided with appropriate equipment and PPE as identified in risk assessments. This includes mobile phones, high-visibility clothing, gloves and other safety gear. Equipment will be maintained and replaced as needed.

12. Incident Reporting & Emergency Procedures

All incidents, near misses, or safety concerns must be reported to the Parish Clerk as soon as possible. In an emergency, individuals should contact emergency services immediately and inform the Council once safe.

13. Training & Support

All lone workers will receive training on this policy, risk awareness, emergency procedures, and personal safety. Support will be provided to any individual affected by a lone working incident.

14. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following any significant incident, staffing change, or legislative update. Feedback from staff will be considered in future revisions.

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – Grievance & Disciplinary Policy (Updated 2026)

1. Introduction

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council is committed to promoting a positive working environment where staff are treated fairly, with dignity and respect. This policy outlines the procedures for handling grievances and disciplinary matters in accordance with the Employment Rights Act 1996, Employment Relations Act 1999, and the ACAS Code of Practice (2024).

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear and fair framework for resolving workplace issues, whether raised by an employee as a grievance or by the Council as a disciplinary matter.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Hatfield Peverel Parish Council. It does not apply to councillors, volunteers, or contractors.

4. Key Principles

- All matters will be handled fairly, promptly, and consistently.
- The principles of natural justice will be upheld.
- Confidentiality will be maintained throughout.
- Employees have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague at any formal hearing.

5. Informal Resolution & Mediation

Where appropriate, issues should be resolved informally through discussion. Mediation may be offered as a voluntary and confidential process to help resolve disputes before formal procedures are initiated.

6. Formal Grievance Procedure (step-by-step)

Step 1: Employee submits a written grievance to the Clerk or Chairman.

Step 2: Acknowledgement and appointment of a Grievance Panel.

Step 3: Grievance hearing arranged within 10 working days.

Step 4: Decision communicated in writing within 5 working days.

Step 5: Right of appeal within 10 working days of decision.

7. Grievance Hearings & Appeals

Grievance hearings will be conducted by a panel not previously involved. Appeals will be heard by an Appeals Panel, whose decision is final.

8. Formal Disciplinary Procedure (step-by-step)

Step 1: Allegation is raised and preliminary review conducted.

Step 2: Formal investigation initiated.

Step 3: If warranted, a disciplinary hearing is arranged with written notice.

Step 4: Hearing conducted by Disciplinary Panel.

Step 5: Outcome and any sanctions communicated in writing.

Step 6: Right of appeal within 10 working days.

9. Investigation Stage

An impartial investigator will gather facts and evidence. The employee will be informed of the allegations and given an opportunity to respond.

10. Disciplinary Hearings

The employee will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the hearing, including details of the allegations and evidence. They may be accompanied by a representative.

11. Outcomes & Sanctions

- No action
- Informal warning
- First written warning (valid for 12 months)
- Final written warning (valid for 12 months)
- Dismissal (with or without notice depending on severity)

12. Gross Misconduct

Examples include:

- Theft or fraud
- Physical violence or threats
- Serious bullying or harassment
- Deliberate damage to property
- Serious misuse of Council property or systems
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol at work
- Serious breach of health and safety rules
- Gross insubordination

13. Right of Appeal

Employees have the right to appeal any formal disciplinary or grievance decision. Appeals must be submitted in writing within 10 working days. An Appeals Panel will hear the appeal and its decision is final.

14. Record-Keeping & Data Protection

Records of all grievance and disciplinary matters will be kept securely and in accordance with the Council's Data Protection Policy. Records will be retained only as long as necessary.

15. Review of Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation or best practice. Last reviewed: May 2026.

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – Data Protection Policy (Updated 2026)

1. Introduction

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council ("the Council") is committed to protecting the rights and freedoms of individuals in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. This policy outlines how the Council collects, uses, stores and protects personal data.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all personal data processed by the Council, including data relating to residents, employees, contractors, volunteers, and other individuals who interact with the Council.

3. Definitions

- **Personal Data**: Any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person.
- **Special Category Data**: Sensitive personal data including racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious beliefs, health data, etc.
- **Processing**: Any operation performed on personal data, including collection, storage, use, and deletion.
- **Data Subject**: An individual whose personal data is processed.
- **Data Controller**: The organisation that determines the purposes and means of processing personal data.
- **Data Processor**: A third party that processes personal data on behalf of the controller.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Council is the Data Controller and is responsible for ensuring compliance with data protection laws. All staff and councillors must adhere to this policy and undertake relevant training.

5. Lawful Bases for Processing

The Council processes personal data under one or more of the lawful bases defined in Article 6 of the UK GDPR, including:

- Consent
- Contractual necessity
- Legal obligation
- Vital interests
- Public task
- Legitimate interests (where applicable)

6. Data Protection Principles (UK GDPR Article 5)

The Council adheres to the following principles:

- Lawfulness, fairness, and transparency
- Purpose limitation
- Data minimisation
- Accuracy
- Storage limitation
- Integrity and confidentiality
- Accountability

7. Data Subject Rights

Data subjects have the following rights:

- Right to be informed
- Right of access
- Right to rectification
- Right to erasure
- Right to restrict processing
- Right to data portability
- Right to object
- Rights related to automated decision-making and profiling

8. Consent

Consent must be freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous. The Council will ensure that consent is obtained where required and that individuals can withdraw consent at any time.

9. Data Collection and Use

The Council collects personal data only for specified, explicit and legitimate purposes. Individuals will be informed of the purpose at the time of collection. Data will be used only for the stated purposes and retained only as long as necessary.

10. Data Sharing and Disclosure

Personal data may be shared with third parties only where lawful and necessary. The Council will ensure appropriate data sharing agreements are in place and that data subjects are informed of such disclosures unless legally exempted.

11. Data Security

The Council implements appropriate technical and organisational measures to ensure data security, including:

- Secure storage systems
- Access controls
- Staff training
- Regular audits and reviews

12. Data Retention and Disposal

Personal data will be retained only as long as necessary for the purpose for which it was collected. The Council follows its Data Retention Policy and ensures secure disposal of data when no longer required.

13. Data Breaches

In the event of a personal data breach, the Council will assess the risk to individuals and report to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) within 72 hours if required. Affected individuals will be informed where there is a high risk to their rights and freedoms.

14. Subject Access Requests (SARs)

Individuals have the right to access their personal data. Requests must be responded to within one month. The Council will verify the identity of the requester before disclosing any information.

15. Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIAs)

DPIAs will be conducted for high-risk processing activities to assess and mitigate potential risks to data subjects.

16. International Transfers

Personal data will not be transferred outside the UK unless appropriate safeguards are in place in accordance with UK GDPR requirements.

17. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or when there are significant changes to data protection legislation or Council practices. Last reviewed: May 2026.

18. Glossary

- **ICO**: Information Commissioner's Office – the UK's independent authority for data protection.
- **UK GDPR**: United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation.
- **SAR**: Subject Access Request.
- **DPIA**: Data Protection Impact Assessment.

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – Dignity at Work Policy (2026)

1. Introduction

Hatfield Peverel Parish Council is committed to creating a working environment where all employees are treated with dignity and respect. We recognise our duty to provide a workplace free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, and victimisation. This policy sets out our approach to promoting dignity at work in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and ACAS guidance (2024).

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to prevent and address all forms of bullying, harassment, and other unacceptable behaviour in the workplace. It aims to ensure that all employees feel safe, respected, and supported in their roles.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, councillors, contractors, volunteers, and others working on behalf of Hatfield Peverel Parish Council. It covers behaviour in the workplace and in any work-related setting outside the workplace, such as meetings, events, or social functions.

4. Definitions

- **Bullying:** Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour that undermines, humiliates or injures the recipient.
- **Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to a protected characteristic that violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.
- **Victimisation:** Treating someone unfairly because they have made or supported a complaint or raised a grievance.
- **Unacceptable Behaviour:** Any behaviour that is unreasonable, inappropriate, or offensive, whether intentional or not.

5. Standards of Behaviour Expected

All individuals are expected to treat others with courtesy, dignity, and respect. Discriminatory, offensive, or abusive behaviour will not be tolerated. Professional conduct must be maintained at all times.

6. Responsibilities of the Council

The Council is responsible for promoting a culture of dignity and respect, ensuring that this policy is implemented, and taking appropriate action when breaches occur. The Council will provide training and support to staff and councillors.

7. Responsibilities of Employees

Employees are expected to uphold the principles of this policy, treat others respectfully, and report any concerns promptly. They should cooperate fully with investigations and maintain confidentiality.

8. Reporting Concerns (Informal and Formal Routes)

Employees are encouraged to raise concerns informally with the individual involved or their line manager. If informal resolution is not possible or appropriate, a formal complaint should be submitted in writing to the Clerk or Chairman. All complaints will be taken seriously and handled sensitively.

9. Investigation Process

Formal complaints will be investigated promptly and impartially. The investigator will gather evidence, interview relevant parties, and produce a report. Both the complainant and the subject of the complaint will have the opportunity to present their views.

10. Outcomes and Actions

Following the investigation, appropriate action will be taken, which may include mediation, training, disciplinary action, or other measures. The outcome will be communicated in writing to the parties involved.

11. Malicious or Vexatious Complaints

While all complaints will be taken seriously, malicious or knowingly false complaints may result in disciplinary action against the complainant.

12. Support for Employees

The Council is committed to supporting employees affected by bullying or harassment. Support may include access to counselling, adjustments to working arrangements, or mediation services.

13. Confidentiality

All complaints and investigations will be handled with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis.

14. Monitoring & Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or in response to changes in legislation or best practice. Feedback from employees will be considered in future updates.