

(I) Internet, Intranet and E-mail Code of Practice

DOUGLAS BOROUGH COUNCIL



INTRODUCTION

With increasing use of the Internet and electronic communications, the Borough of Douglas is keen to take advantage of the benefits of the technology in the provision of effective services. Council officers will in future have ready access to the technology and become proficient in its use. It is the responsibility of senior and line managers to sensibly implement and monitor this policy.

There is a need for safeguards to protect the wider interests of the Council. In particular it seeks to prevent:

- Overloading of the systems and networks
- Exposure to viruses
- Damage to the Council's reputation
- Use of Council facilities in a way which would be offensive
- Expensive and inefficient use of resources

Internet, Intranet and E-mail Code of Practice

(To be studied and acknowledged by officers prior to connections being provided)

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1. USE OF THE INTRANET/ MICROSOFT OUTLOOK

It is part of the Council's overall ICT strategy for the future that the INTRANET used through the medium of the MICROSOFT OUTLOOK programme should become the prime means of internal communication and progressively the method whereby diaries are organised to best effect. To improve access to information and to reduce the amount of paper based information use of the information held on the council's intranet is encouraged wherever possible.

Both for efficient, secure use and to ensure that the same methods are used by all staff it is necessary to clearly establish rules and procedures for its use.

To ensure staff can be contacted quickly and with minimum disruption Microsoft outlook should be open and available on all terminals during working hours.

During periods of absence the automatic reply back notifying the originator of a message that the recipient is absent together with the anticipated return time/date should be activated.

As a discipline staff should read and respond to internal E-mails requiring a response either as they arrive or at frequent intervals during the working day.

It is the intention that the Outlook diary system should progressively take over as the universal system for organising diaries and meetings, staff should be familiar with, and respond to the diary system.

A central filing system will be devised and introduced and documents and correspondence of common interest and relevance to all departments should be filled in the central general file rather than individuals and departments each holding independent files not generally available but all on the same subject.

2. ACCESS BY THIRD PARTIES

Access by third parties to the Councils intranet will only be permitted when all of the following apply:

- there is a legitimate business need for the third party to have access to the information;
- the 'information owner' authorises the access;
- access is limited to the specific information needed to fulfil the business need.

3. USE OF THE INTERNET

Full use of the internet will only be granted to those officers who require it on a regular basis other staff will be allowed access as required. Accessing business-related information on the Internet is potentially of great benefit to the Council. Using the Internet to research information, where there is a clear business benefit, is supported. However, the quality of information on the Internet may vary according to its source and users should be wary of relying upon its accuracy.

4. IMPROPER USE OF THE INTERNET

When accessing the Internet from Council equipment, individuals must ensure that the service is not used improperly. The following are deemed to be improper use:

- accessing pornographic material;
- accessing material that could offend others because of its racist or political nature;
- conducting personal business transactions via the Internet e.g. buying and selling, advertising, personal banking;
- contributing to Internet newsgroups without being authorised to do so;
- playing games;
- anything which may bring the Council or individuals into disrepute;
- Browsing for personal interest.

Where possible, filters will be employed to deny access to known Internet sites which facilitate 'improper uses as defined above. Exceptions to the policy will only be authorised by Chief Officers where there is a justifiable business reason.

NOTE: Internet servers have the ability to record any access in a log detailing the originator. It should be noted that all access to the Internet from the Intranet may be intercepted, monitored and analysed by the Council.

5. E-MAIL SERVICES

Your Email address will be:

Your initial surname @douglas.gov.im

For example "droberts@douglas.gov.im"

To reduce the spread of computer viruses any word documents sent as E-mail attachments must be in rich text format (rtf).

6. IMPROPER USE OF COUNCIL E-MAIL SERVICES

E-mail services must not be used in any way likely to bring the Council or its Members into disrepute. The following are not permitted:

- making personal comment outside the Council;
- making any defamatory/derogatory comments about companies or individuals, either within or outside the Council, which may result in legal action against or embarrassment to the Council;
- producing, introducing or forwarding chain letters;
- registering a Council E-mail account on an external mailing list for receipt of E-mail (other than for business purposes);
- using distribution lists from the global address list for personal items of mail;
- conducting personal business transactions via E-mail e.g. selling, advertising;
- sending material that could offend others because of its nature e.g. offensive, racist or political;
- Committing the council without ensuring proper prior authority exists in accordance with standing orders and financial regulations.

7. CONTRIBUTIONS TO NEWS GROUPS

People with access to the Internet from the Council Intranet, shall only contribute to Internet newsgroups for strictly work related purposes with the prior authorisation of their senior manager. All such contributions must contain a disclaimer as follows: 'This post represents the views of the author and does not necessarily accurately represent the views of the Borough Council.'

IMPROPER CONTRIBUTIONS

The Council considers any of the following to be improper use of Internet newsgroups:

- personal non-work related contributions;
- any comments which may bring the Council into disrepute;

- anything which may be offensive to others e.g. racist, political, pornographic etc.

8. DOWNLOADING SOFTWARE

Downloading software from the Internet or accessing service for a business use for which a subscription is payable must be authorised by the Assistant Chief Officer (Digital & Information). Extreme caution must be exercised to avoid the importation of virus.

9. INSPECTION AND AUDIT

The Council, directly and through its auditors, reserves the right to inspect any files to ensure compliance with the Policy. Access to Internet sites may be logged and the data used by the Council and its managers for period reviews of access authorisation and usage.

If misuse is suspected the matter should be reported immediately to the departmental Chief Officer or to the Assistant Chief Officer (Digital & Information), all available records, externally saved or extracted files, printouts, error or advice messages must be securely retained as evidence. **Misuse may result in disciplinary action.**

I ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT OF THE INTERNET, INTRANET AND E-MAIL CODE OF PRACTICE
I AM FAMILIAR WITH ITS CONTENTS AND REQUEST ACCESS TO:

1. Intranet

2. E-Mail

3. Internet

SIGNED _____

NAME (PRINT) _____

DATE _____