EMAIL ETIQUETTE POLICY

Document Purpose

This document describes Knapton Parish Council's policy for email etiquette. It is based on industry best practice and guidance and must be followed by all Knapton Village email users.

1. **When to use email**
   a. Email tends to be used for a variety of reasons and can be as informal as arranging refreshments for a meeting to communicating a formal business decision.
   b. Email is not always the best way to communicate information as email messages can often be misunderstood and the volume of email messages people receive can be prohibitive to receiving a meaningful reply as a result of email overload.
   c. All staff that use email have the responsibility of deciding whether email is the most appropriate form of communication. Staff should consider the following factors before sending an email:

The Subject

Some subjects are too sensitive to be sent via email, e.g. employee information. Careful consideration needs to be given as it is the responsibility of the sender to decide whether or not email is the most appropriate vehicle for communication in these circumstances

Speed of Transmission

Where information is needed to be communicated urgently and the recipient is expecting it then this is fine, however, if an urgent message needs to be sent and the recipient(s) is/are not expecting anything, then it is probably better to use the phone

Speed of Response

There is no guarantee that an email will be read as soon as it is sent; if the email requires immediate action then this is probably not the best way to communicate

Number of Recipients

Do not necessarily use "reply all" as not everyone in the previous communication necessarily needs to receive it

2. **Writing emails**
   a. When writing an email, it is important to compose the message with care and clarity, particularly as emails form part of the council record under the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts
   b. Always ensure that your Recipient List is appropriate to avoid causing a nuisance to other colleagues.
   c. Always complete the Subject Line with a clear description of what the email is about as recipients cannot always distinguish between what they need to look at immediately and what can wait. For example, parish council minutes January 2020 for approval
   d. Don't be a novelist. Ensure language is simple, unambiguous and to the point.
   e. Avoid using abbreviations and emoticons - don't trade clarity for confusion
   f. Be polite. Terseness can be misinterpreted. Please and Thank you go a long way
   g. Be patient. Not everyone can respond immediately or necessarily have the confidence to communicate using email
   h. Be careful when replying to an email message with many recipients. Do you really want everyone to see your reply?
   i. Never reply in anger. Take a break or sleep on it before responding
   j. Never write your email in CAPITAL LETTERS. This implies shouting

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a. Never conduct an argument on email or "flame" anyone
b. Always, always read email before sending it and consider the resultant reaction

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Acceptance
This policy was adopted by full council on – 2nd June 2020

This policy will be reviewed by full council on - 4th May 2021
(unless the law or the council's financial activities requires that this is done sooner)

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