



**Policy Document
PO 28**

Internet Usage Policy

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07/07 2010	SISCO	1.3	Rename policy Internet usage policy, remove wording acceptable. Change review date and version number. Remove section 6.9 acceptable statement and signature. Section 8, Governance delete Chief Information officer insert Senior Information Risk Officer, Delete Data officer insert Audit and Information Assurance Manager
02/11/10	SISCO	1.4	Insert Officers of the County Council are required to comply with this policy in respect of its provisions and ethos. Failure to do so may be regarded as a breach of the Officers' Code of Conduct and could result in action being taken against the member of staff concerned.
27/09/11	SISCO	1.5	Review of scope statement and amendment to cover including casual, agency workers, secondees, contractors and contractual third parties
15/11/11	SISCO	1.6	Section 5 para 4 change Human Rights Act to Human Rights Act 1998. Insert Data Protection Act 1998 and Telecommunications (Unlawful Business Practice) Interception of Communications Regulations 2000. Sections 6.6 remove ICT Access Policy.
02/05/2012	SISCO	1.7	Review due to PWC Audit
09/09/2013	SISCO	1.8	CIGG review. Changes to job titles and directorates
30/04/2014	ISCO	1.9	Changes to incorporate PSN and Technology & Change

Document Approvals

This document requires the following approvals:

Sponsor Approval	Name	Date
Senior Information Risk Officer		
Assistant Director Technology and Change		24 09 2009
Audit and Information Assurance Manager		23 09 2009

Document Distribution

This document will be distributed to:

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Contents

1	Policy Statement	4
2	Purpose	4
3	Scope	4
4	Definition	4
5	Risks	4
6	Applying the Policy	5
6.1	What is the Purpose of Providing the Internet Service?	5
6.2	What You Should Use Your Council Internet Account For	5
6.3	Personal Use of the Council's Internet Service	5
6.4	Internet Account Management, Security and Monitoring	6
6.5	Things You Must Not Do	6
6.6	Your Responsibilities	7
6.7	Line Manager's Responsibilities	8
6.8	Whom Should I Ask if I Have Any Questions?	8
7	Policy Compliance	8
8	Policy Governance	8
9	Review and Revision	8
10	References	8
11	Key Messages	9
12	Appendix 1	10

1 Policy Statement

North Yorkshire County Council will ensure all users of Council provided internet facilities are aware of the acceptable use of such facilities. This document explains the policy and procedure that governs use of the *Internet* and *World Wide Web* within the Council. Compliance with this policy will ensure that access to the Internet will be available and responsive to the business needs of the Council.

2 Purpose

This policy document tells you how you should use your Council Internet facility. It outlines your personal responsibilities and informs what you must and must not do.

The Internet facility is made available for the business purposes of the Council. A reasonable amount of personal use is permitted in accordance with the statements contained within this Policy.

It is recognised that it is impossible to define precise rules covering all Internet activities available and adherence should be undertaken within the spirit of the policy to ensure productive use of the facility is made. Use of the Internet is encouraged in the execution of day-to-day business to the extent that it supports the council's objectives. Users must not use the Internet within the council in the same way they do at home—all users must respect the council's standards of business conduct whenever the Internet is used.

3 Scope

This policy applies to, but is not, limited to NYCC councillors, employees (including casual, agency workers, secondees, contractors and contractual third parties) who have access to the Council's Internet service and/or ICT equipment

4 Definition

This Internet Acceptable Usage Policy should be applied at all times whenever using the Council provided Internet facility. This includes access via any access device including a desktop computer or a Smartphone device.

4.1 DEFINITIONS/GLOSSARY

The *Internet* is a system of computer networks that are located all over the world, linked together to allow computers on these networks to communicate and exchange information. The Internet is not synonymous with the *World Wide Web*

A *web browser* is a software application programme that provides a way to look at and interact with all the information on the *World Wide Web*.

A *website* (web site or simply, site) is a set of interconnected web pages, usually including a homepage, and prepared and maintained as a collection of information by a person, group, or organisation.

The *World Wide Web* (www or simply, the Web) is a way of exchanging information between computers on the *Internet*, tying them together into a vast collection of interactive multimedia resources. The World Wide Web is not synonymous with the *Internet*.

5 Risks

North Yorkshire County Council recognises that there are risks associated with users accessing and handling information in order to conduct official Council business.

This policy aims to mitigate the following risks:

- Inappropriate use of the Internet Facility
- Legal Issues

- Data and Information protection issues

Non-compliance with this policy could have a significant effect on the efficient operation of the Council and may result in financial loss and an inability to provide necessary services to our customers. The council has a legal responsibility with regard to Internet access control and monitoring. The council must comply with the following legal statutes:

Human Rights Act 1998

Sexual Offences Act 2003

EU Privacy and Monitoring Directive 2000

Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000

Data Protection Act 1998

Telecommunications (Unlawful Business Practice) Interception of Communications Regulations 2000

6 Applying the Policy

6.1 What is the Purpose of Providing the Internet Service?

The Internet service is primarily provided to give Council employees and Councillors:

- Access to information that is pertinent to fulfilling the Council's business obligations.
- The capability to post updates to Council owned and/or maintained web sites.
- An electronic commerce facility.

6.2 What You Should Use Your Council Internet Access For

Your Council Internet access should be used in accordance with this policy to access anything in pursuance of your work including:

- Access to and/or provision of information.
- Research.
- Electronic commerce (e.g. purchasing authorised equipment for the Council).

6.3 Personal Use of the Council's Internet Service

The Council permits limited personal use of the Internet in your own time (for example during your lunch-break), however the internet must not be used for personal use during 'paid hours' and should not

Consume a significant amount of resources, including staff time

Interfere with staff productivity or performance

Involve significant costs to the council

Detrimentially affect the council's business interests, reputation, or cause loss of goodwill to the council

Business use of the Internet takes precedence over personal use at all times

The Council is not, however, responsible for any personal transactions you enter into - for example in respect of the quality, delivery or loss of items ordered. You must accept responsibility for, and keep the Council protected against, any claims, damages, losses or the like which might arise from your transaction - for example in relation to payment for the items or any personal injury or damage to property they might cause.

If you purchase personal goods or services via the Council's Internet service you are responsible for ensuring that the information you provide shows that the transaction is being entered into by you personally and not on behalf of the Council.

You should ensure that personal goods and services purchased are not delivered to Council property. Rather, they should be delivered to your home or other personal address.

If you are in any doubt about how you may make personal use of the Council's Internet Service you are advised not to do so. Further information is available from Technology and Change.

All personal usage must be in accordance with this policy. Your computer and any data held on it are the property of North Yorkshire County Council and may be accessed at any time by the Council to ensure compliance with all its statutory, regulatory and internal policy requirements.

6.4 Internet Account Management, Security and Monitoring

Access to the Internet is granted by your Director who will authorise employees to use the Internet where it is an integral part of their duties and responsibilities. There are different levels of access to the Internet, the majority of staff will be given default access, bands 0-2. Please refer to Appendix 1 for details of the Council's Internet Access Bands.

Additional access can be requested by completing an Internet Access Form and submitting it via your Client team. A copy of the Internet Access Form is available on the intranet. The Directors will annually review the employees with Internet Access higher than default to make sure it is still appropriate for their duties and responsibilities.

Those granted access to the internet do so by logging on to the Council's network with their computer username and password. Technology and Change is responsible for the technical management of this account.

You are responsible for the security provided by your computer account username and password. Only you should know your username and password and you should be the only person who uses your Internet account.

The provision of Internet access is owned by the Council and all access is recorded, logged and interrogated for the purposes of resource management and compliance to current policies and legislation: To help enforce this policy, the council has invested in technology to filter and monitor the usage of its Internet connection. The Internet filtering and monitoring system is used to:

- Monitor, analyse, and track all access to the Internet within the council
- Categorise websites based on content
- Allow or block access to websites by category, keyword, bandwidth, and file type
- Reduce legal liability associated with Internet misuse
- Produce logs and reports (for example, to list website names and time spent on them by each user, track attempts to visit blocked sites, track usage trends etc and make these available for line managers and auditors)

Users who fail to follow this policy risk disciplinary action. The council acknowledges its obligation to report any illegal activities to the appropriate authorities

Access to the Internet via the council's network is only possible using computers issued by the council—assembled using standardised hardware and software and connected to the council's computer network. The *web browser* used by the council is Microsoft Internet Explorer®.

6.5 Things You Must Not Do

Access to the following categories of websites is currently blocked using URL filtering:

- Illegal.
- Pornographic.
- Violence.
- Hate and discrimination.
- Offensive.
- Weapons.
- Hacking.
- Web chat.
- Gambling.
- Dating.
- Radio stations.

- Games.
- Streaming media
- E-Bay
- YouTube
- Social networking sites

However if you have a legitimate business reason to access the above categories you can request access by completing an Internet Access Form (See section 6.4).

Except where it is strictly and necessarily required for your work, for example IT audit activity or other investigation, you must **not** use your Internet account to:

- Create, download, upload, display or access knowingly, sites that contain pornography or other “unsuitable” material that might be deemed illegal, obscene or offensive.
- Subscribe to, enter or use peer-to-peer networks or install software that allows sharing of music, video or image files.
- Subscribe to, enter or utilise real time chat facilities such as chat rooms, text messenger or pager programs.
- Subscribe to, enter or use online gaming or betting sites.
- Subscribe to or enter “money making” sites or enter or use “money making” programs.
- Subscribe to bulletin boards, newsgroups or any other Internet service of any kind without permission from their Manager.
- Run a private business.
- Download any software that does not comply with the Council’s Software Policy, this includes shareware, games, screensavers, and ‘upgrade patches’ available for ‘free’ on the Internet. Any person could be liable for breaches of copyright where it is directly attributable to their actions. Monitoring procedures built into the Standard Desktop would also quickly identify any unauthorised equipment use.
- Modems must not be attached/installed to networked or stand-alone machines without prior approval from Technology and Change; modems may only be attached/installed by Technology and Change Services. Monitoring procedures built into the Standard Desktop would also identify any unauthorised equipment use.

The above list gives examples of “*unsuitable*” usage but is neither exclusive nor exhaustive. “*Unsuitable*” material would include data, images, audio files or video files the transmission of which is illegal under British law, and, material that is against the rules, essence and spirit of this and other Council policies. If anyone deliberately visits or downloads material from Web Sites containing illegal or unacceptable material they will be dealt with under the Council’s disciplinary procedure. The Police may also be notified.

6.6 Your Responsibilities

It is your responsibility to:

- Familiarise yourself with the detail, essence and spirit of this policy before using the Internet facility provided for your work.
- Assess any risks associated with Internet usage and ensure that the Internet is the most appropriate mechanism to use.
- Know that you may only use the Council’s Internet facility within the terms described herein.
- Read and abide by the following related policies that are available on the intranet:
 - Email Policy.
 - Software Policy.
 - Remote Working Policy.

Unless informed otherwise, the council assumes that all users understand this policy and accept personal responsibility for adhering to its requirements

6.7 Line Manager’s Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of Line Managers to ensure that the use of the Internet facility:

- Within an employees work time is relevant to and appropriate to the Council’s business and within the context of the users responsibilities.
- Within an employees own time is subject to the rules contained within this document.

6.8 Whom Should I Ask if I Have Any Questions?

In the first instance you should refer questions about this policy to your line manager who will refer you to the Information Security Officer if appropriate. Councillors should refer questions to the Information Security Officer.

You should refer technical queries about the Council’s Internet service to the Technology and Change Service Desk.

7 Policy Compliance

Officers of the County Council are required to comply with this policy in respect of its provisions and ethos. Failure to do so may be regarded as a breach of the Officers’ Code of Conduct and could result in action being taken against the member of staff concerned.

If you do not understand the implications of this policy or how it may apply to you, seek advice from the Information Security Officer.

8 Policy Governance

The following table identifies who within North Yorkshire County Council is Accountable, Responsible, Informed or Consulted with regards to this policy. The following definitions apply:

- **Responsible** – the person(s) responsible for developing and implementing the policy.
- **Accountable** – the person who has ultimate accountability and authority for the policy.
- **Consulted** – the person(s) or groups to be consulted prior to final policy implementation or amendment.
- **Informed** – the person(s) or groups to be informed after policy implementation or amendment.

Responsible	Information Security Officer
Accountable	Senior Information Risk Officer
Consulted	Audit and Information Assurance Manager
Informed	All Council Employees, All Temporary Staff, All Contractors and All Third-party Suppliers.

9 Review and Revision

This policy will be reviewed as it is deemed appropriate, but no less frequently than every 12 months.

Policy review will be undertaken by the Information Security Officer consultation with the Corporate Information Governance Group.

10 References

The following North Yorkshire County Council policy documents are directly relevant to this policy, and are referenced within this document: These policies are available on the corporate intranet

- Email Policy.
- Software Policy.
- IT Access Policy.
- Remote Working Policy.

The following North Yorkshire County Council policy documents are indirectly relevant to this policy:

- PSN (GCSx) Acceptable Usage Policy and Personal Commitment Statement.
- Computer, Telephone and Desk Use Policy.
- Removable Media Policy.
- Information Security Incident Management Policy.
- IT Operational Management Policy.

11 Key Messages

- Users must familiarise themselves with the detail, essence and spirit of this policy before using the Internet facility provided.
- At the discretion of your line manager, and provided it does not interfere with your work, the Council permits personal use of the Internet in your own time (for example during your lunch-break).
- Users are responsible for ensuring the security of their computer account username and password. Individual computer account username and passwords should only be used by that individual user, and they should be the only person who accesses their Internet account.
- Users **must not** create, download, upload, display or access knowingly, sites that contain pornography or other “unsuitable” material that might be deemed illegal, obscene or offensive.
- Users must assess any risks associated with Internet usage and ensure that the Internet is the most appropriate mechanism to use.

12 Appendix 1 – Internet Access Bands

**Band 0
(24 x 7)**

DEFAULT RESTRICTIONS:
Access to all websites in .northyorks.gov.uk

**Band 1
(24 x 7)**

Business: General corporate websites, international and multi-national business corporate websites, Business Associations.
Education: Education sites – pre, elementary, secondary & high schools, universities. Trade schools, online training, Online teacher resources.
Finance & Investment: Accountancy, banks, insurance companies. Personal investments & options. Online stock trading.
Government: all .gov.uk sites. Government services – e.g. taxation, armed forces.
Hosting Sites: Website that host business and individual webs pages.
News: Newspapers online. Headline news sites, newswire services, personalised news services. Weather sites.
Philanthropic & Professional orgs: Charity, Environmental, Professional, and Social organisations.
Phishing & Fraud: Phishing, Phone, service theft advice, Plagiarism and cheating.
Photo Searches: Resources for photos and images, image hosting, online photo albums.
Politics: Political sites
Reference: Personal, professional or educational reference – e.g. dictionaries, maps, language translation.
Religion: Churches, synagogues & other houses of worship. Faiths & religious beliefs, alternative religions.
Search Engines: General search engines – e.g. Yahoo, AltaVista, and Google.
Sex Education: Sites relating to the use of contraceptives, sexual health.
Travel: Travel destinations, airlines, reservations, discount travel listings, events, sightseeing, weather.

**Band 2
(24 x 7)**

Alcohol & Tobacco: Promotional Web sites, distribution.
Arts & Entertainment: Movies, TV, music, amusement parks, art galleries, museums, book reviews, horoscopes, performing arts, celebrity fan sites, jokes, comic books, online greetings cards.
Message Boards & Forums: Newsgroups, opinions or discussion forums.
Kid’s Sites: Child oriented sites and sites published by children.
Computing & Internet: Reviews, buyer’s guides, parts & accessories, software, magazines, web design, Pay-to-Surf sites.
Fashion & Beauty: Fashion & glamour magazines, Beauty and cosmetics.
Food & Drink: Recipes, cooking instruction & tips, food products, wine advisors, restaurants, pubs, cafes. Food & Drink magazines and reviews.
Health & Medicine: General health, fitness & wellbeing. Alternative & complementary therapies. Medical information & reference. Dentistry, optometry & other medical related sites. Support groups. Prescription medicines.
Hobbies & Recreation: Pastimes – e.g. collecting, gardening. Outdoor recreation – e.g. hiking, camping. Online clubs. Traditional games, role-playing, video games, game reviews – e.g. backgammon, Battleship. Animal/pet related sites.
Job Search & Career Development: Employment agencies, job listings, career searches.
Motor Vehicles: Car reviews, vehicle purchases or sales tips, parts catalogues. Motorcycles. Boats.
Real Estate: Sales listings, rental & relocation services, tips on buying/selling, loans, mortgages, agents.
Shopping: Online auctions, department stores, market promotions – e.g. clothing, accessories.
Excludes E-Bay.
Society & Culture: Home & family related topics – e.g. weddings, births, funerals, gay & lesbian discussions, vegetarianism, naturism, foreign cultures, socio-cultural information.
Sports: Topics related to sports - e.g. teams, discussion, scores, merchandise, magazines, newsletters, colleges.

**Band 3
(24 x 7)**

Advertisements & Pop-Ups: Banner Ad Servers, Pop-Up advertisements, Adware.
Downloads: non-streaming movie, video, or sound clips. Downloadable PDA software, Freeware and Shareware, Clip art, Personal storage and back-up.
Illegal Drugs: Recipes, and instructions for manufacturing, information, distribution, and instruction in the use of illegal substances.
Infrastructure: Content delivery networks, XML reference schemas, Web analytical and statistical services.

**Band 4
(24 x 7)**

Chat: All Web-based chat software, Instant Message Servers.
Personals & Dating: and relationship topics – e.g. personal ads, dating services, dating discussions, matchmaking.
Ring tones/Mobile Phone Downloads: Providers of mobile phone downloads

**Band 5
(24 x 7)**

Criminal Activity: Advocate, instruct or give advice on performing illegal acts - e.g. phone/service theft, evading law enforcement, lock-picking, fraud, plagiarism/cheating, burglary techniques.

Hacking: Promotion, instruction or advice on the illegal use of equipment/software. Instructions or workarounds for filtering software, pirated software and multi-media, computer crime.

Hate Speech: Propaganda encouraging the oppression of specific groups; or promotion of political or social agendas supremacist in nature and exclusionary of others – e.g. racism, or recruitment for membership in a gang or cult.

SPAM URLS: URLs found in spam, including these topics; computing, finance & Stocks, entertainment, games, health & medicines, humour & novelties and personal & dating.

Spyware: Sites that provide or promote information gathering or tracking, malicious executables or viruses, monitoring software.

Tasteless and Offensive: Offensive or violent language. Excessive use of profanity or obscene gesticulation.

Violence: Portray, describe or advocate physical assault against humans, animals, institutions etc.

Weapons: Online purchasing, ordering information, use of weapons – e.g. guns, ammunition, poisons, knives.

**Band 6
(24 x 7)**

Adult/Sexually Explicit: Adult products, child pornography/paedophilia, explicit cartoons and animation, erotic stories, sexually-orientated or erotic full or partial nudity, depictions or images of sexual acts

Intimate Apparel & Swimwear: Lingerie, negligee and other intimate apparel modelling, swimwear modelling

**Band 7
(24 x 7)**

E-Bay: Online Auction sit E-Bay and Paypal

Social Networking Sites: Twitter, Facebook, Bebo, MySpace, Friends Reunited, etc.

Instant Messaging: MSN, Yahoo, etc.

You Tube: www.youtube.com

**Band 8
(24x7)**

Streaming Media: Streaming media files or events, internet TV and radio.

**Band 9
(24 x 7)**

Games: Game playing or downloading. Game or contest hosting. Tips on games or obtaining cheat codes.

**Band 10
(24x7)**

Gambling: Betting - e.g. bingo, bookmakers, Lottery. Casinos & gambling ventures. Virtual leagues & betting pools.

Always Excluded

**Proxies & Peer-to-Peer, Web-based Email
Personal Network Storage and Backup**