

# **ABERDEENSHIRE COUNCIL PUBLIC ACCESS - ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (AUP)**

## **INTRODUCTION**

For the Internet to operate in a manner that satisfies the majority of its users, all users need to observe some rules and behaviours governing their use of it. These requirements are usually contained or referred to in the relevant terms and conditions governing the particular Internet service as well as the law.

To enable users to have a better understanding of what is and is not acceptable when using the Internet, and to help you get the best out of the Internet, Aberdeenshire Council has developed this Acceptable Use Policy (AUP).

## **ILLEGAL AND INAPPROPRIATE ACTIVITIES**

### **YOU MUST:**

- comply with the relevant laws that apply in the UK. You should also be mindful of the fact that the Internet is a global medium and is regulated by the laws of many different countries. Material which is legal in this country may be illegal in another and vice versa.

### **YOU MUST NOT:**

- by using the service, download, possess or transmit in any way, illegal material (for example indecent images of children).
- send, publish, distribute, circulate or otherwise propagate any material that may be deemed to be grossly offensive or of an indecent, obscene nature or menacing in character.
- send, with the intention of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety a message that you know to be false, defamatory or misrepresentative to others.
- gain or attempt to gain unauthorised access to any computer systems for any purpose, including use of anonymisers to disguise identity or activities.
- intentionally impair or attempt to impair the operation of any computer, or to impair the operation of any such program or the reliability of any such data (this could include deleting files, changing the desktop settings, introducing viruses, etc.).
- infringe the rights of others, including the right of privacy and copyright (an example would be downloading/sharing, without permission of the copyright owner, protected material such as music/video files, software or games).
- intentionally or unwittingly participate in the sending of unsolicited email (spam), bulk or otherwise.
- send email which has forged header information, nor should you attempt to impersonate any other individual or organisation.

Many of these activities could result in legal action leading to a fine, term of imprisonment or both.

## **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Children and Young People under the age of 16 will be allowed access to computers and the Internet provided that a parent or legal guardian has signed a consent form on their behalf. Parents or guardians must assume responsibility for the information obtained by the child or young person and ensure the child/young person understands the conditions stated above and acts responsibly. It is recommended that where an email account is used, an appropriate level of filter be applied.

## **FINANCIAL TRANSACTIONS**

Any online financial transactions, using credit/debit cards, are undertaken at the users own risk. You should always provide the minimum amount of personal data required for the transaction – be wary of providing bank account details, mother's maiden name, etc. The Internet site should use secure technology – web address begins with "https" and a small padlock should appear on the menu bar.

## **BANDWIDTH-INTENSIVE SITES**

Aberdeenshire Council reserves the right to restrict access to sites which are bandwidth-intensive in order to maintain a quality level of service across the network. Bandwidth intensive sites could include, but are not limited to: streaming audio/video, games and social networking sites.

## **WI-FI / WIRELESS**

Where available, the internet may be accessed using wireless devices e.g. within some libraries. Aberdeenshire Council cannot guarantee that wireless devices will connect to the access points and cannot offer any support for wireless devices.

## **SANCTIONS**

Aberdeenshire Council reserves the right to refuse further computer access to any individual who breaches the conditions of the AUP. In the case of a junior computer user, the parent or guardian who signed the consent form will be notified. In serious instances of abuse we may also notify the police or relevant law enforcement agency.

## **DISCLAIMER**

Aberdeenshire Council is obliged under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act to disclose information to Law Enforcement Agencies and Public Authorities that are legally entitled to obtain such information. Similarly Aberdeenshire Council must comply with court orders to disclose information. In serious instances of abuse we may also notify the police or relevant law enforcement agency.

Aberdeenshire Council reserves the right to monitor access to the computers and Internet sites visited electronically for statistical and security purposes. Aberdeenshire Council cannot and does not monitor content of chat rooms,

instant messaging, email, newsgroup or indeed of any communications and therefore cannot and does not guarantee that all of these are free of illegal material or other content considered unacceptable by others including the Internet community.

While internet content is filtered, Aberdeenshire Council does not accept responsibility for the quality, accuracy or availability of information accessed through the Internet. Aberdeenshire Council does not assume liability for any loss, damage or injury, direct or indirect, suffered as a result of using these computer resources.

This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains timely and relevant. It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with any changes to this Policy.