

To: SCS  
From: Peter Kennedy  
Date: 29 October 2020

cc: NR  
Permanent Secretary

## REMINDER – WHATSAPP USE

Dear colleagues,

As you know from my SIRO notice about Social Media (issued January 2020), WhatsApp is not permitted on Welsh Government corporate devices:

*“My team regularly receive requests to use WhatsApp on Welsh Government phones. A summary of our position on WhatsApp is that its use does not allow us to comply with our legal responsibilities as a data controller. The full statement explains the position and includes the alternatives for staff. In the same way that personal email accounts cannot be used to undertake Welsh Government business, personal WhatsApp accounts may not be used for Welsh Government business.”*

In the last few weeks my team have received a number of approaches from SCS colleagues who are concerned about requests made by senior colleagues to use WhatsApp on their personal mobile phones for work related activity.

As well as breaching our policy on the use of personal devices for Welsh Government business I am concerned that colleagues feel:

- pressurised by line managers to breach the policy;
- left out of work related discussions if they do not breach the policy.

This is a leadership issue and these behaviours must stop.

I also understand that Records Management policies are not being followed as discussions are not copied back to iShare. I'd remind you that record keeping is part of your responsibility as a civil servant.

Our corporate platform is Microsoft Teams which has a chat feature. All staff can access Microsoft Teams from their laptops and those with corporate mobile phones can access Teams chat from their mobiles. I understand that some have wanted to use WhatsApp on personal devices so that they can receive briefings from staff whilst in meetings. To be aware that your corporate mobile phone and laptop can work independently e.g. you can be in a video call on your laptop while receiving chat messages from staff on your mobile.

Please use the corporate tools that we have for messaging/chat and remember that Microsoft Teams chat messages also need to be saved to iShare if they contain business records.

**Peter Kennedy**  
**Senior Information Risk Owner (SIRO)**