# Glasgow council staff caught attempting to access streaming, adult and gambling sites on taxpayer devices



An SNP-led council in Glasgow has plunged into yet another scandal, drawing ire from taxpayers who have endured significant rises in council tax. Reports reveal that employees attempted to access streaming sites like Netflix on 63 occasions over the last year with council-provided devices. While firewalls managed to block these attempts, there were still 17 incidents where staff attempted to browse adult content on Pornhub and 17 tries to visit various gambling websites—five of which were successful, raising serious concerns about accountability.

Scottish Conservative MSP, Annie Wells, has rightly voiced her outrage, stating, “Glaswegians who have faced massive hikes in their council tax will be appalled that council employees are prioritizing personal entertainment over their public duty.” It’s clear that the expectation for public sector workers should focus on delivering critical services like road maintenance and waste collection, not indulging in trivial distractions or gambling.

Despite the council claiming these infractions are a tiny fraction of its internet use, the incidents highlight critical questions about employee conduct and oversight, especially as many council staff continue to work remotely. Alarmingly, some employees logged in from overseas, including the United Arab Emirates and Germany, complicating any attempts at monitoring internet use. A council spokesperson insisted that strict policies are in place to curtail access to inappropriate sites and that their IT system is meant to prevent such egregious activities.

The situation in Glasgow isn’t an isolated incident; similar cases across Scottish councils indicate a troubling trend of inappropriate internet use within public sector environments. Angus Council and Highland Council have also reported attempts to access adult sites, with Angus blocking six attempts and Highland contending with 15. Notably, some incidents stem from IT staff allegedly testing their own filtering systems, exposing the ongoing challenge of oversight within government operations.

Moreover, misuse of taxpayer-funded devices extends beyond Scotland’s borders. Reports from Wales show attempts to access not only adult content but also firearms and fetish sites. The TaxPayers' Alliance has raised grave concerns about the misuse of public resources, emphasizing the critical need for stringent IT policies and robust accountability measures, as public outrage is sure to follow any breaches.

The Department for Work and Pensions has faced similar scrutiny, with hundreds of civil servants disciplined for accessing inappropriate content on government devices. They cited many incidents as unintentional due to misleading links, but strict penalties were levied for those neglecting proper conduct. Meanwhile, Glasgow City Council maintains that such matters are taken seriously, vowing to uphold standards of acceptable online behaviour.

As awareness of these incidents grows, the demand for tighter controls and more severe disciplinary measures within the public sector is expected to mount. Taxpayers are justifiably calling for transparency and accountability in the handling of council resources, particularly during a time of economic strain and soaring living costs. This scrutiny is poised to significantly shape discussions around remote working practices and digital conduct policies in local governance.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-14745915/Now-SNP-led-council-staff-try-watch-Netflix-porn-using-work-computers.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.pressandjournal.co.uk/fp/news/aberdeen-aberdeenshire/6650202/access-denied-just-who-is-trying-to-watch-x-rated-content-on-council-servers/> - An investigation revealed that staff at various Scottish councils, including Angus and Highland, attempted to access adult websites using council devices. Angus Council blocked six attempts to access Pornhub, while Highland Council blocked 15 attempts to access adult content. The councils stated that some of these attempts were due to IT staff testing the effectiveness of their blocking systems. The incidents highlight the challenges councils face in monitoring and controlling internet usage on their networks.
3. <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-wales-38158312> - A BBC investigation found that council staff in Wales attempted to access blocked websites, including pornography, firearms, and fetish sites, using work devices. Since January 2014, councils have been blocking access to such sites. The TaxPayers' Alliance expressed concern over the misuse of taxpayer-funded devices, while the Welsh Local Government Association emphasized that only a small proportion of workers breached rules, and strict IT policies are in place to prevent such incidents.
4. <https://www.bbc.com/news/technology-35341531> - A BBC investigation revealed that over 51 UK council workers were suspended for breaching social media and internet usage policies, with 11 suspended for accessing online pornography. The Local Government Association emphasized that while some personal use of social media at work is acceptable, it must be reasonable and appropriate. Councils take such breaches seriously and deal robustly with unacceptable cases.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2004/aug/27/uk.technology> - The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) admitted that hundreds of civil servants had been disciplined for downloading pornographic images. Between July 2003 and March 31, 2004, 227 staff were disciplined for accessing pornography from government computers. The DWP emphasized that the majority of 'hits' were accidental, with staff being routed to such sites through innocent-looking internet links. However, those who deliberately downloaded pornography faced disciplinary action.
6. <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2001/mar/07/internetnews> - Glasgow City Council was forced to shut down all public internet access at its libraries after children were discovered viewing pornographic websites. The council acknowledged the issue and accepted full responsibility, stating that they should have paid more attention to how the libraries' internet access was managed. New filtering software was due for installation to prevent such incidents in the future.
7. <https://news.stv.tv/north/virtual-council-meeting-hacked-with-porn-material> - Angus Council's special arrangements committee meeting was temporarily shut down after being infiltrated by inappropriate images during a Zoom session. The council reported the incident to Police Scotland and emphasized that it would not be appropriate to comment further at that time. This incident highlights the challenges councils face in securing virtual meetings against unauthorized disruptions.