

	<b>Mobile Phone Policy</b> <i>Policy No. FINPOL 13</i>	<b>Version No:</b>	2.0
		<b>Responsible Officer/s</b>	ITC Coordinator
		<b>Issued:</b>	16 January 2012
		<b>Next Review:</b>	Aug 2019

## 1. Scope

This policy covers all usage of mobile phones supplied by Council to employees.

## 2. Objective

The main objectives of this policy are to:

- ensure the correct approval process for the issue of a mobile phones.
- purchase appropriate equipment that is standardised across Council.
- define the permitted use of Council's mobile phones.
- manage the expenses incurred resulting from the use of mobile phones.

## 3. Allocation

- Mobile phones are a communication tool issued to assist employees in the performance of their duties.
- In determining a mobile phone application the Chief Executive Officer should take into account the following:
  - a. The need for the user to be contactable at all times including after hours and weekend contact.
  - b. A requirement for the user to be contactable or to contact suppliers, ratepayers, other staff etc., whilst in the field.
  - c. Work Health and Safety issues such as where a worker may regularly be working remotely or alone.
  - d. Other work needs that may warrant the issue of a mobile phone.
- All requests for a new mobile phone must be on the appropriate form and approved by the Chief Executive Officer (Appendix 1).

## 4. Mobile Phone Agreement

Each employee allocated a mobile service must enter into a Mobile Phone Agreement (Appendix 2) with Council acknowledging:

- that they have received and read this policy.
- that they will comply with the requirements of this policy.
- the details of any mobile telephone and accessories serial numbers issued to them.
- they accept responsibility for the equipment.
- their requirement to reimburse Council for any charges incurred due to use that is outside of the requirements of this policy
- that any Council owned service, device or associated equipment remains at all times the property of Council and will be returned upon termination of employment, when required by this policy, or when requested by the CEO.

## 5. Purchasing

- All purchasing of Council owned mobile handsets and accessories will be centralised through the ITC Coordinator to ensure all handsets and services are consistent throughout Council.
  
- All Mobile telephones, contracts or reimbursements will be generally be reviewed on a two yearly cycle.

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## 6. **Bring Your Own Contract (BYOC), Bring Your Own Device (BYOD)**

Council may consider approving a staff member who has been allocated a mobile service the ability to BYOC or BYOD, if the following conditions are met:

- The staff member is in a role that will not require a phone to be provided to another staff member or contractor in the approved staff member's absence.
- The staff member agrees to be responsible for providing and maintaining their contract and/or device.
- There is no additional cost to Council, the staff member agrees to cover all costs above the standard reimbursement rates (Appendix 1) and understands that reimbursement will be immediately cancelled if the mobile service is deemed as being no longer required for Council business.
- The device meets or exceeds the security and management provisions on the equivalent Council owned device.
- There are no issues regarding the future ownership of the mobile phone number.
- The device is deemed suitable for the task by the ITC Coordinator

## 7. **Meeting Protocol**

It is considered inappropriate for mobile phones to be turned on during Council meetings and any other meetings attended as a representative of the District Council of Grant. As such, all mobile phones are to be turned off in such instances thereby allowing the call to go to message bank for retrieval at a more appropriate time. In some cases it may, however, be appropriate for a user to switch a phone to the silent function to enable receipt of urgent calls.

## 8. **Use of Mobile Phones**

### 8.1 General

The mobile phone is provided primarily to allow contact with the staff member by other staff or customers. All mobile services owned by Council have been set-up to allow free calls and text messages between other Council owned mobiles.

Mobile phones are to be used only in instances where a regular Council telephone service is not accessible.

Council owned mobile device or services are only be used by the specified approved user or by another staff member or person acting in Council's best interest.

### 8.2 Personal Usage

Council mobile services are provided for business use, however, from time to time, the phone may be used for personal use, if important, while on Council business. This privilege should not be abused or the use of the mobile phone may be restricted or removed.

If a staff member's mobile phone is not used in accordance with this policy or the monthly bill is deemed to be unreasonable they will be asked to justify their account. This could include going line by line through the account.

Council's mobile phone plans include a generous amount of included calls and other services. Any charges incurred that are outside of or exceed these included services would be deemed as unreasonable use. Council will seek reimbursement for unreasonable use.

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Where Council has agreed to allow a staff member to BYOC the staff member is responsible for all charges above the standard reimbursement rates (Appendix 1).

### 8.3 Unauthorised Usage

Mobile phones must not be used to access premium services. Any call or service that is not charged at the mobile carrier's standard rate is deemed as a premium service. Examples of premium services include: directory services such as Call Connect, 1900 services, international service, ringtone providers, and calls or text messages to competitions or surveys.

By default, the following services are disabled on all Council Mobile Phones:

- 1900 numbers
- International Services and Roaming

### 8.4 Illegal Usage

Approved users must abide by all Federal, State and Local laws and regulations when using a Council mobile phone. In particular, mobile phones must not be used to communicate or record offensive, obscene, threatening, abusive or defamatory information, nor discriminate against, harass or vilify others on any grounds. The phone must not be used to record any conversations unless all parties are advised that they are being recorded.

### 8.5 Periods of Leave

Council mobiles phones are provided to staff to assist them in the conduct of Council Business. When an approved staff member with a mobile phone goes on leave their phone must remain with Council if that phone is required for Council business in their absence.

This decision regarding Council's business need will be made by the approved staff member's manager. If the leave is greater than one week, prior approval must also be obtained from the CEO.

In the case a mobile phone is taken by the staff member on leave then any additional costs incurred whilst on leave are to be reimbursed to Council and responsibility for this rests with the approved user.

### 8.6 Monitoring of Usage

Council will exercise the right to monitor and log any matter relating to the use of a mobile phone. Monitoring of mobile phone accounts will be undertaken on a regular basis as a means of ensuring compliance with this policy and to identify any irregularities.

Council reserves the right to recover any amounts due to Council through the approved user making incorrect assessments of private or personal telephone charges. Any inconsistencies of a possible fraudulent nature will be immediately reported to the CEO.

## 9. **Safe Use of Mobile Phones**

The use of mobile phones in certain parts of the workplace and in Council vehicles can create unsafe or potentially unsafe conditions:

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- The use of a mobile phone that is not installed with hands free car equipment, whilst driving a motor vehicle is illegal. If hands free equipment is installed, mobile phone usage should still be limited as it still has the potential to be a hazardous activity. All traffic infringements incurred while using a mobile phone are the responsibility of the approved user and Council accepts no responsibility whatsoever. There is anecdotal evidence without any scientific evidence, that mobile phones may cause a potential hazard of omitting electromagnetic radiation. Therefore care needs to be taken when using a mobile phone. As such, users are advised to minimise the use of mobile phones, keep calls short and use hands free devices where available.
- Mobile phones fitted with camera or recording equipment must be used appropriately and in accordance with privacy guidelines.

#### **10. Care of Mobile Phones and Accessories**

- Mobile phones and accessories are to be maintained in reasonable condition. It is the responsibility of the approved user to ensure that the mobile phone and accessories are kept in good order.
- Mobile phones must be kept in a secure/safe location at all times and must never be left unattended, e.g. in a vehicle.

#### **11. Lost or Damaged Phones and Accessories**

- Council expects people who have been allocated a mobile phone and accessories to take the utmost care and responsibility for them.
- If a mobile phone or accessory is lost or stolen Council's ITC Coordinator must be advised immediately during normal business hours. The mobile phone is to be barred for all outgoing services and any other precautions undertaken until it is either found or replaced.
- If a mobile phone or accessory is faulty or broken, the ITC Coordinator must be advised as soon as possible so that repairs can be carried out or a replacement phone supplied.
- The approved user may be asked to replace or reimburse Council for an equivalent replacement phone or accessory if the staff member's negligence is found to responsible for the cause of the lost, stolen or damaged item.

#### **12. Termination of Employment**

On termination of employment, the employee must return the mobile phone to the ITC Coordinator. Any battery chargers, hands free equipment and/or other phone accessories supplied by Council for use with the mobile phone must also be returned.

The ownership of the mobile phone number is retained by council under all circumstances (e.g. if the phone is made redundant or employment is terminated for any reason).

#### **13. Responsibility**

It is the responsibility of each manager to ensure that their staff are aware of, and comply with this policy.

Telephone accounts are reviewed monthly by the ITC Coordinator for variations to general usage. If a concern arises, the employee's Manager will be alerted and if necessary, further action taken.

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#### 14. Non Compliance with this Policy

Should the approved user not comply with any clause of this Policy or of the Mobile Phone Agreement, Council reserves the right to revoke the approved user's entitlement to a Council mobile phone and associated accessories and/or take disciplinary action.

Further action may include:

- Seeking reimbursement for unauthorised charges
- Removing the mobile phone

#### 15. Other Relevant Policies/Procedures

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Electronic Use

#### 16. Review

This Mobile Phone Policy shall be reviewed by the District Council of Grant at minimum every four (4) years, within 12 months of a general election (or on significant change to legislation or other matters which could affect this policy).

Action	Date	Minute Reference
Adopted by Council	16 January 2012	12008.5
Amended	23 April 2014	14039.7.1
Reviewed	4 April 2016	16038.3.4