



City of Ely Council

Use of Mobile Phones Policy for Council Staff

1. City of Ely Council Mobile Phones

Where a mobile phone has been issued by the Council, it is for **business use only** and at all times will remain the property of the Council. The user(s) will be responsible for its safekeeping, proper use, condition and eventual return to the Council.

A mobile phone is provided primarily to enable the user to do their job, i.e. to keep the Council informed at the earliest opportunity of matters which it needs to know about. To be similarly contactable by the Council, or to contact others as required in conjunction with their job when working away from base and also in conjunction with the Council's Lone Working Policy. Therefore, it is the user's responsibility to ensure that the mobile phone is kept charged and switched on whilst on duty.

Users should not sign up to text based information services, e.g. RAC traffic alerts, text voting. The use of the internet on Council mobile phones is permitted, but it is the responsibility of the user to not exceed their allowance currently of **unlimited minutes, unlimited texts and 5 GB data (this will vary should the contract change)**.

The SIM card from Council mobiles should not be placed into any other mobile, unless to another Council issued mobile phone. The camera facility is to be used for Council business only.

The Council recognises that users may, **on occasion**, have to make personal calls or send personal text messages during working hours, or outside normal working hours. Where it is deemed that an unreasonable amount of personal calls/text messages have been made using the mobile phone, the Council reserves the right to deduct those costs, either through deduction from pay, or otherwise. The Council may, after formal investigation, take action under the Disciplinary Procedure if such use is excessive or unauthorised. Users will be expected to make payment for private calls made beyond reasonable usage.

If it is found, following investigation, that there has been excessive personal data use, then the user will be asked to reimburse the Council for the cost of this and action may be taken under the Disciplinary Procedure.

The user agrees that upon termination of employment, the allocated mobile phone must be returned at the exit interview and all passwords will be given to the Council. Should the mobile phone be returned in an unsatisfactory condition, the cost of replacement, or a proportional amount of this as decided by the Council, will be deducted from any final monies owing, or the user will otherwise reimburse the Council.

1.1 Use of a Mobile Phone Whilst Driving

The user must ensure they have full control of any vehicle that they are driving at all times.

It is an offence to use hand held mobile phones whilst driving or whilst the engine is turned on. The user will be liable for prosecution if they are holding a mobile phone, or any other type of hand held device to send or receive any sort of data, be it voice, text or pictorial images. The user will be regarded to be driving if they are in charge of a vehicle with its engine running on a public road, even if the vehicle is stationary. It is therefore strictly forbidden for the user to use a hand held mobile phone whilst driving.

A mobile phone may only be used where there is an in-coming call or an out-going voice activated call through a hands free device that is activated without a need to hold the phone at any time, in which case the call should be kept to the shortest possible time and only to effect essential communications. When the phone needs to be operated to make or deal with a call through the hands free device for longer than receiving or giving a short communication, before doing so the user must stop and park the vehicle where it is safe and lawful to do so and with the engine switched off. Whilst driving they must not use the text message facility on the mobile phone, or if available through such a phone, an image facility or internet access.

Individuals are personally responsible for the payment of any fine or fixed penalty (including any externally raised admin charges) incurred whilst in charge of the vehicle. Any conviction for driving offences, any driving endorsements and any fines incurred must be reported immediately to line management as this may affect the Council's insurance.

It should be noted carefully that a breach of the Council rules on the use of a mobile phone whilst driving may render the user liable to action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

1.2 Lost or Stolen Mobiles

The user is responsible at all times for the security of the mobile phone and it should never be left unattended

If the phone is lost or stolen, this must be reported to the Council immediately (if during working hours), or if out of hours phone the network provider to ensure that the account is stopped and there is no unauthorised usage.

In the event of theft of a mobile phone, the incident must also be reported to the police and the Council office).

The Council reserves the right to claim reimbursement for the cost of the phone, or excess usage charges should the correct procedures not be followed, a user reports repeated loss of their mobile, it is deemed that the user has not taken appropriate measures to safeguard the equipment, or reported the loss thereof (which will be investigated by the Council and judged at its absolute discretion).

1.3 Support

Should there be any queries on the use of the Council mobile, please contact the Council office to speak to the appropriate person.

1.4 Monitoring of Usage and Costs

If it is found the mobile has been misused, the Council may, after formal investigation, take action under the Disciplinary Procedure.

The user is responsible for not exceeding the allowances that are within the contract of the mobile phone and will be liable for any additional charges that are incurred. If the user finds that the allowance given is not sufficient then they must approach the Council to review the tariff.

I agree to the above policy.

Signed

Name (print).....

Date.....

Reviewed and approved on 22nd May 2023

Signed

Cllr C Phillips – Chairman of the Council