

# HR Policies and Procedures

## Telephone Usage Policy



## Telephone Usage Policy

### 1.0 Background and Purpose

1.1 - This documents sets out Chelmsford City Councils policy on the use of telephones both mobile and landline. It will help to ensure the effective running of the Council and inform employees about how they may and may not use the Council's phones and the guidelines that apply to making and receiving calls whilst at work. It applies to all staff including agency, casual, temporary and contract workers.

1.2 – Breach of this policy will be regarded as Misconduct or Gross Misconduct as set out in the Disciplinary Standards.

1.3 - This policy will outline the guidelines for:

- Using Council telephones
- Receiving non-work related calls
- Use of Council Mobile phones
- Use of personal mobile phones during working hours
- Supervisor's / manager's responsibility

### 2.0 Principles

2.1 – Chelmsford City Council telephones are provided for Council business use and to help enable good communication. Chelmsford City Council recognises that sometimes personal calls are required, and asks that these be kept to a minimum, whilst adhering to the guidelines in 3.0 for other authorised uses.

### 3.0 Authorised Uses for non-council business

3.1 - Authorised uses of Council telephones are calls that:

- Could not reasonably have been made during non-working hours in accordance with the examples given in 3.2.
- Do not affect the employee carrying out of his/her duties.
- Are of a reasonable duration and frequency in accordance with the examples given in 3.2.

3.2 – Examples of authorised use of Council-owned phones include, but are not limited to, the following:

- An employee works differing hours to normal pattern and calls (within his/her commuting area) to advise his / her family of changes in schedule or to make alternative transport or carer arrangements.
- Brief calls within local commuting area to numbers that can only be contacted during working hours (e.g. Doctor, Local Government agency).

- Brief calls within local commuting area to arrange for emergency repairs to place of residence or vehicle.

Note: 'Brief' has been used in the context of the time it takes to accomplish the purpose of the call. 'Commuting area' is the employee's normal commuting area, i.e. where they travel from each day to come to work.

#### 4.0 Receiving Calls

4.1 - Receiving personal calls on Council telephones can cause as much disruption to an employee's work as making the call themselves. Staff should ensure that friends and relatives only call if it is of an urgent or important nature and the call is not excessive in length.

4.2 – The Council is a place of business and therefore the use of personal mobile phones should be restricted to non-working time (e.g. lunch times or when clocked out) unless it meets the above criteria in 4.1.

4.3 - All staff should ensure that their mobile phone is on silent or vibrate during their working day, unless the mobile phone is used for business purposes. Mobile phones should also be set to silent or vibrate for meetings unless otherwise stated as acceptable by the participants.

#### 5.0 Use of Council Mobile phones

5.1 – May be used for personal calls in accordance with the details given above. Employees must identify such calls on the itemised bill and will be issued with an invoice for the total cost of these calls for payment by the employee within one month of receipt of invoice.

5.2 – Users of mobile phones should ensure that they sign the relevant 'Mobile receipt form' available from ICT Services.

5.3 – Users of mobile phones and Blackberrys should ensure security and safety of their devices at all times and in the event of loss or theft, should contact ICT Services immediately. Users must ensure their devices are not accessible and / or used by anyone else.

5.4 – It is illegal to use handheld devices whilst driving. Chelmsford City Council does not encourage the use of hands free devices and staff should ensure that calls are made whilst the vehicle is stationary.

#### 6.0 Supervisory / Management Responsibility

6.1 Managers and supervisors are responsible for the successful implementation of this policy within their individual service areas and should:

- Lead by example.
- Ensure staff are aware of, and follow the policy outlined in this document.
- Be aware of telephone usage by staff, especially calls of a personal nature received during an employee's working day where possible.
- Ensure that any issues with telephone usage are dealt with correctly and if applicable, in liaison with the appropriate HR Business Partner.

Version Number	Creation Date	Changes Made	Changes Made By:	Authorised/Checked?	Date of Changes
1.4	Jan 2011	Replaced two ticks with disability confident	HR Team	Y	18/10/2016
1.3	Jan 2011	Removal of 'Blackberrys'	A Felton	Y	11/01/2013
1.2	Jan 2011	Rebranded to City	HR Team	Y	Sept 2012