

COUNCIL MOBILE PHONES POLICY

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Background

Staff periodically receive messages from Council members, or members of the public, requesting that they text message them. It is unacceptable for staff to be expected to use their own personal mobile numbers for this purpose.

The following staff members are issued with Council mobile phones: Chief Officer, Community Engagement Officer (this phone is also utilised by the Community & Engagement Manager and occasionally, the Market & Town Hall Manager), and Caretaker & Market Officer; this mobile phone remains on site for staff use within the Market & Town Hall.

Policy

Use of Council Mobile Phones

1. If the Town Council provides you with a mobile phone to assist communications between staff, councillors, and other business-related contacts, it is solely for use for work related matters and is not – other than in an emergency – to be used to make or receive personal calls or text messages.
2. The Community & Environment Department's mobile phone will chiefly be used for social media updates, taking photographs and use when conducting site visits for allotments. Occasionally, this phone will be passed to the Market & Town Hall Manager for use and/or storage.
3. For this reason, no personal data should be stored in the handset or SIM card, other than an emergency contact.
4. Similarly, your work mobile number should only be given to work-related contacts, not personal ones (other than an emergency contact).
5. Unless you are required to be available outside normal hours (e.g. for market related queries) there is no obligation on you to make or respond to calls/texts outside your normal working time for the Council.
6. You must not use a handheld mobile phone to make or receive calls whilst you are driving. This includes points at which you are temporarily stationary. If caught by the police, you may be liable to a fixed penalty and potentially points on your licence. If the Town Council becomes aware that you have been using a mobile phone whilst driving – whether or not you have been caught by the police – you may be subject to disciplinary action (including, in serious cases, your dismissal).
7. If you have a hands-free/Bluetooth kit fitted to your vehicle, it is your decision as to whether you answer or make calls. The Council does not expect you to do so and you must judge whether the conditions are safe enough to use your hands-free equipment. If in doubt, do not use it.

8. If it appears that the use of your phone is excessive or there appear to non-work calls, we may investigate matters. If it appears that there has been wilful misuse of the phone then the Council may consider disciplinary action.
9. All council mobile phones will be pass number or **pass-pattern** protected. The Chief Officer will supply the pass number, with any amendments agreed.
10. At the end of your employment, the phone must be returned in good condition.