



Councillor IT Equipment Policy

Policy Owner	Governance and Corporate Accountability Governance and Corporate Performance
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Purpose

This policy details the IT hardware and software provided to Mitchell Shire Councillors to enable them to undertake their duties.

It will ensure that:

- Each Councillor is provided with suitable IT equipment to conduct council business in a productive and efficient manner.
- Provided equipment can be efficiently maintained.
- Councillors can be provided with technical support when required.

Scope

This policy applies to elected Mitchell Shire Councillors.

Policy

After each election, councillors will be provided with the following hardware:

- laptop
- headphones
- smartphone
- printer (optional).

Laptop functionality

Laptops provided to Councillors will enable:

- access to the internet via WiFi
- access to emails and calendars via Microsoft Outlook
- the ability to create, edit and view documents using Microsoft Office
- the ability to view and print PDFs
- printing
- other functionality as required (e.g. WebEx for remote meetings).

Internet Access

Councillor laptops will be able to connect to the internet via WiFi. Councillors can connect to their home internet or when in Council offices and the Chamber via the MSC network.

Should a Councillor require installation of equipment in their home as a result of low internet connectivity, this will be arranged through Council. An agreement will be put in place between Council and the Councillor to ensure reimbursement in the case that the Councillor resigns or moves home within the Council term.

Councillor Portal

Councillors will have access to all council business papers, presentations, newsletters, forms, policies and other relevant material via an online Councillor Portal.

Email setup

Each councillor will be given an email address which reflects their position as a Mitchell Shire Councillor. The email address will be in the form [‘Cr.firstname.lastname@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au’](mailto:Cr.firstname.lastname@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au).

In addition to an individual email address for each councillor, the public will be able to use a single email address to reach all councillors. This address is configured as: ‘AllCouncillors.DL@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au’.

Mobile Devices

Councillors will be provided with a smartphone featuring:

- standard mobile phone functionality (e.g. make / receive calls, SMS etc)
- the ability to install and manage ‘apps’
- connectivity via WiFi and 4G / 5G
- bluetooth
- synchronisation of calendars and emails
- Councillors will be provided with a Council issued phone number.

Data packs applied to mobile SIM cards are for council-related business only – with some allowance for minor personal usage. Mobile phone data is not to be used by anyone other than the Councillor it has been allocated to. For example – ‘hot spotting’ friends or relatives.

Issue Resolution

1. Governance & Corporate Accountability staff should be the first contact point in the event of any IT-related problems, who in turn will forward the issue to the IT Helpdesk.
2. Helpdesk staff will make an initial assessment of the issue and follow standard protocols, though the issue will be given ‘high priority’, as follows:
 - details of the issue will be sought and recorded
 - a ticket number will be generated and provided to Governance & Corporate Accountability as a reference point and to ensure that the issue is escalated to the appropriate level

- if the staff member is unable to resolve the issue, it will be assigned to an external IT provider for resolution.

To assist in the resolution of the issue, the Councillor should provide as much factual information as possible including:

- a description of the issue
- identify what equipment and/or program they are using
- outline any error messages they are experiencing
- plus any other relevant information they can supply.

On occasion, Councillors may be required to bring their equipment into the office, to enable the IT Department to carry out updates. Updates are an important part of cyber-security and equipment must be returned in a timely fashion when requested.

Equipment Usage Protocols

- If requested, councillors must return IT equipment in a timely fashion.
- All supplied equipment and all associated peripherals (eg cables, chargers etc), as well as business-related software and information contained on the devices, are the property of Mitchell Shire Council.
- No councillor is permitted to copy information in any form unless it is for council business or relevant to their role as a councillor.
- Hardware has been provided to Councillors for the purpose of undertaking their elected duties and must not be used for private/personal purposes or private business purposes.
- Software copyrights and licenses must be adhered to. The installation of software is not permitted on any equipment without the permission of the Manager Information and Business Transformation.
- Copying of software is not permitted, and the removal or transfer of software is theft and will be treated as such.
- Requests for additional software will be considered by Governance
- Councillors may access the MSC_Staff network when on site.
- Usage of equipment must be consistent with all policies of Mitchell Shire Council.
- Equipment must not be used for illegal purposes.
- Lost or stolen equipment must be reported immediately.
- The return and purchase for exiting Councillors will be managed as per the Councillor Exit Procedure.
- Councillors should be mindful of cybersecurity and participate in all relevant training.

Related Documents

Council Expenses Policy
Local Government Act 2020
Councillor Code of Conduct

Councillor Exit Procedure

Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy will be updated ahead of the 2024 Council election.