



**WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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INDEPENDENT REVIEW – REPORT

**INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE TELEPHONE USAGE OF THE LEADER OF
BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL BETWEEN 2004 - 2013**

CONDUCTED BY

**VICTORIA JACKSON, SENIOR INVESTIGATIONS OFFICER, WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

DATE – 16 JANUARY 2014

REPORT DISTRIBUTION

| Name | Job Title |
|-------------|--|
| Alex Jack | Monitoring Officer and Borough Solicitor, Bracknell Forest Borough Council |

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 4 July 2013 Bracknell Forest Borough Council received a freedom of information request from a Bracknell resident, Martin Wood. The request asked for the following:
 - The detailed accounts of payments made by yourselves (Bracknell Forest Council) to Councillor Paul Bettison, for all the expenses he has claimed for his time as Council Leader in charge of Bracknell Forest Council, and
 - Any other payment made by a third party other than Council duties.
- 1.2 Between 2004 – 2009 Cllr Bettison claimed reimbursement of the cost of Council related telephone calls, which he made on his business phone. Payments were made to Bettison Associates. In 2009 Cllr Bettison was provided with a Bracknell Forest Borough Council mobile Vodafone phone.
- 1.3 Democratic Services are responsible for co-ordinating payment for any personal phone calls a Councillor makes on their Bracknell Forest Borough Council phone.
- 1.4 On 26 July 2013 a response to the FOI request was sent to Mr Wood containing the details of all expenses claimed by Cllr Bettison, following this on 19 August 2013 Mr Wood entered a complaint on the Bracknell Forest Borough Council Website. Mr Wood complains that after reviewing the data supplied by the FOI request, he finds the repayment costs paid to Councillor Bettison in respect of his mobile phone usage as “*extremely high*” and comments on “*the possible misuse and irregularities of public funds for which can only be seen as one’s personal gain*”. Mr Wood highlighted in his complaint that between 2004 – 2010 the leader was paid £23,812.82 in mobile phone expenses, which is approximately £4,000 per annum.
- 1.5 The Monitoring Officer and the Chairman of the Standards Committee have decided that there is no basis for referring Mr Wood’s complaint for investigating under the Council’s procedures for determining complaints alleging a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members. However, the Council has decided that the matter of the Leader’s telephone expenses should be the subject of an independent review. The Terms of Reference for the review was agreed with the Monitoring Officer on 7 October 2013, it was agreed that an independent review report would be produced for the January 2014 Audit Committee.
- 1.6 This report makes recommendations to review the process of reviewing Members mobile phone usage, in order to give clarity and transparency. This review has found no misuse by Cllr Bettison.

2. Member Details

- 2.1 Cllr Bettison became Leader of Bracknell Forest Borough Council in May 1997.

3. Relevant Policies and Procedures

- 3.1 The following Policies and Procedures have been used for the investigation:
 - Procedure notes for processing bills (last updated October 2012);
 - Bracknell Forest Telephony Usage Standards (last updated March 2013);
 - 2003 Members Allowance Scheme;
 - 2004 Members Allowance Scheme;
 - April 2005 Members Allowance Scheme;
 - March 2006 Members Allowance Scheme;
 - May 2006 Members Allowance Scheme;

- December 2006 Members Allowance Scheme;
- May 2007 Members Allowance Scheme;
- August 2007 Members Allowance Scheme;
- September 2007 Members Allowance Scheme;
- February 2008 Members Allowance Scheme;
- September 2008 Members Allowance Scheme;
- March 2009 Members Allowance Scheme;
- April 2009 Members Allowance Scheme;
- April 2010 Members Allowance Scheme;
- 2010 Members Allowance Scheme; and
- April 2012 Members Allowance Scheme.

4. Outline of review

- 4.1 This review seeks to answer the following points as agreed with the Monitoring Officer of Bracknell Forest Borough Council:
- What guidance on the usage of mobile phones are Members provided with?
 - What was the authorisation process for Cllr Bettison using his personal business phone between 2003 – 2009? Were expenses claimed and reimbursed in accordance with that process?
 - What is the authorisation process for the current checking procedure for Members mobile phone bills, including how Democratic Services co-ordinate payment for any personal phone calls a Member makes on their Bracknell Forest Borough Council Phone?
 - How often are the Leader's telephone bills reviewed to ascertain whether he is on the most cost effective tariff for the authority; and
 - How frequently should the arrangement for the processing of identifying the Leader's personal telephone calls be reviewed?
 - Is there any evidence to support the contention that there was misuse of a Council mobile phone and irregularities of public funds arising from payments made in respect of Councillor Bettison's telephone usage?

5. Methodology

- 5.1 I have taken into account a range of documentary evidence, including:
- Councillor complaints form sent by Martin Wood in relation to Cllr Bettison's telephone usage, dated the 19 August 2013;
 - Cllr Bettison's Declaration of Interest;
 - Mobiles blank request form;
 - Bracknell Forest Borough Council Councillors contact details list;
 - Cover sheets for Cllr Bettison's personal phone bills (that incurred business usage) for the period 2004 – 2009. Itemised bills were requested for this review though the mobile phone company were not able to provide them to Cllr Bettison;
 - Cllr Bettison's telephone bills for his Bracknell Forest Borough Council mobile phone. It has been agreed by the Monitoring Officer that quarters would be sampled from each year for analysis. The following bills have been sampled for the years 2009 – 2013:
 - 2009 – January – March

- 2010 – April – June
 - 2011 – July – October
 - 2012 – September – December
 - 2013 – January – March
- Members Allowance Scheme audit reports containing recommendations relating to Member's mobile phone expenses. The following audit reports were considered:
 - Members Allowance Scheme Audit 2005 – 2006;
 - Members Allowance Scheme Audit 2007 – 2008: Final issued 13 November 2007;
 - Members Allowance Scheme Audit 2008: Final issued 18 December 2008;
 - Members Allowance Scheme Audit 2009: Final issued 14 May 2009;
 - Members Allowance Scheme Audit 2010: Final issued 21 June 2010; and
 - Members Allowance Scheme Audit 2012: Final issued 6 February 2013.

I have also considered the following interview summaries:

- Summary of interview with Chris Herbert, ex Borough Treasurer, 25 October 2013;
- Summary of interview with Ann Moore, Head of Democratic and Registration Services, 6 November 2013;
- Summary of interview with Alison Sanders, Director of Corporate Services, 6 November 2013;
- Summary of interview with Pat Keane, Head of I.T, 14 November 2013; and
- Summary of interview with Cllr Paul Bettison, 2 December 2013.

6. Findings

6.1 The purpose of the following section is to present and assess the evidence gathered in order to make recommendations.

6.2 **What guidance on the usage of mobile phones are Members provided with?**

6.2.1 Upon applying for a Bracknell Forest Borough Council mobile phone (or Blackberry); Members are expected to fill out a business justification for the requests and sign to confirm the following declarations:

- I will be the only person using the mobile phone.
- I will be responsible for the security of the mobile phone and if it is lost or mislaid it will be my responsibility to ensure that the ICT Helpdesk and Vodafone are notified immediately.
- I note that my use of the mobile phone will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- I agree to return the mobile phone to the Head of Democratic and Registration Services if I cease to be a Councillor or at the request of the Leader following a review or change in circumstances.

(See [Appendix 1](#) for a full copy of the document)

6.2.2 There is guidance available on the Council's intranet site 'Boris' aimed at staff, Bracknell Forest Telephony Usage Standards was last updated in March 2013. Section 10.1 of the document entitled Private Use states the following (See [Appendix 2](#) for a full copy of the policy):

Mobile phones and Blackberries – These are issued to those employees who need one to ensure the efficient discharge of their duties. The cost (or reasonable estimate of the cost) of personal calls and texts must be reimbursed to the Council. Inappropriate or improper use of a mobile phone will result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

- 6.2.3 There is a document given to new mobile phone users called Bracknell Forest Mobile Phone – Do's and Don'ts. The document was put in place 18 months ago as part of the Council's flexible and mobile project. Pat Keane, Head of IT has advised that this document was not circulated to those Officers and Members already in possession of a Council mobile phone. (See Appendix 3 for the document). However, the Bracknell Forest Telephony Standards has been circulated to all Officers and Members.
- 6.2.4 Ann Moore, Head of Democratic and Registration Services has advised the review that the Bracknell Forest Telephony Usage Standards document is aimed at staff and there isn't a differentiated one for Members.
- 6.2.5 **Summary of findings:** There is no guidance on mobile phone usage within the Council's IT Acceptable Usage Policy for Members. There is not currently a process in place to alert Members to the expected standards of mobile phone use when they receive one, other than the brief declaration on the request form as detailed in paragraph 6.2.1. The Bracknell Forest Telephony Standards document refers to mobile phone usage, though this only applies to Officers. The Bracknell Forest – Mobile Phone Do's and Don'ts document was created 18 months ago but has not been circulated to those who already had been given a Council Phone.
- 6.2.6 **Suggested Recommendations:**
1. The current arrangements in place to give guidance; Bracknell Forest Mobile Phone Do's and Don'ts should become part of the Telephony Standards and issued to all existing Council mobile phone users.
 2. It is recommended that the Council's IT Acceptable Usage Policy is developed to also contain acceptable mobile phone usage, to give clarity and transparency. Members should be required to declare their understanding of the policy once circulated.
- 6.3 **What was the authorisation process for Cllr Bettison using his personal business phone between 2003 – 2009? Were expenses claimed and reimbursed in accordance with that process?**
- 6.3.1 On 25 October 2013, an interview was held with ex Borough Treasurer Chris Herbert who was in post from 1997 until he retired in September 2011. Chris Herbert explained that the previous Chief Executive Gordon Mitchell had approved the leader using his own telephone and claiming expenses. Chris Herbert said that in around 2003, it was suggested that Cllr Bettison transfer his existing phone over to a Council contract. However, this would have caused difficulties as he would have had to have a new telephone number which would be extremely impractical. At this point in time it was not easy to transfer contracts and be able to retain the same phone number.
- 6.3.2 In interviews Chris Herbert, Ann Moore, Alison Sanders, Director of Corporate Services and Pat Keane, Head of IT all commented that Cllr Bettison had very high mobile phone usage in his day to day working life as he was often travelling around both for his work and his role as Leader of the Council and use of a mobile phone was essential to him.
- 6.3.3 It was explained that through his business Cllr Bettison had a mobile phone that had a tariff with the maximum number of minutes possible. Cllr Bettison did not want to have two mobile phones, so it was agreed that money for Council related calls would be paid to his company (as the phone was registered under Bettison Associates) for use of his company mobile phone for council business. Chris Herbert stated in the interview that it would not

have been correct for the expenses to be paid personally to Cllr Bettison as he did not pay for the phone; it was paid for by Bettison Associates.

- 6.3.4 Chris Herbert recalled that expenses claims were not received regularly from Cllr Bettison and they occurred at irregular intervals. Whilst the above arrangement was in place, it was identified that it seemed odd that the council was paying Bettison Associates and also queried the amounts paid. Chris Herbert stated that he was unsure if he was directly asked to get involved with the query or if he was assisting and working with the Head of Democratic Services, but he was involved with working out a better process for payments made to Cllr Bettison. A review was undertaken with a sample number of bills to assess Council use of his business mobile to agree a split to be applied to future bills.
- 6.3.5 Chris Herbert explained that arrangements were that the Leader's telephone expenses were reviewed monthly, but it was agreed that due to the lengths of Cllr Bettison's phone bills, he would not submit each bill monthly for review but submit sample bills as "*otherwise it would be far too much work for someone to go through every bill*". Chris Herbert cannot recall when this process was introduced but it did apply after the review where his private use was assessed and an agreed split was agreed.
- 6.3.6 During his interview on 2 December 2013 Cllr Bettison explained that he already had a mobile phone when he became Leader. He stated that it was neither convenient for him, nor for callers, to operate two mobile phones. Cllr Bettison was able to demonstrate that he had a 'package deal' on his own mobile because at that time he owned his own company, Graphic Systems International. Cllr Bettison advised that over a 12 month period he never exceeded the package of calls.
- 6.3.7 As advised in interview by Chris Herbert, Cllr Bettison stated that the suggestion was that if he continued to pay for the package, the Council would pay for any Council additional calls. Cllr Bettison paid around £60 per month which gave him 3,000 minutes or texts, depending on what usage had been made. Cllr Bettison continued to pay the basic amount of £60 and explained that if there were some spare "the Council can have the unused ones, and the Council would pay for any more (over the package price)". This continued up until the point at which Cllr Bettison closed Graphic Systems International around 10 years ago. After this Graphic Systems ceased trading and Bettison Associates took over the contract. Bettison Associates continued the same arrangement with the Council. Cllr Bettison stated in interview that the main reason for not using a personal phone and a Council mobile phone is that it would have been impractical for him to have two phones.
- 6.3.8 Ann Moore became Head of Democratic and Registration Services in March 2007. Ann explained in interview on 6 November 2013 that pre 2009 Cllr Bettison's phone usage was not dealt with by Democratic Services as other members' phones were. The Leader would submit an invoice from Bettison's Associates for any council work that his personal phone was used for and an invoice would be paid. It was agreed that the Leader would pay a contribution for his own personal use to the bill which Ann believes to have been around £40, so Cllr Bettison would take the contribution off the bill and then submit the invoice. The bills would be certified annually.
- 6.3.9 When Ann Moore began working for the Council in 2007 this arrangement was already in place. Ann Moore explained that this arrangement was managed by the Borough Treasurer Chris Herbert who also had overall responsibility for IT at the time. Ann Moore stated in interview that though unusual, the arrangement at the time seemed to work well for the Council as they did not have to provide Cllr Bettison with a device which saved some money.
- 6.3.10 Between 2005-2008 the number of mobile phones used by the Council had dramatically expanded, which put them in a better position to negotiate and get a more cost-effective contract with Vodafone. In 2009 Cllr Bettison transferred from using his personal business phone for Council calls to a Bracknell Forest Borough Council mobile phone. This was as a

result of audit recommendations. Cllr Bettison was able to retain his telephone number, and a cheaper deal was negotiated.

6.3.11 Recommendations were made following Members Allowance Scheme audits around the verification of expense claims. Audits between 2007 – 2009 commented on Members claims for mobile phone usages with recommendations being made which had an impact on future Members Allowance Schemes.

6.3.12 Excerpts from the following audits show relevant findings and recommendations:

Members Allowance Scheme 2007 – 2008 Audit – Final Report issued 13 November 2007

With reference to mobile phone usage specifically, Members who use Council provided mobile phones are required to respond to the Support Assistant directly if their bill is over £35, to detail if any calls on the statement are personal and to then provide payment for those calls. Audit confirmed for a sample of five mobile phones assigned to Members, two statements had been sent to the Member and no evidence was obtained to confirm whether payment was due for personal calls. A further two Members returned payments for personal calls, but this payment was received by the Council over six months after the Member had received the original statement, without supporting evidence to highlight the personal calls concerned. For the final Member who uses a personal mobile phone for Member duty, invoices from the Members own business, are being issued directly to the Support Assistant at BFBC without formal authorisation, are not supported by detailed phone usage and are not issued using the official expense claim vouchers. The monthly phone bills invoiced range from £155 to £1200 per month. Two recommendations have been proposed to tighten the control on mobile phone usage.

Members Allowance Scheme 2008 Audit – Final Report issued 18 December 2008

REC07: Evidence maintained of the review of the expense claim forms prior to payment

On a quarterly basis, Members should review their mobile phone statement and within two months of receiving their bill, return their statement having highlighted calls which are not related to Member duties and provide payment for those calls to the Support Assistant. Where Members have their own mobile phone and calls are billed back to the Council the same rules apply. Personal calls should be highlighted and removed from the expense total and a Members Expense Claim form should be completed and submitted to the Senior Democratic Services Officer from approval and processing.

6.3.13 In relation to the Members Allowance Scheme itself there was no mention to Members mobile phone expenses before the audit recommendations in 2007. The following addition was made regarding Members mobile phones in the February 2008 update of the scheme, which continues to appear through to April 2012:

February 2008 Members Allowance Scheme:

14. Provision of information and computer technology (ICT)

Members will be sent statements periodically in order for them to review their bills and pay for all personal calls. Payment to be received within two months of receipt of the bill.

In exceptional circumstances claims for personal mobile usage for Council work will be accepted, with the approval of the Director of Corporate Services. Claims must be submitted on a Members' Allowances claim form supported by the relevant mobile phone bill. Claims must be made within two months of receipt of the bill.

6.3.14 In interview Pat Keane said that he remembered Chris Herbert mentioned having discussed with Cllr Bettison the use of his personal phone for business use. Pat Keane stated that in

2009 it was then possible to put Cllr Bettison on a corporate contract with Vodafone. Pat Keane stated that Chris Herbert dealt with the facilitation of this as he was a Senior Officer.

- 6.3.15 **Summary of findings:** Chris Herbert has advised that the arrangement for the reimbursement of the Leader's telephone expenses was agreed with the ex-Chief Executive, Gordon Mitchell. As ex Borough Treasurer, Chris Herbert facilitated this and was aware the process had been agreed. Cllr Bettison claimed expenses for that period in accordance with the agreed process.
- 6.4 **What is the authorisation process for the current checking procedure for Members mobile phone bills, including how Democratic Services co-ordinate payment for any personal phone calls a Member makes on their Bracknell Forest Borough Council phone?**
- 6.4.1 Member Services receive itemised bills quarterly. The Council pays for the quarterly charge for the phone and for all other calls other than personal calls. On a quarterly basis, Members should review their mobile phone statement and within two months of receiving their bill, return their statement having highlighted calls which are not related to Member duties and provide payment for those calls to the support assistant, Joanna Benham.
- 6.4.2 Unlike other Councillors, Cllr Bettison does not inspect the full bill to confirm whether there are non-council related calls. This is due to the fact the bills can run to 300 pages long per quarter. Cllr Bettison has provided Member Services with two prefix numbers 01624 and 07624, which Cllr Bettison has advised are land line and mobile prefixes' for numbers linked to the Isle of Man where he has family and visits regularly. Another member pays a £50 contribution every quarter, which is over what his actual usage would probably be, but he prefers to do this rather than go through his phone bills.
- 6.4.3 There is now an annual review within Member Services to ensure the numbers provided by Cllr Bettison have not changed, the last check took place in July 2013.
- 6.4.4 The personal calls are extracted from the bills and totalled. If the amount is less than £25 is rolled over until the amount exceeds £25 at which point an invoice is raised for Bettison Associates. The standard connection charge is £2 per month (£6 per quarter). For all periods analysed as part of this review the mobile phone tariff was the standard Council tariff, which does not include any free minutes or texts as the standard tariff is considered to be best value across the Council.
- 6.4.5 Member Services have created a procedure document called 'Procedure note for processing bills' which was last updated in October 2012. This document shows two different ways of processing payment for Members personal calls; the Leader and other Members. (A copy of the procedure document is available as [Appendix 4](#))
- 6.4.6 Following Cllr Bettison being given a Council contract mobile phone in 2009 there continued to be findings and recommendations around Members mobile phone expenses. The main comment in audit reports from 2010 – 2012 was that the process for Cllr Bettison's personal telephone calls was exceptional in comparison to other Members.
- 6.4.7 In interview on 6 November 2013 Alison Sanders, Director of Corporate Services stated *"the recommendation in the 2009 Audit report was followed and the Leader's phone was changed to a council phone included on the corporate contract. He submitted a list of personal numbers that he would use his council phone for and said that all other numbers would be for council business and this is how it has operated since. Every quarter Cllr Bettison reimburses the council for his personal calls"*.
- 6.4.8 In the Members Allowance Scheme Audit 2010 (final issued 21 June 2010) it was highlighted that up until late October 2009 the Councils IT department managed and monitored the quarterly statements for Members using mobile phones, Blackberry's and

internet. Following this date Democratic and Registration Services took over. A recommendation was made from this audit that mobile phone statements should be sent to Members in a timely manner.

- 6.4.9 In the Members Allowance Scheme 2013 Audit (final report issued 25 June 2013) it was identified that all Councillors apart from 'Councillor One' referring to Cllr Bettison were required to *"declare all personal calls on a quarterly basis following the download of each bill by the Democratic Services Assistant"*. The audit confirmed that was a *"special arrangement in place with regard to recharging personal calls to Councillor one from the quarterly Council bill run. The Democratic Services Assistant is required to download the bill and review this, Councillor one is recharged for the costs associated with these numbers specified as his personal calls"*.
- 6.4.10 Recommendation 11 of the above audit report noted that the agreement was made in September 2010 and had not been reviewed since; the audit recommended a review of this process.
- 6.4.11 **Summary of findings:** This review sought to ascertain who had authorised the Leader to identify and pay for personal calls in a different way to other Members. Ann Moore advised that it was a historic decision that she understands Chris Herbert made when facilitating the transfer of Cllr Bettison from his personal phone to a Council contract phone. Chris Herbert was unable to confirm whether he made the decision though the review can confirm that it was agreed with Democratic Services that this was the preferred way of identifying his personal calls due to the volume of the bills. In interview Alison Sanders advised that she was aware there had been this agreement, as detailed in paragraph 6.4.7.
- 6.4.12 In relation to how Member Services within Democratic and Registration Services co-ordinate payment for any personal phone calls a Members, this review has found there is a different process being operated for Cllr Bettison and one other Member (who pays a fixed amount quarterly for personal calls) as opposed to other Members as detailed in paragraph 6.4.2.
- 6.4.13 **Suggested Recommendation:**
1. It is recommended that the Council decide on and document the procedure for the checking and processing personal mobile phone calls for Members when they appear on the Council quarterly phone bills, to give clarity and transparency to the process. There may be different ways for different Members, though this should be documented.

6.5 How often are the Leader's telephone bills reviewed to ascertain whether he is on the most cost effective tariff for the authority; and

How frequently should the arrangement for the processing of identifying the Leader's personal telephone calls be reviewed?

- 6.5.1 Ann Moore advised in interview that a form is filled in as a business justification for someone either Member or Officer requesting a phone, which states that usage will be reviewed regularly. The main reason for this was actually to see if people had a need for a phone. Ann explained that if their usage was minimal, then the council would take the phone back and then a saving would be made from not paying for a phone that was not being used. The review was to look at non-usage rather than excess usage. Ann elaborated that to Democratic Services it was clear that the Leader was a high volume user and they did want to find a cheaper solution but there were problems as the council has a specific contract that Cllr Bettison's sort of usage would not fit in to.
- 6.5.2 When analysing the mobile phone bill data of Cllr Bettison the review has found that there is a system whereby he could send text messages to a Council computer that would be received as an email, though would still incur the cost to the Council as a text message as his mobile phone does not have an email function.
- 6.5.3 The data showed that on some occasions texts messages were being sent only a matter of seconds apart at great volume, this is Cllr Bettison sending group text messages to other Members, for example the Conservative Group. This incurred a charge not only to every individual sent but for the length of the text message should it have gone over the default number of characters permitted in one text message. Cllr Bettison commented that since the original Freedom of Information Request entered by the member of the public, he has learnt that if there were twenty people in a group the Council could incur costs for 60 text message.
- 6.5.4 As a result of this finding the review suggested to the interviewees the possibility of Cllr Bettison being supplied with a Blackberry device. Cllr Bettison confirmed that he had use of a Blackberry with email function for his role in the LGA. Cllr Bettison stated that there are advantages to using a mobile phone and sending texts as opposed to a Blackberry. Cllr Bettison stated that very often messages are quite short and putting together a group on the Blackberry is more difficult than keeping it on the phone.
- 6.5.5 Both Alison Sanders and Pat Keane confirmed that Cllr Bettison had been offered a Blackberry. Pat Keane advised that Cllr Bettison had been reminded about the number of characters in a single text message.
- 6.5.6 Alison Sanders stated that the Council's mobile phone corporate contract tariffs are reviewed every 2 years, and the tariff that is best council-wide is considered. The Leader had not been picked out as a special user whose extraordinary use did not 'fit' into the Council's tariff. The Council's tariff covers 983 handsets of whom 218 use a Blackberry and 765 use standard mobile phones; Cllr Bettison is the highest phone user.
- 6.5.7 Pat Keane confirmed that in the past the corporate tariff had always stayed the same for everyone as it is a corporate contract. Pat advised that an exercise had taken place in the summer last year to secure a new corporate contract until August 2014. A review of the corporate contract and tariff was undertaken at least every 2 years. It is currently the most cost effective tariff for the Council's overall use. He advised that IT will be using the government procurement framework to ascertain which future potential suppliers could be used for future mobile phone contracts.

- 6.5.8 It has been confirmed that since the beginning of this review, a review exercise with Vodafone has revealed that for one quarter (billing month October 2013) Cllr Bettison's mobile phone usage was 10% of all Council usage. Following this report was received from Vodafone, IT have now negotiated a £10 per month bundle with Vodafone inclusive of unlimited calls and texts for the Leader. There are no other users who are close to this volume of calls.
- 6.5.9 **Summary of findings:** This review has established that it has been acknowledged there had been a failure in not recognising Cllr Bettison as an exceptional user earlier and not making other contract arrangements, but this has now been rectified. There is only one tariff for whole Council, which was not suitable for his usage, hence why alternative arrangements of the £10 per month contract had to be made separately for him to reduce cost. The review has found no evidence to suggest regular checks are made to monitor individual high volume Member user's mobile phone usage in order to ascertain whether the tariff is the most cost effective. The review detailed in paragraph 6.5.8 indicated that Cllr Bettison's usage is 10% of Council usage, though there is no evidence to suggest this check has been carried out prior to this.
- 6.5.10 **Suggested Recommendations:**
1. It is recommended that the Council consider whether there are any additional Officers or Members deemed as high users who should be transferred to a similar contract as Cllr Bettison, leading to increased savings.
 2. It is recommended that the Council improve its policy for the regular review of the cost of mobile phone usage to pick up individual Member high users, in order to give clarity and demonstrate transparency.
- 6.6 **Is there any evidence to support the contention that there was misuse of a Council mobile phone and irregularities of public funds arising from payments made in respect of Councillor Bettison's telephone usage?**
- 6.6.1 There was insufficient data available to review and analyse the data for the period 2004 – 2009 as Cllr Bettison no longer had the full itemised bill information available. Cllr Bettison requested these from Vodafone though they were unable to provide the information dating back.
- 6.6.2 There were only 'expenses' paid between 2004 – 2009, as Cllr Bettison was invoicing the authority for Council related calls. After Cllr Bettison was given a Council mobile phone in 2009 there were no expenses paid in relation to the bills, he was required to reimburse the authority for personal calls and texts.
- 6.6.3 Raw data was obtained from Member Services within Democratic and Registration Services, in the form of itemised bills for each quarter of each year between 2009 – 2013 for Cllr Bettison's Council mobile phone. The bills obtained had not yet been processed by Members Service so the two prefixes of 01624 and 07624 were present.
- 6.6.4 It was agreed with the Monitoring Officer that due to the volume of the telephone bills that a quarter per year would be sampled and analysed in order to ascertain whether there is any evidence to support the contention that there was a misuse in order to gain, on the part of Cllr Bettison in respect of his mobile telephone usage. The following periods were sampled:
- 2009 – January – March
 - 2010 – April – June
 - 2011 – July – October
 - 2012 – September – December
 - 2013 – January – March

- 6.6.5 Both Pivot table and Excel spreadsheet analysis has be used in order to analyse the data, the data has been separated into the below sections (full pivot table methodology is available in Appendix A)
- 6.6.6 (A) SMS data analysis;
(B) Roaming SMS data analysis;
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(F) Calls to Directory enquiries data analysis.

(A) SMS data analysis

- 6.6.7 Pivot table (A) shows SMS data analysis of Cllr Bettison's mobile phone bills. The analysis showed a large number of text messages are being sent, which is due to the volume of group messages Cllr Bettison sends.
- 6.6.8 The total cost of all calls and texts sent and received for the whole period was £2818.44, with £2049.49 being text messages either sent or received. This is supported by evidence when looking at the bills that there are multiple text messages as mentioned in paragraph 6.6.10, Cllr Bettison mainly uses his phone for sending group text messages as an alternative to email and because this is deemed as the most convenient form of communication for Cllr Bettison. (Appendix A – details Pivot table (A)).
- 6.6.9 The lowest cost per quarter is £123.06 for the period January – March 2009, with the highest being £682.37.
- 6.6.10 The following breakdown of costs has been established:
- SMS Incoming - £35.47 (Pivot table A.1 shows a breakdown of costs per quarter in Appendix A)
 - SMS Outgoing - £1960.22 (Pivot table A.2 shows a breakdown of costs per quarter in Appendix A)
 - SMS Foreign Leg - £53.75 (Pivot table A.3 shows a breakdown of costs per quarter in Appendix A)

(Meaning of SMS Foreign Leg: When you are roaming, you are charged for example for all outgoing calls as well as the international 'leg' of incoming calls or texts).

(B) Roaming SMS data analysis

- 6.6.11 Pivot table (B) shows roaming SMS data analysis of Cllr Bettison's mobile phone bills. Cllr Bettison has paid for all of the costs incurred sending text messages to the prefix 07624.
- 6.6.12 The cost of text messages sent to the prefix Cllr Bettison identified as private - 07624 for the whole period sampled is £419.10 out of the total cost of £2049.43 as detailed in Pivot table (A). The lowest cost per quarter being £25.15 between January - March 2009 against the highest cost per quarter being £154.69 between July – October 2011. (Appendix A – details Pivot table (B)).
- 6.6.13 Checks have been made and the review can confirm that the prefix 07624 applies to all Isle of Man mobile telephone numbers. The prefix is operated by Manx Telecom and evidence of this was obtained at <http://www.area-codes.org.uk/07624-numbers.php> (Printout of website evidence available as Appendix 5)

(C) Call data analysis

6.6.14 Pivot table (C) shows call data analysis of Cllr Bettison's mobile phone bills.

6.6.15 The cost of all calls during the whole period sampled being £769.01. The lowest cost per quarter being £40.98 between January – March 2009 and the highest being £322.04 for the period July – October 2011. (Appendix A – details Pivot table (C)).

(D) Roaming call data analysis

6.6.16 Pivot table (D.1) shows the cost of roamed outgoing calls and the cost of calls to the Isle of Man landline prefix Cllr Bettison identified as private - 01624. The total cost of all roamed outgoing calls for the whole period sampled was £290.33 and incoming was £95.19.

6.6.17 Pivot table (D.2) shows the cost of calls to the Isle of Man mobile prefix 07624. For the whole period sampled the cost of the calls to numbers with the above prefix was £57.20, with the lowest cost per quarter being £3.91 against the highest cost per quarter as £21.09 for the period July – October 2011.

6.6.18 It can be confirmed that checks were made using the website: <http://www.area-codes.org.uk/01624-numbers.php> which confirmed that 01624 was a prefix for an Isle of Man landline number. Cllr Bettison was invoiced for and paid for these personal calls. (See Appendix 6 for printout)

(E) Calls to Bracknell Forest Borough Council Members analysis

6.6.19 The review was given authorisation to obtain all contact details for Bracknell Forest Borough Councillors, including landline, work and a mobile numbers. Out of all 92 Cllr contact details only ten numbers were not contacted either via text or phone during the period. This shows the review that Cllr Bettison is clearly active in communicating with colleagues and again demonstrates the sheer number of phone calls and text message Cllr Bettison makes as part of his daily Council business.

(F) Calls to Directory enquiries data analysis

6.6.20 Pivot table (F) shows for the whole sampled period the total cost for calls to Directory Enquiries comes to £50.94, with the highest expenditure for one quarter being £28.57. Cllr Bettison advised that he uses Directory Enquiries by calling, asking for a number and being put straight through. (Appendix A – details Pivot table (F)).

6.6.21 Further Findings

6.6.22 Cllr Bettison confirmed that the only personal calls he had made or texts he had sent had been to numbers with the two prefixes that he has identified as personal. When asked if he had ever made any other personal calls, he said *“very rarely – perhaps the dentist occasionally”*.

6.6.23 As identified in paragraph 6.3.2 all interviewees stated that whilst Cllr Bettison's usage is extremely high, this is due to the nature of his role. Cllr Bettison advised that he uses his in-car hands free system to speak to people on Council business in between meetings.

6.6.24 Cllr Bettison said *“To get maximum use of my time, I schedule calls during travel and times waiting between meetings, and in London when there is perhaps a 2 hour gap. I don't often make calls in the office – that is when I meet people in person.”* This gives context to the number of calls and texts identified in the sampled period.

6.6.25 **Summary of findings:** The review has found no evidence to support the contention that there was misuse of a Council mobile phone and irregularities of public funds arising from payments made in respect of Councillor Bettison's telephone expenses. Whilst the review has not entailed interrogating each telephone number, the detailed analysis has not indicated any anomalies that have not been explained. Whilst Cllr Bettison did advise that he "very rarely" on the balance of probabilities an occasional call cannot be deemed as misuse.

7. Recommendations

7.1 The following recommendations are as a result of the findings of the independent review:

Guidance on usage of mobile phones for Members

1. The current arrangements in place to give guidance; Bracknell Forest Mobile Phone Do's and Don'ts should become part of the Telephony Standards and issued to all existing Council mobile phone users.
2. It is recommended that the Council's IT Acceptable Usage Policy is developed to also contain acceptable mobile phone usage, to give clarity and transparency. Members should be required to declare their understanding of the policy once circulated.

Authorisation process for the current checking procedure for Members mobile phone bills

1. It is recommended that the Council decide on and document the procedure for the checking and processing personal mobile phone calls for Members when they appear on the Council quarterly phone bills, to give clarity and transparency to the process. There may be different ways for different Members, though this should be documented.

Frequency of the review of Members mobile telephone usage and cost to the Council

1. It is recommended that the Council consider whether there are any additional Officers or Members deemed as high users who should be transferred to a similar contract as Cllr Bettison, leading to increased savings.
2. It is recommended that the Council improve its policy for the regular review of the cost of mobile phone usage to pick up individual Member high users, in order to give clarity and demonstrate transparency.



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APPENDIX A – PIVOT TABLE DATA ANALYSIS

**INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE TELEPHONE USAGE OF THE LEADER OF
BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL BETWEEN 2004 - 2013**

CONDUCTED BY

**VICTORIA JACKSON, SENIOR INVESTIGATIONS OFFICER, WOKINGHAM
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

DATE – 16 JANUARY 2014

REPORT DISTRIBUTION

| Name | Job Title |
|-------------|--|
| Alex Jack | Monitoring Officer and Borough Solicitor, Bracknell Forest Borough Council |

Introduction

This appendix shows the detailed findings in relation to the pivot table data analysis which was carried out as part of this review:

- (A) SMS data analysis;
- (B) Roaming SMS data analysis;
- (C) Call data analysis;
- (D) Roaming call data analysis;
- (E) Calls to Bracknell Forest Borough Council Members analysis; and
- (F) Calls to Directory enquiries data analysis.

Additional Information

Pivot table data analysis of Cllr Bettison's Bracknell Forest Borough Council mobile phone bills 2009 – 2013:

(A) SMS data analysis

SMS Data Analysis:

Cost of SMS messages sent and received for each invoiced period:

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Invoice Period | Total |
| April - June 2010 | 636.66 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 123.06 |
| January - March 2013 | 305.99 |
| July - October 2011 | 682.37 |
| September - December 2012 | 301.37 |
| Grand Total | 2049.43 |

Breakdown of costs:

- SMS received whilst roaming – 0
- SMS Incoming - £35.47
- SMS Outgoing - £1960.22
- SMS Foreign Leg - £53.75

SMS Incoming:

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Invoice Period | Total |
| April - June 2010 | 11.28 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 1.28 |
| January - March 2013 | 2.50 |
| July - October 2011 | 12.50 |
| September - December 2012 | 7.92 |

| | |
|-------------|-------|
| Grand Total | 35.47 |
|-------------|-------|

SMS Outgoing:

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | |
|---------------------------|---------|
| Invoice Period | Total |
| April - June 2010 | 625.38 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 68.03 |
| January - March 2013 | 303.49 |
| July - October 2011 | 669.87 |
| September - December 2012 | 293.45 |
| Grand Total | 1960.22 |

SMS Foreign Leg:

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Invoice Period | Total |
| April - June 2010 | 0.00 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 53.75 |
| January - March 2013 | 0.00 |
| July - October 2011 | 0.00 |
| September - December 2012 | 0.00 |
| Grand Total | 53.75 |

(Method: for each of the above pivot tables the invoice period was selected first, followed by charge amount, followed by destination being; SMS Incoming, SMS Outgoing, SMS Foreign Leg)

(B) Roaming SMS data analysis

SMS sent to 7624 (Prefix identified as personal number):

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | Destination | | |
|---------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Invoice Period | SMS - Outgoing | SMS Foreign Leg | Grand Total |
| April - June 2010 | 131.968 | 0 | 131.97 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 13.755 | 11.395 | 25.15 |
| January - March 2013 | 55.922 | 0 | 55.92 |
| July - October 2011 | 154.69 | 0 | 154.69 |
| September - December 2012 | 51.374 | 0 | 51.37 |
| Grand Total | 407.709 | 11.395 | 419.10 |

(Method: for the above pivot table the invoice period was selected first, followed by charge amount, followed by destination being, followed by destination; SMS Outgoing and SMS Foreign Leg, followed by dialled number searching for all numbers beginning with 07624)

Call data analysis

Cost of all calls made during the tested periods:

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Invoice Period | Total |
| April - June 2010 | 194.97 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 40.98 |
| January - March 2013 | 71.93 |
| July - October 2011 | 332.04 |
| September - December 2012 | 129.09 |
| Grand Total | 769.01 |

(C) Roaming call data analysis

Cost of outgoing calls to 7624 during the identified period:

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Invoice Period | Total |
| April - June 2010 | 9.17 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | 5.22 |
| January - March 2013 | 3.91 |
| July - October 2011 | 21.09 |
| September - December 2012 | 17.82 |
| Grand Total | 57.20 |

Cost of outgoing calls to 01624:

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | Destination | | | Grand Total |
|---------------------------|-------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| | Isle of Man | Other Mobile Network | Roamed Outgoing | |
| April - June 2010 | 0.621 | | 2.605 | 3.226 |
| Jan - Mar 2009 | | | 1.124 | 1.124 |
| January - March 2013 | | 0.129 | 0.746 | 0.875 |
| July - October 2011 | | 4.708 | 21.556 | 26.264 |
| September - December 2012 | | 1.437 | 1.744 | 3.181 |
| Grand Total | 0.621 | 6.274 | 27.775 | 34.67 |

(Method: for the above pivot tables the invoice period was selected first, followed by charge amount, followed by destination being, followed by destination; Isle of Man followed by selecting dialled number beginning with;07624 or 01624)

(D) Calls to Bracknell Forest Borough Council Members analysis

Confidential data due to personal numbers being analysed.

(F) Calls to Directory enquiries data analysis

| Sum of Charge Amount (£) | |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Invoice Period | Total |
| January - March 2013 | 3.333 |
| July - October 2011 | 28.574 |
| September - December 2012 | 19.028 |
| Grand Total | 50.935 |

(Method: for the above pivot tables the invoice period was selected first, followed by charge amount, followed by destination being, followed by destination; Directory Enquiries)



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APPENDICES

**INDEPENDENT REVIEW OF THE TELEPHONE USAGE OF THE LEADER OF
BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL BETWEEN 2004 - 2013**

CONDUCTED BY

**VICTORIA JACKSON, SENIOR INVESTIGATIONS OFFICER, WOKINGHAM
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1. **Blank request form – Mobile**
2. **Bracknell Forest Telephony Standards document**
3. **Bracknell Forest – Mobile Phone Do's and Don'ts document**
4. **Procedure note for processing bills**
5. **Printout of website evidence – Area Codes – 07624**
6. **Printout of website evidence – Area Codes - 01624**

APPENDIX 1 - Blank request form – Mobile

BRACKNELL FOREST BOROUGH COUNCIL

MOBILE PHONE REQUEST FORM FOR COUNCILLORS

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Date of Request: | |
| Name of Councillor: | |
| Contact Telephone Number: | |

BUSINESS JUSTIFICATION FOR REQUEST

OR

I confirm that I hold the following office:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Executive Member | <input type="checkbox"/> | Minority Group Leader | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mayor / Deputy Mayor | <input type="checkbox"/> | Champion | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Planning & Highways Chair | <input type="checkbox"/> | Licensing & Safety Chair | <input type="checkbox"/> |

AGREEMENT

- I will be the only person using the mobile phone.
- I will be responsible for the security of the mobile phone and if it is lost or mislaid it will be my

responsibility to ensure that the ICT Helpdesk and Vodafone are notified immediately.

- I note that my use of the mobile phone will be reviewed on a regular basis.
- I agree to return the mobile phone to the Head of Democratic and Registration Services if I cease to be a Councillor or at the request of the Leader following a review or change in circumstances.

Councillor's Signature:

LEADER'S SIGN OFF

Name: Paul Bettison

Signature:

Date:

FOR ICT SERVICES USE ONLY

Date mobile phone provisioned: _____

Completed by: _____

Device handover & familiarisation
session date (if appropriate): _____

Bracknell Forest Telephony Usage Standards

Classification: Unrestricted

Document Control

Document Ref: Live Date Created: 5th July 2012

Version: 1.1 Date Modified: 25th September 2012

Revision due 5th March 2013

Author: Jackie Jordan Sign & Date:

Owning Service: Pat Keane Sign & Date: Pat Keane (5th March 2013)

Change History

Version Date Description Change ID

0.2 July 2012 Changes to reflect meeting with ICT

0.3 July 2012 Changes following review by Alison Sanders

0.4 Aug 2012 Changes following further consultation with ICT Services

0.5 Aug 2012

Changes following consultation with HR and further comments from ICT Network Manager

0.6 Aug 2012 Changes following feedback from Robin Brown, ICT Services

0.7 Aug 2012 Change to 10.1 following feedback from Alan Nash, Borough Treasurer

0.8 Aug 2012 Correction to rental costs for Blackberry from £12.50 to £12.75 pm

V1.0 September 2012 Post CMT Changes to reflect reimbursement for the cost of personal calls

V1.1 March 2013 Reviewed and updated PK

Related Documents

Reference Title Tier

Bracknell Forest Mobile & Flexible Working Policy - 2012

Corporate ICT Policies and Principles for the Use of ICT – BBP8 Mobile Phones

Numerous articles/downloads on BORIS for telephones/handsets/mobiles/Blackberry devices

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1. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this standard is to ensure a consistent quality of telephone usage and telephone communications are maintained.

1.2. This document defines common standards for the use, procurement and management of mobile telephone and land line telephone communications.

1.3. This document should be read in conjunction with

- (a) Corporate ICT Policies & Principles for the Use of ICT and
- (b) the Council's Flexible Working Policy.

Information contained within this standard does not supersede information nor should it contradict anything within those Policies.

1.4. This document covers:

- Standard Mobile Telephones
- Blackberry Devices or equivalent
- Land Line Telephones (desk handsets and soft phones)
- Voicemail

References to "telephones" within this document may cover any or all of these.

The aims of this standard are as follows:

1.5.1. To ensure Bracknell Forest Council mobile and landline telephones and voicemail are used appropriately and efficiently to support effective working practices;

1.5.2. To ensure all Bracknell Forest Council staff understand the relevant requirements concerning their use of Council mobile devices; and

1.5.3. To support the Council in fulfilling its Duty of Care and ensuring the wellbeing of its employees.

1.6. This standard has had consultation with relevant stakeholders and has been ratified by Corporate Management Team.

2. Applicability

2.1. This standard applies to everyone who uses telecommunications facilities owned by

the Council, including employees, temporary staff, agency staff, consultants where telephones facilitate flexible working. Some sections may have their own local practice on telephone answering (eg the Customer Services Centre) but the general principles of this document will apply where those standards are not specific.

2.2. This standard will apply whenever users are working for the Council, whether it is in the Council offices, working remotely from home or another location.

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2.3. This standard will be implemented to staff in phases in line with the Time for a Change Programme's move to flexible working and the implementation of "workstyles". It will be limited to those sites that are covered by the Council's corporate Cisco telephone system.

2.4. Misuse of telephones or telecommunications equipment which breaches the Bracknell Forest ICT Policy or non-adherence to the standards set out in this document may result in:

- Withdrawal of access to relevant services
- Informal or formal disciplinary action (in accordance with the Council's disciplinary procedure)

3. Responsibilities

3.1. It is the responsibility of users identified in Section 2 above to familiarise themselves with and to comply with this standard.

3.2. Managers are responsible for promoting, monitoring and ensuring adherence to these standards within their area.

3.3. Implementation of the Council's Telephony Usage Standard will be managed by the Chief Officer, Information Services

3.4. The ICT Service is responsible for:

- Directing and reviewing this standard.
- Ensuring that there is effective consultation about the standard and, if appropriate, any subsequent changes to it.
- Publishing and promoting the adoption of this standard.
- Ensuring the Council's telecommunications infrastructure underpins this Standard

4. Review

4.1. This standard will be reviewed annually to respond to changes in technology or working practices.

4.2. The Corporate Management Team is responsible for approving updated standards.

5. Equipment Allocation

5.1. In areas operating under the Council's flexible working policy, telephone handsets are allocated to desks rather than to individuals. Staff will be allocated a virtual 4 digit extension number ("one-number") – in most cases this will be their existing 4 digit number. **Fixed** workers who are allocated a number will normally "log into" the telephone handset on their desk and their calls will normally be permanently directed

to that handset. **Flexible** workers (**home flex** and **free**) would normally divert their “one number” to their working location each day, ie a desk handset (on a shared desk

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in the office) or their existing or new Bracknell Forest mobile device (outside of the office / home).

5.2. As far as flexible workers are concerned, because they regularly spend time away from the office it is important that communications are maintained - both to maintain the service and to take account of lone working. It is therefore, likely that most if not all will require a mobile device of some kind.

5.3. Line Managers must be satisfied that one or more of the following business criteria are met before authorising issue of a mobile phone or Blackberry device:

- The employee is a “flexible” worker - either **home-flex** or **free** - and requires a mobile device to enable them to undertake their job effectively.
- Issuing the employee with a mobile device will enable them to provide a more efficient service to their customers.
- There is a requirement for the individual to be contactable whilst working away from their normal place of work and where other methods of communication (e.g. landline or e-mail) are unsatisfactory.
- The individual’s role involves out of hours support (e.g. on call) which necessitates alternative means of contact.
- The employee is a lone worker and their personal safety could be compromised if they are not able to communicate or be contactable by phone.
- There is a statutory/corporate requirement for a mobile device (e.g. Emergency Planning).

5.4. Blackberry devices represent a considerably higher investment for the Council than a mobile phone in terms of ongoing rental costs. At the time of writing this is Mobile £1.50 per month and Blackberry £12.75 per month. A Blackberry device will provide voice and “on the move” data (email) access. A mobile will provide voice only. Line managers will therefore need to refer to Appendix A for ICT equipment allocation to Employee Workstyle and also assess the business need carefully before authorising the issue of a Blackberry device. In determining business need the manager will need to identify for his or her Chief Officer how the member of staff’s/department’s efficiency measurably improves if they are able to receive emails rather than just voice communications during the working day (eg whilst working in the field and not able to access a computer).

5.5. Requests for mobile devices may originate from an employee or their line manager but must be approved by the line manager. Requests for Blackberry devices will require the further authorisation of a Chief Officer. A line manager/Chief Officer may refuse an employee’s request for a mobile device if the above criteria are not met and a refusal should be explained to the individual.

5.6. Mobile devices are allocated to according to workstyles/roles and service needs. If an individual changes their role, and has previously had a mobile device, this does not mean that they are automatically entitled to the same equipment in their new position. On leaving the authority the individual should surrender their mobile device (as they will do with other ICT equipment) to their line manager. If transferring to another role

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within the authority, the individual should discuss with their line manager if it is appropriate to keep the same mobile and/or other ICT equipment (see 6.4 below.)

Equipment Procurement and Registration

6.1. The process for ordering telephone equipment (landlines, mobile devices and handsets) is published in BORIS.

6.2. Directorates are responsible for processing requests for mobile phones and Blackberry

devices for their staff. All other telecommunications requests are handled by ICT. Current departmental telephone contacts are published in BORIS

6.3. Once a new Blackberry device is received by the departmental telephone contact, they will need to log a call with the ICT Help Desk and leave the device with the Help Desk so that

- It can be recorded and appropriately configured
- Training in its use can be provided to the recipient

6.4. Where a mobile phone or Blackberry device needs to be re-allocated to employees, eg

where a new employee takes over the job role of someone who has left, the department telephone contact and IT Helpdesk should be notified.

6.5. Managers must ensure that the relevant employee's telephony contact details (their "one number") is maintained appropriately – see Section 15.2 below.

6.6. Mobile device users are expected to maintain the equipment provided to them in a serviceable condition. Damage to or loss of the phone may result in the withdrawal of this facility, and/or if the loss or damage is due to negligence, in disciplinary action.

7. Return/transfer of Equipment

7.1. Members of staff in possession of a Council mobile phone or Blackberry device are required to surrender it to their line manager upon leaving the employment of the Council, or on maternity leave or on being transferred to another post which may or may not require the use of a mobile device .

7.2. Council staff are permitted to buy out their existing mobile phone contract should they leave the Authority. Please contact you local Vodafone representative for further details.

8. Lost or Stolen Equipment

8.1. If a Council mobile device is lost or stolen a bar should be put onto the phone by the employee contacting their departmental Vodafone Contact during office hours and outside office hours Vodafone's Customer Service team on 03333 043333. The loss of equipment must be reported:-

- to the Police and an incident reference number obtained.

- the line manager.
- as a security incident.

8.2. The local Vodafone Contact should contact the ICT Help Desk to report the loss or theft so that

- if applicable, the link to the Blackberry server can be severed.
- the number can be removed from the corporate telephone system.

8.3. The local Vodafone Contact can then arrange for a replacement device.

9. Security

The following guidance is provided by the Council's Information Security Officer:

9.1. Telephone conversations (and messaging) are inherently insecure. It is possible for calls to be intercepted, although the risk of a specific Council number being targeted is small.

9.2. Users are advised to take the following precautions when discussing sensitive information over telephone lines:

- If you are in a public area, ensure you cannot be overheard by persons not authorised to hear the content of your call.
- Ensure you know that the person you have called is authorised and has a 'need-to-know' the information you are discussing.
- If the information you are discussing is very sensitive, it may be appropriate for the discussion to take place in person or to use the Bracknell Forest internal email system, "safe" emails or GCSX mail accounts.

9.3. Voicemail security – Users are advised to take the following precautions when using Bracknell Forest's own corporate (Cisco) or mobile voicemail:-

- Ensure you have set your own PIN/security code (do not use the initial pre-set code) and that it is kept secure and not shared (see also 13.3).
- Record an appropriate greeting for callers, recommending that they do not leave very sensitive messages.
- When retrieving voicemail messages consider the risks of eavesdropping (where a caller may have left a sensitive message).

10. Private Use

10.1. Mobile phones and Blackberries– These are issued to those employees who need one

to ensure the efficient discharge of their duties. The cost (or reasonable estimate of the cost) of personal calls and text must be reimbursed to the Council. Inappropriate

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or improper use of a mobile phone will result in appropriate disciplinary action being taken against the employee.

11. Using a mobile phone while driving

11.1. Staff are expected to abide by legislation and are responsible for any fine/penalty if using a mobile phone while driving. Bracknell Forest Council will not accept liability for penalties incurred for breach of legislation.

11.2. From 1st December 2003 it became illegal to make or receive a call from a mobile phone while driving if the phone is held in your hand during any part of the operation.

You can also be prosecuted for using a 'hands free' mobile phone if you fail to have proper control of your vehicle. The penalties for careless or dangerous driving whilst using a phone can include disqualification, a large fine and up to two years imprisonment.

11.3. The Council does not condone the use of any telephone device whilst driving even when employing hands-free equipment, for anyone working for the Council or on Council business. Users should only use a phone in a vehicle once they have stopped in a safe place. The engine must be switched off if the mobile device is used in the car.

12. General Guidance on Use for Landline Telephones

12.1. It is the responsibility of Fixed staff who have been allocated a four digit number ("one

number") to ensure that they are correctly logged into the handset on their fixed desk.

12.2. It is the responsibility of an individual using a shared desk to ensure that they are correctly logged into the desk phone on arrival and logged out on leaving.

12.3. There are clear guidelines provided detailing how to log into and out of a desk handset and also how numbers can be diverted (call forward) using the telephone handset. Guidance can also be found on BORIS.

12.4. Over and above the use of the handset to divert calls, it is possible to set up diverts using the corporate (Cisco) system through the ccmuser web page. The ccmuser web page is available both internally and externally and guidance on its use can be found in BORIS

12.5. If a user needs to make or take sensitive calls, they are advised to select an appropriate location where they will not be overheard.

12.6. It is not appropriate for a "one number" to be diverted to either a personal mobile or a personal landline since the Council wish to ensure that appropriate voicemail greetings are left and that business calls are answered professionally at all times.

12.7. Bracknell Forest mobiles and Blackberry device numbers will be input into the corporate telephone system by ICT Services in line with the phased introduction of flexible working. This will enable "flexible staff" to divert their calls. In future this will be done as part of the "new starter" process. If a member of staff believes their mobile/Blackberry number is not in the system, they should email ICT Helpdesk to log a call for this to be done.

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13. Other General Guidance on Usage of Mobile Phones and Blackberry devices

The following guidelines must be observed when using Council Mobile Devices (Mobile Phone or Blackberry devices):-

13.1. Employees issued with a mobile device are reminded that the mobile device remains the property of the Council. The user should take all reasonable steps to prevent loss or damage to their mobile device. This includes not leaving it in view in unattended vehicles and storing it securely, when not in use.

13.2. All mobile devices will be provided with an instruction booklet and battery charger. It is

advisable to read the instruction manual and become familiar with the features provided. Online help is also available on BORIS. Mobiles should be kept adequately charged.

13.3. To protect the authority against any misuse, as a result of loss or theft, mobile phones must be protected by a PIN (Personal Identification Number) code to prevent access by unauthorised users. This can be set up by following the instructions in the manual provided with the device. Online help is also available on BORIS. Blackberry devices are protected by the use of a password.

13.4. Mobile devices issued by the Council need only be switched on when the member of staff is working or on call.

13.5. Members of staff should keep their mobile device with them during office hours when working away from the office. Where possible, the phone should be switched on to receive calls. If this is not possible (e.g. during a conference or meeting), the member of staff should check their phone to receive messages at intervals throughout the day.

13.6. Mobile devices should not be left ringing or unattended in the office as this can cause a disturbance to other members of staff.

13.7. In meetings, mobile phones should be switched to the silent mode or switched off. As a courtesy to other meeting attendees users should not be checking emails or sending text messages during the meeting. This should be done at appropriate breaks in proceedings. In the rare cases where users do have an urgent call/situation to respond to, they should step out of the meeting.

13.8. When making and receiving calls on a Council mobile device, calls must be handled in a professional and efficient manner. Each department may have its own protocols in relation to this but as a minimum calls should be answered by giving name and department/section.

13.9. Voice mail greetings should be changed regularly, as required. During planned absences, staff should modify any voice mail greeting to reflect this information, and provide a relevant contact name/number or divert their phone to the relevant contact once it has been agreed with their line manager who this should be.

- Name
- Position
- Availability
- Alternate / emergency contact number or extension

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NB Some staff may have more than one voicemail service (Corporate & Vodafone) so will need to update both greetings

13.10. In the case of unscheduled absence of an employee with a four digit number, in the same way as for email, the immediate line manager should make contact with the ICT Help Desk to make arrangements for calls to be forwarded to another person within the Council and/or to have access to voicemail accounts so that the greeting can be amended accordingly.

14. Guidelines for Fixed workers

14.1. If you have been designated the role of a Fixed Worker, then you will be office based and have an allocated desk. As such, the landline telephone will be the communication device for you to make and receive calls.

14.2. Detailed guidance on the use/functionality of your handset is available from BORIS

14.3. It is the responsibility of the user to ensure that their 4 digit extension number (one number), is published in BORIS and the Outlook Address Book. A call should be logged with the IT Help Desk if the number is missing or incorrect in the Outlook Address Book.

14.4. Employees should ensure that their whereabouts are kept up to date on Outlook and also be able to access and check the whereabouts of their team on the system. Employees should work in accordance with the Open Calendar Policy.

14.5. It is important that you handle incoming calls in a prompt, courteous and efficient manner.

14.6. If you have a voicemail associated with your direct dial extension you will need to update it regularly, as appropriate. This will need to be kept up to date with a personal greeting containing:

- Name
- Position
- Availability
- Alternate / emergency contact number or extension

14.7. You should check your office voicemail regularly (speak to your manager about the frequency) so important callers/messages can be responded to quickly.

14.8. During a scheduled absence, calls should be diverted to another member of your team or by voicemail greeting should direct the caller to use another number, so no calls go unanswered. This should be agreed with your Line Manager.

14.9. During unscheduled absence from the office, as for email, the Line Manager will need to contact the ICT Help Desk to obtain access to the voicemail to be able to check any messages that may be waiting, amend the greeting or forward calls to another number.

14.10. If you work as part of a team that has an Out of Hours answering service then you need to make yourself familiar with the procedure for activating this service at the end of each day.

15. Guidelines for Flexible workers (Homeflex or Free)

15.1. As a flexible worker, your working time is divided either between the office and your home OR the office, your home and other locations. As a flexible worker you will have access to a shared-desk when in the office. The office shared-desk telephone handset will be the primary communication device for you to make and receive calls, and you will be issued with a mobile device which is your secondary device.

15.2. It is the responsibility of you, the user to ensure that your “one number” (four digit extension) is correct and published in

(a) BORIS -

(b) the Outlook Address Book

If the data is incorrect, you should log a call with ICT Help Desk for the change/s to be made in the Outlook Address Book.

15.3. On arriving at the office and finding a shared-desk to work at, log into the handset, as per the instructions/guidance provided. You can then use this handset to make and receive calls during the working day, update your voicemail greeting, check for messages and missed calls.

15.4. Once you leave the office to attend a meeting/travel home, you should ensure that your one number is forwarded to the appropriate support team, who are kept up to date with your whereabouts, OR you should forward your one number to your mobile phone. If you have corporate voicemail, logging out of the handset and not diverting to mobile will mean all of your calls will go straight to corporate voicemail. If you do not have corporate voicemail, logging out of the desk phone and not diverting calls elsewhere will mean any caller will hear an “engaged” tone. It is important that you do not leave the number logged into the desk handset, as calls may go unanswered and/or cause annoyance to your colleagues.

15.5. You must ensure that Outlook is kept up to date with your whereabouts and accessibility, and update it frequently as your calendar changes. Employees should work in accordance with the open calendar policy available from BORIS.

15.6. You will need to ensure that your voicemail is kept up to date with a personal greeting containing:

- Name
- Position
- Availability
- Alternate / emergency contact number or extension

NB Some staff may have more than one voicemail service so will need to update both.

15.7. You should check your voicemail regularly (check with your manager the frequency required) so important callers/messages can be responded to quickly.

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15.8. During a scheduled absence, eg holiday, calls should be forwarded to another (agreed) team member/manager. Alternatively, your voicemail greeting should be updated to reflect your absence and give an alternative number so that no call goes unanswered. This should be agreed with your line manager.

15.9. In the event of an unscheduled absence, your line manager should be informed. Your

line manager may decide to divert all your calls to another member of staff or they may decide to update the personal message that you have on your voicemail to provide callers with an alternative contact name and number.

15.10. When in a meeting/not able to answer the mobile phone, switch mode to silent to minimise interruption to others.

15.11. When you are working from home, Outlook should be updated accordingly. It should detail when you are available and when you are not (e.g. make it clear if there are periods during the day when you will not be available) and ensure that you can be contacted by colleagues/managers/external contacts during the periods agreed.

15.12. When working from home, you should be contactable on your one number during normal flexible working hours (as shown on your Outlook Calendar), unless there are agreed special circumstances with your manager. You will therefore need to ensure that your “one number” is diverted to your mobile device.

15.13. Numbers other than your “one number” should not be given out to clients/colleagues. We need to avoid the necessity to maintain more than one number per employee for voice communications. If you give out a personal number you cannot distinguish between personal and business calls. You may also continue to receive calls when you are not working or even after you change jobs or leave the Council’s employment.

15.14. It is not appropriate for flexible staff to make use of their personal mobile phones for Bracknell Forest communications because of the necessity for an appropriate voice greeting and also to ensure that business calls to mobiles are always answered in a professional manner. Under no circumstances should client contact data or any other work related data be held in a personal mobile phone for security reasons. Similarly it is not appropriate for calls to your “one number” to be diverted to any number where someone who is not a Bracknell Forest employee may answer.

15.15. If you are unable to make or receive calls at home due to poor quality mobile reception discuss this with your line manager. ICT Help Desk can investigate alternative communications options with you.

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(DOCUMENT COPIED FROM PDF)

APPENDIX 3 - Bracknell Forest – Mobile Phone Do’s and Don’ts document

Bracknell Forest Mobile phone

Your work style has been agreed as ‘free’ or ‘home flex’. You have a BFC mobile phone so you can be contacted easily when working from home.

Keep the phone with you at all times when you are working.

Record an appropriate business greeting on your mobile voice mail.

When working away from the office, divert your council landline number to your BFC mobile phone or divert to an office number where the phone will be answered in working hours.

When you are back in the office, un-divert your landline number from your mobile number.

Use our own directory enquiries number which is 118 881 and costs .71p a minute.

For further advice and guidance please refer to the Bracknell Forest Telephony Usage Standards via the BORIS link <http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/corporate-services/ict-services/ict-services-help-desk/telephone-and-voicemail.htm>

Don't call premium rate numbers on BFC mobiles.

Don't divert your BFC mobile to a home or personal mobile number because calls could be picked up by anyone or answered inappropriately.

Don't use your personal mobile for work purposes and under no circumstances hold work related information on personal phones or other mobile devices.

If your BFC mobile is stolen, report it to:

- ***the police and get an incident reference number***
- ***your line manager***
- ***Vodafone's customer service on 03333 04333 if it happens outside office hours***
- ***your departmental Vodafone rep (find your rep on BORIS via the link <http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/departmental-vodafone-representatives.pdf>***
- ***and raise it as a security incident with the ICT helpdesk***

Personal use of a work mobile is only allowed where reasonable and unavoidable and not excessive. You are expected to pay for these personal calls and texts. You should contact your Vodafone rep for advice on how to make payments. Inappropriate or improper use of a mobile phone could result in disciplinary action.

DEPARTMENTAL VODAPHONE REPRESENTATIVES

| Each directorate and departments within directorates have their own contacts for Vodafone.

| These representatives will provide information about your phone and should be contacted if you have any issues with your phones:

Corporate Services: Tracy Farmer

Environment Culture & Communities: Carol Hughes

Adult Social Care & Health Management Team: Jane Redmond

Adult Social Care & Health – Old People & Long Term Conditions: Gail Ebdon

Adult Social Care & Health - Learning Disabilities Team: Jane Redmond

Adult Social Care & Health – Intermediate Care: Carol Parsons

Adult Social Care Housing & Benefits: Carol Cull

Adult Social Care & Health – Community Mental Health Team: Ruth Carroll

Adult Social Care & Health – Dementia Team: Angela Voeten

Children Young People & Learning - Children's Social Care: Kevin Haddrell

Children Young People & Learning - Youth Offending Service: Janet Besant

Children Young People & Learning - Youth Services: Suzanne Andrews

Children Young People & Learning - Education: Lesley Adams

Children Young People & Learning – Learning & Achievement: Helen Greehy

Chief Executives: Debs Jones

APPENDIX 4 - Procedure note for processing bills

Mobile Phone and Blackberry Bills – Joanna Benham
Last Updated October 2012

Downloading the bills

An email is sent by Vodafone each quarter to say that the bills are ready to download.

You will need to download each mobile phone bill and blackberry bill from the Vodafone website – <https://www.vcol.co.uk/home/default.vco>

On the left hand side of the screen, click on online billing, then report inbox.

You'll need to scroll down the list and find the "cost by user" for the month after the mobile phone period, i.e.

| | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| January – March | cost by user April |
| April – June | cost by user July |
| July – September | cost by user October |
| October – December | cost by user January |

Enter the mobile phone / blackberry number in the box in the top right hand corner and click on add. This will then bring up the details for the relevant member and their mobile or blackberry.

Make a note of the amounts for the following:

- Usage charges
- Recurring charges
- Other charges
- Credits / discounts
- Total charge

Click on the usage charges – this will bring up the list of calls made.

Click on the "export" button at the top of the screen, and for report format, click on Excel (tab separated format), but leave the data range as all data. Click on export.

Click on save and save as

G: / committee / member services / ICT / mobile phones & blackberry's / 2010 bills / 04 – September – December / "Blackberry – name" or "mobile – name"

It will then save the document as an Excel spreadsheet for you. When it's downloaded, it will look pretty unreadable, so you'll need to make it look as readable as possible.

There are a couple of blank sheets saved that show you what column widths to use and the headings to insert at the top of each bill downloaded:

G: / committee / member services / ICT / mobile phones & blackberry's / 2010 bills / BLANK Blackberry and BLANK Mobile

Once you have downloaded each bill, open each one and insert a load of blank lines at the top of the page – copy and paste the headings from the blank form above and fill in the gaps and enter the information that you wrote down before you downloaded the bill.

You'll need to delete a couple of the columns as they contain information that the councillors don't really need to see. Make sure that when you copy and paste the headings from the blank form, make sure that they match up with the ones on the downloaded spreadsheet – then delete the columns that have no bold headings. Also delete the first row that contains the headings that aren't in bold.

When you download the bill, you'll find that some of the numbers dialled will come out funny – i.e. 4.47748E+11. All you need to do is highlight the column, then click on the tools dropdown menu, click on cells, click on the number tab, then number in the left hand list, and drop the decimal places to zero. This will then reformat the numbers in the column to appear as numbers. It will always miss of the zero at the beginning of the phone number though. I always then sort the call data by the date and time of the call – makes logical sense for the phone bill to be in date order.

Sending out the bills

The Councillors individual mobile phone bills and Blackberry bills are received as on a quarterly basis – they need to be downloaded from the Vodafone website.

The bills need to be sent out to each councillor asking them to pay for any personal calls made. Some of the councillors will have just a mobile phone, others will have just a Blackberry, some will have both.

The Blackberry bills are sent out to the councillors for information only – as they are just used to check emails, etc, the council covers the cost of the bill. There are a few councillors who have their Blackberrys voice activated. When you send out the emails requesting payment, they will need to check for calls and pay for any personal ones.

- Send an email to each Councillor with their bill(s) attached and a message saying:

Blackberry only

Dear Councillor

Please find attached your latest Blackberry bill to cover the period April – June 2013.

This is for information only - no action is required from you.

Voice enabled Blackberry

Dear Councillor

Please find attached your latest Blackberry bill to cover the period April – June 2013.

I would be grateful if you could look through your bill, highlight any personal calls and send the highlighted bill, together with any remittance, to me at your earliest convenience.

If no personal calls were made, I would be grateful if you could email me back to confirm this.

Mobile phone only

Dear Councillor

Please find attached an itemised bill for your mobile phone to cover the period April – June 2013.

I would be grateful if you could look through your mobile bill, highlight any personal calls and send the highlighted bill, together with any remittance, to me at your earliest convenience.

If no personal calls were made, I would be grateful if you could email me back to confirm this.

Mobile phone and Blackberry

Dear Councillor

Please find attached an itemised bill for your mobile phone to cover the period April – June 2013.

Mobile Phone Bill

I would be grateful if you could look through your mobile bill, highlight any personal calls and send the highlighted bill, together with any remittance, to me at your earliest convenience.

If no personal calls were made, I would be grateful if you could email me back to confirm this.

Blackberry Bill

Please note that this has been sent to you for information only - no further action is required.

The Leader

Dear Councillor

Please find attached an itemised bill mobile phone to cover the period April – June 2013.

I will raise an invoice to Bettison Associates for the amount of £65.70 for your personal calls.

You then need to complete the “Mobile & Blackberrys – totals, payments, automatic approvals – 20xx – xx” spreadsheet. The filepath is:

G: / Committee / Member Services / ICT / Mobile Phones & Blackberry's /
Mobile & Blackberrys – totals, payments, automatic approvals – 20xx – xx.xls

- Voice enabled BlackBerry’s and mobile phones, enter the bill total on the “mobile phone totals” tab.
- Non voice enabled BlackBerry’s, enter the bill total on the “BlackBerry totals” tab.
- If you are emailed confirmation that no personal calls were made, enter the date on the spreadsheet and date confirmed.
- If payment is received for mobile phones and voice enabled BlackBerry’s, enter amount received on the “mobile phone totals” tab, enter date received and any notes.

- When payments are made, complete a “miscellaneous payment slip” and pop it in the internal post (with the cheque), addressed to the cashiers. Enter the following on the slip:

Received from e.g. Cllr Ward
Financial code COR006R5
Amount amount paying in
Details e.g. April – June 2010 mobile phone bill.

Put a note on the front to ask them to send you a copy of the receipt back.

- File the receipt along with the returned bill on file 01.15.07.

07624 numbers

Mobile phone numbers

07624 numbers are for mobile phones on the Isle of Man.

All UK [07 numbers](#) are for mobiles, pagers and personal numbering.

Which network is 07624?

07624 numbers are shared between multiple operators:

| | |
|--------------|--------------|
| 07624 0..... | Manx Telecom |
| 07624 1..... | Manx Telecom |
| 07624 2..... | Sure |
| 07624 3..... | Manx Telecom |
| 07624 4..... | Manx Telecom |
| 07624 5..... | Manx Telecom |
| 07624 6..... | Manx Telecom |
| 07624 7..... | Manx Telecom |
| 07624 8..... | Manx Telecom |
| 07624 9..... | Manx Telecom |

Although these numbers are issued to these operators, customers are free to take their number with them when they change networks. The 07624 prefix is not a reliable indicator of which network a phone is currently connected to, only which network issued it originally.

Formatting an 07624 number

There is no set format for UK mobile phone numbers, but the commonest format is:
07624 xxxxxx

For international callers, use: +44 7624 xxxxxx

Recent History

07624 replaced the older mobile prefix 04624 on 28 April 2001. Former 04624 xxxxxx numbers became 07624 xxxxxx on this date.

[» See all mobile prefixes](#)

UK Area Code Finder
Quick and easy telephone dialling code information

01624 area code

Isle of Man phone numbers



UK area code 01624 covers the whole of the Isle of Man.

Towns and areas using 01624 numbers include Castletown, Douglas, Kirk Andreas, Kirk Michael, Laxey, Marown, Peel, Port Erin, Port St Mary, Ramsey, St Johns and Sulby.

01624 number call costs

Calls from the UK to Isle of Man 01624 numbers may be charged at a higher, international rate and may not be included in free call allowances or bundled minutes.

Formatting an 01624 number

Local telephone numbers on the Isle of Man are six digits long. An 01624 number should be displayed in the format:
01624 xxxxxx or (01624) xxxxxx

For international callers, use: +44 1624 xxxxxx

- [Browse and find UK area codes](#)
- [Phone numbering guide](#)
- [Number formatting guide](#)
- [Mobile phone prefixes](#)
- [International dialling codes](#)
- [Business phone numbers](#)
- [Downloadable area code list](#)

Search area codes