

SOUTHWATER PARISH COUNCIL

ELECTRONIC TABLETS FOR USE BY COUNCILLORS POLICY



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Southwater Parish Council has agreed to the use of Electronic Tablets. This will enable Councillors to receive information and transactions of business, in order to facilitate communication and reduce the need for hard copies of documentation thereby the hope being that there will be a reduction in costs.

2. Services Provided by Officers of the Council

- 2.1. The Council will provide all Councillors with a tablet to use for the Council's business.
- 2.2. A tablet is a wireless, portable computer with a key pad and touch screen. A tablet is typically smaller than a laptop and notebook computer, but larger than a smartphone. The Council has sourced Samsung Galaxy Tablets for use by Councillors.
- 2.3. The Council's IT Support provider, will provide Councillors with basic technical support during working hours.
- 2.4. The Council will provide Councillors with regular training on the use of the tablet if requested.
- 2.5. The Council will where practicable provide Councillors with a replacement tablet whilst fixing or replacing their original tablet providing Councillors have complied with all the required as outline in Paragraph 3.1.

3. What Officers Can Expect From Councillors

- 3.1. Councillors must report immediately to the Executive Officer or Deputy Officer, and Democratic Services any loss or damage to all or any of the equipment, including if the Tablet is stolen.
- 3.2. If the equipment (including tablet, charger, keypad and cover) is lost or broken then Councillors may need to pay an element of the cost to fix or replace it.
- 3.3. If the tablet is lost, broken or stolen (as a result of negligence on the part of a Councillor) then the Councillor would be expected to pay for the cost of a replacement, which would be provided by the Council on a like for like basis.
- 3.4. If the equipment ceases to work as a result of reasonable wear and tear or due to a fault, it would be fixed or replaced by the Council at no cost to the Councillors.

- 3.5 Councillors may only download and use Applications (known as Apps) approved by the Executive Officer or Deputy/Assistant Officer.
- 3.6 Councillors may use Bluetooth enabled accessories (such as a keyboard) with the tablet.
- 3.7 It should be noted that non-compliance with this usage policy would be contrary to the Code of Conduct for Members and Co-Opted Members' relating to the use of Council resources which states that:-
- a) Act in accordance with the Council's reasonable requirements; and
 - b) Ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political reasons (including party/personal purposes).

4. Return and Recovery of Equipment

- 4.1 All equipment and software assigned remains the property of the Council. The Council reserves the right to require Councillors to return the equipment at any time.
- 4.2 At the point at which a Councillor's term is ended, all equipment issued (including tablet, case, keyboard and charger) must be returned to the Council within one week of ceasing office, in the condition it was issued (reasonable wear and tear excepting). All information held on the equipment will be deleted and the equipment may be re-issued.

5. Email Messages

- 5.1 All emails that are used to conduct or support official Southwater Parish Council business must be sent using a "@cldr.southwater-pc.gov.uk" address.
- 5.2 Non Council email accounts must not be used to conduct or support official Southwater Parish Council business. Councillors and users must ensure that any emails containing sensitive information must be sent from an official council email account.
- 5.3 Automatic forwarding of email is not permitted.

6. Information Security Policies Overview

- 6.1 This policy is subject to but not inclusive of other adopted Southwater Parish Council Policies, eg., Electronic communications, member/officers protocols, financial regulations, Freedom of Information and Data Protection Policies and Members should abide by these at all times.

7. The Provision of Electronic Summonses to Meetings

- 7.1 Before the Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015 came into force in January 2016 Councillors could receive committee agendas electronically however there was still a requirement to issue the summons to Councillors in paper format.
- 7.2 The Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015 allows Councillors to receive the summons to attend meetings in electronic format subject to receipt of written consent.
- 7.3 In view of the Parish Council's wish to increase electronic provision of information and the transaction of business to facilitate effective communications and reduce the reliance on hard copies of documents, Members are asked to agree to no longer receive paper copies of committee and council agendas (including the summons) electronically by signing the declaration below.

8. Policy Compliance

- 8.1 If you do not understand the implications of this policy or how it may apply to you, seek advice from the Executive Officer to the Council or Office Manager.

9. Declarations

- 9.1 In accordance with the Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015, I consent to receive summonses for committee meetings by electronic communication.