

Annexure N

TELECOMMUNICATION POLICY

1. Definitions

For the purpose of this policy unless the context otherwise indicates –

- 1.1 “**Council**” means the Council of the municipality, any committee or person to which or to whom an instruction has been given or any power has been delegated or sub-delegated in terms of, or as contemplated in, section 59 of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 or a service provider in respect of any power, function or duty of the Council.
- 1.2 “**Councillor**” shall mean a member of the municipal Council of the **MUNICIPALITY**.
- 1.3 “**Municipal Manager**” means the person appointed by the Municipal Council as the Municipal Manager for the municipality in terms of section 82 of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998) and includes any person to whom the Municipal Manager has delegated a power, function or duty in respect of such a delegated power, function or duty.
- 1.4 “**Official**” shall mean all persons in the employment of the **MUNICIPALITY**.
- 1.5 “**Official Calls**” shall mean all calls made during office hours for the purpose of conducting official Council Business and includes after-hour calls to family members or housemates, calls on arrivals to national and international destinations and in emergencies.
- 1.6 “**HODs**” shall mean all Section 57 appointees and Directors of the **MUNICIPALITY**.

2. Scope of the Policy

The Policy includes the following

- Land Lines
- Use of Fax machines
- Cellular Phones

3. Application of the Policy

This Policy shall apply to all Councillors and officials of the **MUNICIPALITY**, regardless of their designation.

4. Policy Objectives

- 4.1 To provide guidelines on the management and use of cellular phones;
- 4.2 To implement a uniform Telecommunications Policy for officials and Councillors respectively;
- 4.3 To provide fair criteria for the allocation of cellular phone reimbursements;
- 4.4 To ensure the effective and efficient use of municipal telephones;
- 4.5 To ensure the recovery of all costs for the unofficial (private) use of cell phones, land lines and fax machines;
- 4.6 To implement the necessary control measures and reduce costs;
- 4.7 To ensure that only authorised persons use Council's telephones and facsimile machines in the performance of their duties;
- 4.8 To prevent the misuse of the above-mentioned facilities by Councillors and officials of the **MUNICIPALITY**.

5. The Right to use to use Telephones, Fax Machines and Cellular Phone Facilities

- 5.1 Council provides its employees with the above-mentioned facilities primarily for official purposes only.
- 5.2 No Councillor or official of the **MUNICIPALITY** has the right to use the above-mentioned facilities for private purposes without approval by the speaker or heads of departments or delegatee.

6. Delegated Powers

➤ **The Municipal Manager or delegatee inter alia has the following powers:**

- 6.1 To authorise the installation of telephones and other similar equipment on Council premises.
- 6.2 To authorise the allocation of cellular phones to or the installation of official telephones at the residences of personnel.

➤ **Powers of the Executive Director: Finance (CFO):**

- 6.3 The **Executive Director: Finance** inter alia has the power to make all payments and deductions in accordance with the policies of Council and appropriate legislation.

8. Telephone Policy

- It shall be the responsibility of the Council to provide municipal offices or a combination of municipal offices with reliable telephone and facsimile service.

8.1 Restrictions

- 8.1.1 It is the policy of the **MUNICIPALITY** that telephones and facsimiles are to be used primarily for official purposes.
- 8.1.2 The Speaker shall determine which Councilors may have access to telephones in their offices for use in the performance of their official duties.
- 8.1.3 The Municipal Manager (or his/her delegatee) shall determine which officials may have access to telephones in their offices for use in the performance of their official duties.
- 8.1.4 Provision is made for the allocation of a PIN-code to all Councillors and officials within the Municipality. This is to ensure that only Council employees and Councillors utilize official instruments appropriately and to manage the usage of telephones.
- 8.1.5 Councilors and officials are expected to exercise reasonable discretion in using telephones for personal use. Excessive incoming or outgoing personal calls during the workday can interfere with employee productivity and be distracting to others.
- 8.1.6 Personal calls should be kept to a minimum in terms of the number of calls made as well as the duration of calls.
- 8.1.7 Councillors as well as officials are expected to reimburse the Municipality for any personal calls made in accordance with the control measures as set out below.
- 8.1.8 The Speaker shall have the discretion to determine which Councilors shall be allowed to make international, national, provincial and cell phone calls only and telephone lines shall be suitably barred on the basis of this classification.
- 8.1.9 The Deputy Municipal Manager or his delegatee shall have the discretion to determine which officials shall be allowed to make international, national, provincial and cell phone calls only and telephone lines shall be suitably barred on the basis of this classification.
- 8.1.10 The **MUNICIPALITY** has the right to monitor telephone bills and the usage to determine if misuse or abuse exists.
- 8.1.11 Subject thereto that telephone records be regarded as confidential information and not disclosed to third parties to alleviate liability as regard to the violation of the privacy of individual employees.
- 8.1.12 Councillors and officials should use their land lines as far as possible, to minimise the use of Cellular Phones. This applies also to Councillors and officials within the main centres who should be contacted via the dialled extensions (refer to telephone list) in order to reduce costs.
- 8.1.13 Councilors and officials shall only be entitled to make international calls with the specific approval of the Speaker and Executive Management.
- 8.1.14 The Municipal Manager, his or her delegatee, after considerations of all *bona fide* operational requirements, may deviate from the provisions of this policy.

8.2 Telephone Usage Control Measures

- 8.2.1 The main centres are linked via dialled extensions (refer to telephone list). Telephone calls made between these centres are regarded as internal.
- 8.2.2 At the end of each month, the Switchboard Operator in the main centre shall provide the Executive Director: Financial Services with a complete list of Councilors and officials who have made telephone calls during the month in question, the destination of such call, the cost incurred and its duration.

- 8.2.3 A detailed statement (printout) of all calls made and the total cost thereof would be provided to all Councillors and officials by the Department Financial Services within seven (7) days after the end of the month.
- 8.2.4 All Councillors and officials must identify private calls made and calculate the respective amounts due, including VAT. The Councillor or official concerned shall be obliged to certify (sign) the printout. The printouts must also be signed and noted by the Executive Director or a person authorized to do so.
- 8.2.5 Signed printouts should be handed to the Chief Accountant: Creditors and Salaries before the 15th of the month. The costs in respect of private calls will be deducted monthly from staff members' salaries.
- 8.2.6 The executive management (or his/her delegatee) must approve all late submissions.
- 8.2.7 Where no signed printout or approval for late submission has been received, it will be investigated and if necessary disciplinary action will be instituted.
- 8.2.8 The municipality, in compliance with the BCEA, shall deduct any amount due, from an employee in question.
- 8.2.9 All queries regarding landline telephones must be directed to the municipal manager or his/her delegatee.

8.3 Fascimile Access

- 8.4 The nature of fax transmissions makes information sent particularly vulnerable to unintended and unauthorized users. As with other communications related to safeguarding confidential information, the **MUNICIPALITY** must reasonably safeguard information sent by fax.
- 8.5 All official faxes must contain an official cover sheet.
- 8.6 All facsimile facilities are provided in all buildings for the purpose of conducting Council business only.
- 8.7 Facsimile machines may have the ability to dial national numbers. Only those facilities in secure locations may have international access as determined by the Municipal Manager.

8.4 Procedure

- 8.4.1 All Councillors and officials should take reasonable safeguards to protect facsimile communications by:
 - 8.4.1.1 Ensuring that facsimile machines are located in an area that is not high in personnel or public traffic and is not within view or accessible to visitors.
 - 8.4.1.2 Ensuring that access for certain officials is limited to preserve the protection of confidential information.
- 8.4.2 Take reasonable steps to ensure that the fax transmissions/communications are sent to the intended contacts and destinations by:
 - 8.4.2.1 Refraining from sending highly confidential information via fax.
 - 8.4.2.2 Double-checking fax numbers before sending.
 - 8.4.2.3 Ensuring that copies of all faxes must be sent to registry for filing.

9. Cellular Phone Policy for Municipal Councillors

9.1 Cellular Phone Allowance

- 9.1.1 Cellular phone allowances, for Municipal Councillors are as determined by the Minister of Provincial and Local Government in terms of the official Government Notice as published annually and of the *Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act (Act no. 20 of 1998)*.

10. Cellular Phone Policy For Municipal Officials

10.1 Employees Qualifying for Cellular Phones

- 10.1.1 The Municipal Manager will authorise the allocation of cellular phones to officials, according to the operational requirements and the approved policy.

10.2 Executive Management

- 10.2.1 A TALK 500 contract can be entered into for the executive management. If the calls exceed 500 minutes, the deputy municipal manager will have to authorise the additional costs provided the official provides substantiation for the additional costs. If not more than 500 minutes are used, no money is recovered from the official. (In the case of the municipal manager the CFO will authorise additional costs and in the case of the deputy municipal manager the municipal manager will authorise the additional costs.)

10.3 The following Contracts will be entered into. In each instance the Contract taken must be the most cost effective one. The Contracts include:

10.3.1 Call 300

10.3.2 Call 200

10.3.3 Call 100

10.3.4 Business call (with limits)

- These will be provided to selected personnel. All private calls must be marked and indicated by the employee, in terms of Clause 8.2.

10.3.5 **Prepaid phones. (All vouchers will be supplied by the Finance Department up to a maximum determined by the executive director)**

- All calls must be justified in detail, with telephone numbers, names, number of minutes and purpose of the call.

10.3.6 The Executive director, in consultation with the deputy municipal manager determines the appropriate contracts for employees as identified in terms of 10.1.

10.4 Executive Mayor's Driver:

- A limit of R250 per month is imposed on this account. The Executive Mayor's Driver must indicate and pay for all private calls.

11. Use of Own / Private Cellular Phones

The Municipal Manager or his assignee may consent to an official using his/her own private cellular phone for Council purposes. Only official calls will be paid for. No petty cash payments will be made. Approved accounts must reach the Finance Division before the 15th of each month. Payment will be made together with payment of the monthly salary on the 25th of the month.

12. General

The purchase of cellular phones will be done by the procurement officer. .

A register for cellular phone must be kept and all details with regard to issuing must be recorded therein.

As soon as a cell phone is issued the old cell phone must be handed in at the Store to be sold at public auction. This will be managed by the procurement officer.

Before a cell phone is issued to a Roads or Primary Health Services employee, the written permission of the Principal must be obtained. The Principal is responsible for payment of the account.

Old cellular phones are the property of the **MUNICIPALITY** and may under no circumstances be utilised for private use.

Any person who at present is in possession of a Council cell phone and who does not qualify to do so in terms of this policy, must return it immediately.

13. Availability of this Policy

Every Councilor upon being elected to serve on the Council and staff member that has access to a Council phone, facsimile or Cellular Phone, upon assuming appointment in the service of the **MUNICIPALITY**, shall be supplied with a copy of this policy and must sign the attached conditions.

14. Consequence of non-compliance

Failure to comply with this policy will be viewed as a serious disciplinary transgression of the Code of Conduct of the Employees.

15. Amendments

The Municipal Manager may from time to time amend this policy.