



## Email and Internet Usage Policy

<b>Policy</b>	8A
<b>Officer Responsible</b>	Manager Information Technology
<b>Last Review Date</b>	21/11/2022

**Strategic Policy**

## **Objective**

To provide parameters for the acceptable use of Blayney Shire Council's corporate systems for email/calendars and internet browsing.

## **PROTOCOLS FOR USE OF COUNCIL RESOURCES FOR INTERNET AND EMAIL**

### **Access**

Access to the use of Council resources for internet and email shall be made available to all councillors, staff, and authorised persons (referred hereon as users) who require such access to support the carrying out of official duties and who have access to a device that is connected to the Council network.

Access to individual mailboxes / email addresses shall normally be restricted to the individual and the system administrator user, however, broader access to a mailbox / email address may be organised when such access adds value to the business function and is authorised by the Director or General Manager. Users who are absent due to leave can organise delegated access to their mailbox/email address prior to commencing on that leave after Director or General Manager approval.

### **Acceptable Usage**

The following uses are acceptable and encouraged:

1. Investigations, research and support of vendor's products. This may include the retrieval and distribution of information, technical material, support documentation or promotional material that may assist users in their daily operations. This includes social media sites such as Facebook.
2. Peer group communications including retrieval and distribution of electronic messages, documentation, contributing or participation in group forums.
3. Use of network resources for personal or academic reasons during the Users' own time. Personal use does not extend to any activities that may provide personal commercial gain or interfere with work of other users for the Council.

### **Unacceptable Usage**

The following uses are unacceptable:

1. Conducting activities such as unsolicited distribution of advertising material.
2. Using the network for conducting personal business transactions.
3. Creating, transmitting or knowingly activating a computer virus.
4. Creating or distributing chain letters, personal advertising etc. to individuals or lists of individuals so as to cause a nuisance or congest the Council's network.
5. Using an account owned by another user who is authorised for Internet access to gain unauthorised access to the internet.
6. Allowing unauthorised users to access the internet or email using your login I.D.

7. Personal use of the network for obtaining illegally distributed or unlicensed software including Bit torrent downloads.
8. Sending or requesting messages or documents that are inconsistent with Council's policies.
9. Using the internet to access store or distribute pornographic, racist, sexist, inflammatory or otherwise offensive material.
10. Misrepresenting the Council or uses that are considered malicious or unethical.
11. Performing excessive, unauthorised downloads from the internet.
12. Uses that may violate any Federal or State laws such as copyright infringement.
13. Emails that interfere with the ability by others to conduct Council business.
14. Users will not reveal or publicise confidential material.

### **Rules for use of Email**

1. Email should be treated with the same significance as Council signed letter.
2. User email, that provides evidence of Council's business activities, shall be registered, together with any attachments, in the corporate record keeping system.
3. Email is a business tool. Users must make sure that email is brief, concise and business related and is kept in the system only as long as required.
4. Email should not be assumed to be secure and viewing by third parties may occur. Users should be aware of potential risks involved in sending confidential or sensitive information.
5. User email signatures are controlled by Information Technology and are automatically created upon logging into a computer. Email signatures on mobile devices are created manually on a per device basis.
6. Users should not forward someone else's email, without prior consent of the original sender, if it is considered sensitive. Users that receive email incorrectly sent should inform the sender promptly and delete the email.
7. Email is admissible as evidence in court and users must use good judgement and think carefully about the contents.
8. Users should follow email etiquette. Keep the message polite and not write in upper case, as this is considered as "shouting". Only send information that is of value to the receiver and not make it High Priority unless it is truly urgent.
9. Email is subject to the full range of laws applying to other communications, including copyright, breach of confidence, defamation, privacy, contempt of court, harassment and criminal laws.
10. Users are to be conscious that attachments may contain viruses, which may affect the integrity of Council's computer network. Council has installed the necessary anti-virus software on the net to detect any viruses, but Users are to remain aware that new viruses may go undetected. Accordingly, any suspicious emails received should not be

opened and immediately reported to IT for the appropriate action to be taken.

11. Emails relating to business user where required need to be registered in the Corporate Records Management System

### **Rules for the use of Internet**

1. Internet use will be for Council business purposes. Personal use of the Internet is acceptable but should be limited to break times and not contravene any point in "Unacceptable Usage"
2. Users will not upload, download or transmit commercial software or copyrighted materials, without the authority of the owner of the software or material.
3. Council reserves the right to implement internet filtering software to ban access to sites that are considered inappropriate.

### **Monitoring**

Council reserves the right to monitor all internet access and email messages received by and contained within Council's computer system(s) and will do so to support:

- System maintenance
- System management
- Document management
- Investigation of illegal use or wrongdoing
- Council's policies
- Legal requirements
- Any other business purposes.

Monitoring shall be undertaken by the Information Technology. Any use deemed excessive or inappropriate will escalate to the person's Manager, Director or General Manager.

Information Technology or other users should report misuse to their Manager, Director or to the General Manager for appropriate action within Council's standard conditions of employment, HR guidelines and policies.

Any disciplinary action taken will be in accordance with the guidelines set out in Council's Performance Management, Code of Conduct and Disciplinary policy.

### **Ethics/Personal Use**

The internet and email system has been developed to support Council's business function and enhance communication. The Council will allow reasonable personal use and users are encouraged to use good judgment and integrity when they do so.

### **Related Policies**

Council Code of Conduct  
Records Management

**Legislative Context**

Local Government Act 1993

Local Government (General) Regulations 2005

State Records Act 1998 No 17

State Records Regulations 2015

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998 (NSW)

Privacy and Personal Information Protection Regulation 2014

Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 No 52

Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018

Workplace Surveillance Act 2005 No 47

Workplace Surveillance Regulation 2017

END

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