

USE OF COUNCIL FACILITIES AND RESOURCES BY COUNCILLORS Factsheet

The [Member] Code of Conduct states 'You must, when using or authorising the use by others of the resources of the Council, ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes) and you must have regard to any applicable Local Authority Code of Publicity made under the Local Government Act 1986 and guidance on the Use of Resources by Councillors within the Council's Protocol'.

A. Will I be provided with facilities and resources to carry out my duties as a Councillor? Yes – this may include access to IT equipment.

B. Can I use Council facilities and resources for political purposes?

No – if used for purely political purposes.

Yes, if the use could reasonably be regarded as likely to facilitate, or be conducive to, the discharge of the Council's functions or of the office to which you have been elected or appointed e.g. use in connection with the following business:

- (a) holding ward surgeries;
- (b) dealing with correspondence from constituents;
- (c) communicating group activities;
- (d) meetings between group members.

C. Can my use of Council facilities and resources extend to political parties more generally?

No. You may only use Council owned premises for party political purposes (where such meetings are used to further the political aims and objectives of the party concerned) if restricted to premises available to the public generally and paid for at the full hire costs.

D. Is the onus placed on me to be aware of and ensure the Council complies with the rules governing local authority publicity? Yes – you must have regard to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity and not do anything which would cause the Council or you to breach the Code e.g. it would not be appropriate for you to use the Council's resources for political purposes, including party political purposes.

E. During the election period, can I publicise my Council email address in any ward newsletters which contain election or campaigning material? No

F. Is my incidental personal use of Council facilities and resources permissible?

Yes - provided that the use is not purely in connection with political purposes, there is no cost to the Council nor any liability for the Council and you ensure that any secondary use of IT equipment supplied by the Council is acceptable and appropriate and that such use does not contravene the [Member] Code of Conduct, Council codes, protocols etc, the Misuse of Computer Act 1990 and any other relevant UK legislation.

G. Find out more - The Protocol for Use of Council Facilities and Resources by Councillors offers further guidance. Advice or clarification can be sought from the Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer.