	Public Internet Policy
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Endorsement	Policy Review Panel, 24 August 2017
Authorisation	Council, 18 September 2017
Review date	21 October 2018
Responsible officer	Manager Engagement and Advocacy
Policy owner	Manager Engagement and Advocacy

1.   Purpose

To provide appropriately managed internet access to our community, responding to issues and risks arising from the provision thereof.

2.   Scope

This policy applies to all users of the public access internet services as well as the Council staff who provide the management, administration and support for these services.

3.   Definitions

Term	Definition and Description
Adult	A person who is 18 years of age or older.
ALIA	Australian Library and Information Association.
	The national professional organisation for the Australian library and information services sector. One of their objects is to promote the free flow of information and ideas in the interest of all Australians and a thriving culture, economy and democracy.
Child	A person 12 years of age or under, or otherwise as determined by individual Council service providers.
Council	Melton City Council.
Identification Method	Method to identify and validate a unique user who wishes to use computer and internet services. (For example use of membership card or temporary access).
IP Address	Internet Protocol Address: This is a number assigned to a device and is required for a device to connect with the internet.
Member	A person who joins council facilities as a user.
Offensive Material	Any content that could be reasonably considered unacceptable for public consumption, as determined by a Council officer.
	This may include but is not limited to:
	• Pornography or implied sexual activity, child abuse material, depictions of bestiality, material containing excessive violence or sexual violence, drug use.

Term	Definition and Description
	• Material that advocates the doing of a terrorist act or detailed instruction in crime. • Material that has a strong impact on or may upset someone in terms of their ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, culture, age and physical appearance. • Material that causes or promotes any form of harassment. • Material that uses frequent or very strong coarse language.
PLVN	Public Libraries Victoria Network.
Responsible adult	A parent, guardian, carer, teacher or any adult with responsibility for a child, youth or the wellbeing of another adult.
Site	A location at which Council provides services to the community.
Spam	Unsolicited e-mails sent indiscriminately to multiple individuals or mailing lists.
Splash Page	Browser page that appears on a device when it attempts to connect to a Wireless Access Point.
Temporary User	A user who requires a one-time or temporary access to Council facilities.
WAP	Wireless Access Point.
Wifi	Is the technology most commonly used for Wireless Network Area Networking that connects devices with the internet.
Youth	A person aged 13 to 17 year of age, or otherwise as determined by individual Council service providers.

4. Policy Statement

Council provides public access to computers and Internet services in several of its facilities and sites, including libraries, youth services and community services, with the objective of providing free access to a range of knowledge, information, recreation, ideas and lifelong learning opportunities to build social connections and self-development.

Council provides public access to unrestricted information via the World Wide Web. Although this medium can deliver an overwhelming amount of valuable information from reliable and authoritative sources, some information is unregulated, incorrect, misleading and may be offensive. The Internet is also not a secure communication medium and users may be victim to third parties accessing their personal information or on-line transactions.

This policy aims to provide Council staff and users of these services with a clear understanding of their responsibilities as well as the terms and conditions of use.

4.1 Responsibility and Risks

Council accepts no responsibility for the nature of the content or the accuracy of information or links presented on third party web sites.

Council also accepts no responsible for any direct or indirect damage caused by the use the facilities provided, the internet or the unavailability or failure of any equipment or service, including but not limited to the loss of data, financial loss, the loss of profit and breaches of privacy.

Users should be aware of the risks associated with internet use and make their own judgement on the accuracy and relevance of the information provided in websites.

4.2 Filtering

Council's position, consistent with ALIA's Online Content Regulation approach, is to provide unrestricted access to internet, promoting the principle: 'Freedom can be protected in a democratic society only if its citizens have unrestricted access to information and ideas'.

Council does not, therefore, filter internet content.

4.3 Identification Methods

Use of public access computers and internet through council facilities and/or provided via discrete Council services are available for users with valid identification. Identification, access details and session times will be recorded by Council.

Facilities or discrete services may have different requirements to identify users or members including the issuance and use of a membership access card. Such cards will always remain the property of Council and are not transferrable.

Users visiting council facilities once-off may be issued with a temporary access card.

Users connecting to a Council provided public WAP with their own device may do so as a guest without providing identification, but must consent to the 'terms of use' presented on the splash page. The device's IP address will automatically be recorded in the system log.

4.4 Bookings

Bookings may be required in order to use computers at some sites.

4.5 Use of Council Public Computers

Users are not permitted to modify computer settings or to install additional software unless prior approval is obtained from site staff. In this case, users are responsible for the software installation with the appropriate software licensing permissions.

Users must be aware that any modifications carried out, including software installation, configuration or documents saved on the computer will be deleted once they finish their computer sessions.

4.6 Wireless Provision

- Council may provide wireless networks (wifi) in some of its facilities, access to which may extend beyond the borders of the facilities to the immediate external surrounds.

- Council may provide WAPs in select public realm precincts.

- Access to wireless services must be in accordance with this policy and any related site specific process or procedure.

- Use of the public wireless network outside of Council facilities in public space such as footpaths and parks, while unsupervised by Council staff, must adhere to Australian Laws and standards of public decency.

- Internet access through a wireless network is available to anyone who agrees to and adheres to the terms of use.

- Council reserves the right to impose limits on access times, to impose data caps and to restrict transfer speeds at any site and at any time.

- Any specific restrictions or terms of use that may exist for a particular WAP will be accessible on the Splash Page for that WAP.

- Users are responsible to configure their devices in order to work with Council's Public Access wireless network.

- Users are not permitted to install any device that provides wireless connectivity on facilities (for example: routers or Access Points).

4.7 Technical Support and Maintenance

- Council provides technical support for all Council owned IT assets, including public access computers and printers. However, no guarantees can be provided on the time taken to resolve issues.

- Remote access support may also be provided to users on council computers, subject to the user's approval.

- Council is not responsible for and does not provide any technical support to user's devices, including support in setting up personal devices for connecting to the Council's Public Internet network.

- Provisioning and maintenance of internet computers must to be conducted according to the 'Public Access Internet Computer Standardisation' policy.

4.8 Children and Youth Users

- Council seeks to protect and support the interests of children and youth users. Site and service specific systems and procedures will vary according to the service, purpose and audience accessing the internet.

- Children must be accompanied by or under the supervision of a responsible adult. The responsible adult takes responsibilities for activities of the children in their care including ensuring appropriate internet use and compliance with this policy.

- A child or a youth user may require a valid identification or council membership card to access this service. The child's or youth's parent or guardian may also be required to sign a consent form.

- Parents and guardians are responsible to ensure that the site procedures in dealing with children and youth are acceptable before signing the consent form.

- Council recognises that WAPs will be accessed by children and youth users, and relies upon parental and/or guardian intervention (supervisory, behavioural, software or hardware restrictions etc.) to limit underage access to offensive material. Council takes no responsibility for any such access by minors.

4.9 Confidentiality & Privacy

- Council respects user privacy and confidentiality as per the Council's Privacy Policy and in accordance with legal requirements.

- Council collects personal information for the purpose of registering and administrating user memberships.

- Council may record user access and session times.

- Council will not remotely access user sessions for any reason without the prior permission of the user.

- Council may collect aggregated, non-personal data relating to usage patterns of public wireless networks.

- Council, observing all applicable legislation, will share user data with other levels of government and law enforcement agencies upon reasonable request where necessary.

4.10 User acceptance and responsibilities

Use of Internet at Melton Council facilities implies acceptance of the terms and conditions described in this policy, in the conditions of entry of each facility, standards expected by services, and as detailed within the terms and conditions accessible on the splash page provided by WAPs.

Council considers the actions described below (but not limited to) as inappropriate use of computing/internet or unacceptable behaviour:

- illegal activities including piracy, breach of copyright and licence conditions
- assuming another person's identity or using another person's membership card
- attempting to breach or compromise systems or network security on any device and on any network site
- accessing, displaying or transmitting pornography or other offensive material
- other activities which may infringe the amenity of the facility or site for other users or occupants, such as excessive volume level of material being accessed or communication with fellow users or others.

Council staff may monitor users of public access computers to ensure compliance with this policy (this specifically excludes any form of on-line monitoring).

Council reserves the right to access the session history of a user if there is an indication of breach of this policy.

4.11 Breaching the Policy

Breaches of this policy may result in loss of access to computing and internet services and users being asked to leave the premises.

Serious breaches may lead to further action including referral to the police.

5.   Responsibility

5.1	Policy Owner
	The Policy owner is responsible for the maintenance, currency and promotion of this policy, ensuring organisational compliance.
5.2	Business Unit Manager and Coordinators
	Business Unit Managers are responsible for ensuring staff comply with and implement this policy within their business unit.
5.3	Council Staff
	Council staff assisting in the provision of internet services are responsible for managing, monitoring and controlling internet use to ensure users are complying with this policy.
5.4	Hirer of facilities
	Companies or individuals that hire computer facilities are responsible for managing, monitoring and controlling internet use to ensure users are complying with this policy.

6.   References and links to legislation and other documents

Name	Location
ALIA online content regulation policy	http://www.alia.org.au/about-alia/policies-standards-and-guidelines/alia-online-content-regulation
PLVN policies and statements	http://www.plvn.net.au/node/19
Privacy Policy	Policy Intranet \\mel-fps\public\Policies and Procedures Intranet\Intranet Pages\Policies and Procedures.Policies_files\Privacy Policy.pdf
Public Access Internet Computer Standardisation policy	Policy Intranet \\mel-fps\public\Policies and Procedures Intranet\Intranet Pages\Policies and Procedures.Policies_files\Public Access Internet Computer Standardisation Policy.pdf