



Leeds
CITY COUNCIL

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Report of the Chief Democratic Services Officer

Member Management Committee

Date: 30th October 2007

Subject: Members' ICT Developments

Electoral Wards Affected:

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

This report updates a progress report on the development of ICT support to Members. It updates Members on the implementation of the ICT Upgrade project, advises on revised ICT support arrangements and the process for requesting additions to the approved Hardware and Software Catalogues.

The report also contains a position statement with respect to making Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs) available to Members and in particular seeks advice on the international dialing aspect of their functionality.

1.0 Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 This report presents Members with an update on ICT issues including a summary of the Members ICT Upgrade Project and future changes to support arrangements as well as a status report on the provision of PDAs to Members.

2.0 Background Information

- 2.1 Members will recall that, in February 07, they received a report updating on issues relating to ICT support to Members and in May 2007 a report outlining the offering of PDAs to Members.
- 2.2 This report now presents a brief but comprehensive report of all ongoing developments.

3.0 Main Issues

Members ICT Upgrade Programme

- 3.1 The Members ICT Upgrade project is progressing through its implementation stage. The majority of Members have either already attended "Getting Started" training sessions and have had the new equipment installed in their homes, or have agreed dates for this to happen. It is important that all Members have their ICT equipment upgraded as soon as possible, in order that the old ICT infrastructure can be decommissioned.

- 3.2 Some Members have expressed an interest in retaining their old ICT equipment for a numbers of reasons, most particularly where they have purchased software which can no longer be operated in the new environment. Officers have investigated the position with respect to licensing etc and are offering the following as a way forward

- Members will be permitted to retain their PCs / laptops for a further 6 months, if required, to assist in making alternative arrangements with respect to their own software and to facilitate the cleansing of their data (the Members ICT team can provide advice and technical assistance in copying data to CD or DVD).
- Members should note that the equipment will be unsupported during this period.
- During June 2008, these laptops and PCs will be recovered from Members homes and dealt with via the corporate disposal policy.
- Alternatively, Members will have the opportunity at the end of this period to purchase their laptop or PC with ONLY the original (OEM) XP operating system installed for a fee equivalent to the price the Council would realise through the disposal scheme. For clarity, this means that all other software and data will be removed. Members will only be permitted to purchase the PC or laptop that they had previously been using.
- Members will then have the option of purchasing licenses through Microsoft's Employee Purchase Scheme (details available on request).
- It should be noted that no support will be offered with respect to this equipment and software going forward and no warranty is available should the equipment fail or fall into disrepair.

- The PC or laptop cannot be connected to the Council's network

Members ICT Support arrangements

- 3.3 Previous reports have explained how the new ICT Infrastructure has given greater flexibility in terms of support arrangements. Members ICT provision, following the upgrade, is now similar to that of Officers.
- 3.4 Through the centralised ICT Service Desk, Officers now benefit from over 70% of support calls that can be fixed at first point of contact being resolved during the initial call. Following the implementation phase of the project, Corporate ICT services can employ similar resolution techniques in respect of Members.
- 3.5 It is recognised that dedicated support is beneficial during the implementation stage of the roll-out, for example, to quickly identify issues and trends which may be affecting a number of users. Following the successful conclusion of the roll-out, the intention is to transfer the Members ICT support line number to the central ICT Service Desk. This transition will be seamless from a Member perspective.
- 3.6 The central ICT Service Desk will provide dedicated Officers to support Members but as part of a centralised team. These Officers would have an immediate overview of any issues which could have an impact on Members' ICT service.
- 3.7 If a support call cannot be resolved at the first point of contact, it would then be passed to the relevant technical support team for further investigation. If the nature of the problem is such that it requires a technical Officer to visit in order to repair, this will continue to be provided by a member of the technical support team based within Civic Hall. Where appropriate the option of attending a Member's home in order to resolve a technical problem will still be available but wherever possible we would encourage Members to bring their laptops into Civic Hall.
- 3.8 There are a number of advantages to these arrangements including:
- Reduction in cost of service provision
 - Quicker response times
 - Better informed support personnel
 - More accurate reporting mechanisms
 - Standardisation of support provision
 - Release of technical support staff to concentrate on resolving more complex ICT problems
- 3.9 It is also necessary to revise the ICT out of hours support arrangements. As Members will be aware there are currently ad hoc telephone-based support arrangements provided by Members ICT Officers between 17.00 and 20.00, Monday to Friday, between 10.00 and 12.00 on Saturday mornings and 12.00 and 13.00 on Bank Holidays. Going forward this model is not sustainable.
- 3.10 It is planned that the ICT Service Desk will offer ICT support within service hours, currently 0800 – 1730 Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays and extended Council Holidays). During these standard office hours, Service Desk Officers will give priority to resolving Members ICT issues (identified through them being logged via the dedicated Members ICT Help Desk number – 247 4866).

- 3.11 Outside of these times the Network Management Centre (NMC) will staff the ICT Service Desk phone line and provide an element of first level support. The NMC is staffed at all times, except between Saturday evening 19:00 – 08:30 Sunday morning. The NMC cover Bank Holidays as dictated by business needs.

It should be noted that the principal function of the NMC is with respect to operational support and maintenance activities outside of standard working hours. Hence there will be occasions when the team members are not available to answer telephone calls.

- 3.12 The NMC can provide basic services as follows:

- Network password resets
- Re-enable disabled accounts
- Basic advice on use of the portal / desktop

Where the nature of the ICT problem is outside of this, assistance with logging a support call will be provided.

- 3.13 A further offering being made available to Members is the facility to log Service Desk calls using ICT online. This service is intended to provide an alternative channel for Members to log their ICT support calls and may be particularly useful outside standard working hours. Full details of how to log a support call using this method will be provided to all Members when the service is formally launched following the implementation phase of the Upgrade project.

Hardware and Software

- 3.14 A further element of the Members ICT Upgrade project is to produce a dedicated Members ICT Hardware and Software Catalogue (see Appendix A) and a process for Members to request additions.

- 3.15 The process for requesting additions to the approved Hardware or Software catalogues is as follows:

- The Member makes the request for through the appropriate Group Support Manager or Democratic Services Officer.
- Democratic Services Officers consult with ICT Business Relationship Management with respect to costs (licensing and development) and alternative corporate offerings.
- The initial decision on whether or not the hardware or software is added to the catalogue is taken by Democratic Services based on criteria such as:
 - The availability of existing alternative software or hardware on the corporate catalogue
 - The number of Members who would benefit from it's inclusion
 - The costs of offering the hardware or software
 - Budget availability
- A listing of requests for new hardware and software, together with a rationale for inclusion / exclusion is provided to this committee.

- 3.16 A copy of the Approved Hardware and Software catalogues and a schedule of the software requested to be added is attached at Appendix B

Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs)

- 3.17 Members will recall that the May 2007 meeting resolved that Officers commence with a roll-out programme and report back on progress within 6 months. Members may also recall that a prerequisite of the distribution of these devices was that the Members ICT provision had been upgraded.
- 3.18 Business and technical leads have been identified to design the implementation and support arrangements and preliminary meetings have taken place.
- 3.19 A drop-in session has been arranged between 11.00 and 13.30 prior to the Council Meeting tomorrow. The purpose of the session is to brief interested Members on the functionality of the devices as well as fielding any questions they may have. It also presents an opportunity for Members to register their interest in receiving a PDA.
- 3.20 A two hour session will be booked with each individual Member for the handover of the PDA. This is necessary to ensure that the device is configured correctly and also to provide a training session around its use. This process was tried and tested during the recent upgrade of PDAs across Officers.
- 3.21 The Council's guide to the use of the PDA will be provided to each Member who receives a device. Guidance documents will also be produced to confirm the chargeable elements for which Members will be liable. Broadly speaking, costs associated with the transfer of data (through replication of the Member's email, calendar etc. from the Council's systems to the device) will be covered by the Council, whilst costs associated with the telephone functionality (standard phone calls, video calls, text messages etc.) will be recharged to the individual Member in accordance with the provisions of the Members Allowance Scheme. It is likely that Members will be invoiced for this element of the bill on a quarterly basis. Members should be advised that the costs of call charges when abroad varies depending on location (and could be considerable) and that there is also a charge for incoming calls. For this reason, this committee is asked to consider
- Switching off the functionality which allows the PDAs to be used abroad
 - Members to accept all international call charges
 - Individual Members to decide whether or not they wish to make use of the International dialing facility

Document Management System

- 3.23 The project to introduce the File Plus document management system within Members Services is almost concluded with the successful implementation of the system across the 3 group offices. All seems to be working well. The roll out to Morley Town Hall has been scheduled to be completed within the forthcoming month.

Members Web Pages

- 3.24 Members Web Pages have been available since June 2007. Arrangements have been made within each Group Office and the Members Services Office to post information from Councillors on the Web Pages. To date, 13 Councillors have web pages set up.

4 Implications for Council Policy and Governance

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report do not have any implications for Council Policy or Governance.

5 Legal and Resource Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report do not have any legal implications.

6 Recommendation

- 6.1 Members are requested to advise on the international dialing facility associated with PDAs.
- 6.2 Members are asked to note the contents of this report and to offer such guidance and advice as they consider necessary with regard to the development of ICT support to Members.

Appendix A

Process for requesting additional Software or Hardware

- A Member identifies a new requirement, an application or a piece of hardware which would enhance the discharge of their Council duties.
- The Member requests the software or hardware through his / her Group Support Manager or Democratic Services Officer.
- Democratic Services assess the business benefits to be gained from adding the item to the Members ICT software / hardware catalogue.
- Democratic Services liaise with ICT Business Relationship Management to obtain relevant information such as whether the proposed solution or an appropriate alternative is readily available, an indication of costs (including licensing and any development), and likely timescales for delivery.
- The Officer Steering Group established for consideration of Members ICT issues decides whether to progress. This decision to be based on considerations including costs, anticipated take-up if offered, the number of Members who would benefit from its inclusion, existing alternatives which may exist on the corporate catalogue and the availability of budget.
- Where there are significant implications (substantial costs etc.), a view from Members will be sought via Member Management Committee
- If the decision is taken to proceed, Democratic Services liaise with ICT Business Relationship Management to manage the delivery process.
- The application or software is added to the Members Approved Software / Hardware Catalogue (as a standard or optional item as appropriate)
- The Member who made the request is to be kept informed of progress throughout the process by his / her Group Support Manager or Democratic Services Officer.
- A full listing of software and hardware requests is provided to Member Management Committee

There will also be occasions where changes will be made to the Members Approved Software / Hardware Catalogues due to occurrences such as technological developments which are considered to be of benefit to Members. An example of this is where there is a general Council-wide upgrade of a piece of software or hardware that already exists on the Catalogue. In such cases Members will be notified in advance of any change.