**Leeds**
CITY COUNCIL

**Report of the Chief Democratic Services Officer**

**Member Management Committee**

**Date: 19th February 2008**

**Subject: Members' ICT Developments**

| Electoral Wards Affected: | Specific Implications For: |
| --- | --- |
| | Equality and Diversity ☐ |
| | Community Cohesion ☐ |
| | Narrowing the Gap ☐ |

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**Executive Summary**

This report provides an update on issues in relation to Members' ICT system. In particular, it provides the following :

A position statement with respect to the provision of PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) to Members.

Confirmation of the establishment of a representative group of Members to work with Officers to investigate appropriate Case Management solutions and progress residual issues emanating from the ICT upgrade.

A comparison between the former ICT support arrangements for Members and those introduced with effect from 17th December 2007.

Details of a recent request for software to be added to the Members Approved ICT Hardware and Software catalogue.

**1.0     Purpose of this Report**

1.1     This report presents Members with an update on several ICT issues including;

   o   a position statement with respect to distribution of PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) to Members;
   o   confirmation of the establishment of a group of Members to work with officers to progress the investigation into an appropriate Case Management solution for Members and to take forward residual issues emanating from the ICT upgrade;
   o   comparison of previous and current support arrangements; and
   o   confirmation of requests for additions to the Approved Members ICT Hardware and Software catalogue.


**2.0      Background Information**

2.1     Following the completion of the ICT Upgrade project, we have been able to make PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) available as a service offering to Members.  A report to the October meeting of this Committee outlined the process for Members to obtain PDAs and committed to reporting back on their use.

2.2     At the meeting of Group Whips in December 2007 it was determined that a representative group of Members should be established to explore the requirement of a Case Management solution and also to progress with Officers residual ICT issues emanating from the ICT Upgrade Project.

2.3     At their January meeting, Group Whips requested for a report to be provided which compares current and previous Members ICT support arrangements.

2.4     The report to the October meeting of this Committee also confirmed the process for Members to request additions to the Approved Hardware and Software catalogue. The report indicated that 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:

   o   The availability of existing alternative software or hardware on the corporate catalogue
   o   The number of Members who would benefit from it's inclusion
   o   The costs of offering the hardware or software
   o   Budget availability

A listing of requests for new hardware and software, together with a rationale for inclusion/exclusion is provided to this Committee in order that a Member perspective can be offered and the decisions be reconsidered as appropriate.


**3.0     Main Issues**

Members PDAs

3.1     Members will recall that the report to this meeting in October 2007 indicated that following a successful pilot involving 4 Members and the conclusion of the Members ICT upgrade rollout,  PDAs would be offered to more Members.

3.2     The report then outlined the approach for Members to request a device; a drop-in session was organised prior to the full Council meeting on 31st October to brief interested Members on the functionality of the devices and also presented an opportunity to register their interest in receiving a PDA. Alternatively requests could be made via Members' respective Group Support Manager or Democratic Services Officer.

3.3     A total of 27 Members have now been provided with a M3100 PDA (Personal Digital Assistant) either as part of the initial pilot or the subsequent roll out. Allocation has been as follows:

- Labour Group                          10
- Conservative Group                    9
- Liberal Democrat Group                4
- Morley Borough Independents           3
- BNP                                   1

3.4     Feedback from Members with respect to the use of the devices has generally been extremely positive notwithstanding the significant issues we have experienced with respect to replication (copying of email and calendar data between the devices and the back office systems) during this period.

3.5     Corporate ICT services are constantly working with partners (Orange and Commontime) to introduce improvements and solutions have been implemented recently which have stabilised this aspect of the service.

3.6     It is too early at this stage to provide detailed analysis of the costs associated with the provision of PDAs but this information will be provided to a future meeting.

Case Management / Post-Upgrade residual issues

3.7     At their December meeting Group Whips requested that a representative group of Members be defined from within the Member Development forum to work with officers to progress the residual issues emanating from the ICT Upgrade and also to investigate and scope the requirements of a Case Management solution for Members.

3.8     The membership of this group has been established and dates for meetings are currently being scheduled.

3.9     Members will recall that following the ICT upgrade, a mini survey was conducted asking all Members 2 questions:

o   How did the process of installing new IT equipment go for you, and,
o   Are you currently experiencing any difficulties or problems with your ICT equipment?

A summary of the responses to these questions was provided in a report to Group Whips at December 2007 which consisted of a range of issues which could broadly be grouped around familiarisation of the new systems, some training issues and a hard core of technical and/or operational/policy issues which needed to be resolved.

3.10    Officers have contacted Members individually to clarify the nature of these problems, resolving these where possible and obtaining additional detail where

appropriate (e.g. a response of system slowness could be to do with logging on or searching or accessing the portal etc.).

3.11    With respect to exploring Case Management system, again Members were surveyed to determine requirements. This resulted in a broad range of responses which indicated that a range of solutions for managing casework may be appropriate.

3.12    Preliminary research has been carried out by officers but the purpose of the representative group is to define and scope the requirements more clearly in order that a way forward can be agreed.

Revisions to Members ICT Support Arrangements

3.13    With effect from 17th December 2007 ICT Service Desk have offered ICT support within service hours, 0800 – 1730 Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays and extended Council Holidays). During these standard office hours, Service Desk Officers give priority to resolving Members ICT issues (identified through them being logged via the dedicated Members ICT Help Desk number – 247 4866). Previously this function was provided by a multi-skilled team residing with Civic Hall. Due to a broad range of duties this team could not guarantee to provide a dedicated helpdesk support function and an answerphone was employed to enable Members to report ICT issues when no officer was available to take the call.

3.14    Historically a range of officers have been provided with front-line ICT support by dialing 247 4866. A key part of the process of centralising the support function associated with this number has been to transition support arrangements for those officers to the standard ICT Service Desk number. The Members dedicated ICT Help Desk number is now solely for the use of Members and those officers providing direct support to Members.

3.15    Initially following the service transfer, a message was provided on the Members ICT Support line confirming that the 247 4866 support number should only be used by Members and those directly involved in supporting Members. At the request of a Member this message has now been removed, although Corporate ICT Services continue to monitor the usage to ensure that Members ICT issues continue to be prioritised

3.16    During January a total of 204 calls were received. It should be noted that this figure contains a number of test calls designed to monitor service levels etc. The average call rate for the month is around 10 calls per day. The average queue time was 00:48 seconds. Service response was 87.25% of calls answered within 30 seconds. There were 16 abandoned calls, of which 9 were in the first 20 seconds and are not measured, This is because in the event of a service outage, a message will be placed on the line, informing customers of the issue. This usually results in the customer listening to the message and then ending the call. As such, it is industry best practice not to measure these calls.

3.17    Out of hours ICT support arrangements have also been amended. As Members will be aware, previously there were 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. Out of hours support has always been provided on a best endeavours basis with issues being resolved over the telephone wherever possible.

3.18   The Out of Hours support function is now provided by the Network Management Centre (NMC).  NMC officer staff the ICT Service Desk phone line and provide an element of first level support.  The NMC is staffed <u>at all times</u> except between 19:00 on a Saturday evening and 08:30 on 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.

3.19   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.

3.20   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 within standard service hours.  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.

3.21   As previously reported, there are a number of advantages to these revised 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

3.22   A further offering which will be 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. This service is currently being upgraded and full details of how to log a support call using this method will be provided to all Members when the new service is formally launched.  The anticipated timescale for this is late spring 2008.

Hardware and Software

3.23   As confirmed at the October meeting, the Members' ICT Hardware and Software Catalogue and the process to request additions has been defined.

3.24   Appendix A identifies the software requested since the last Member Management Committee meeting.

**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 asked to note the contents of this report and to offers such guidance and advice as they consider necessary with regard to the development of ICT support to Members.