

**Report of Chief ICT Officer**

**Report to Member Management Committee**

**Date: 25<sup>th</sup> October 2011**

**Subject: Members ICT Update**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary of main issues**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on changes to their ICT Service provision.
2. The report contains feedback on the survey undertaken in the summer to determine the perception of their current ICT service provision.
3. The report also proposes that a project be undertaken to upgrade the ICT services available to Members to offer a range of more flexible and tailored offerings whilst reducing overall costs. This to be achieved by maximising the benefits of the arrangements the Council has entered into with partner organisations such as Microsoft and the technical advances resulting from corporate initiatives such as the Essential Services Programme.
4. It also identifies opportunities which will be available to Elected Members and explains that the project will provide a foundation for better and more flexible ways of working in the future.
5. This report also confirms that the enhancements to the Members Casework Management system previously recommended by this Committee have also been completed.

## **Recommendations**

6. Members are asked to note the content of this report.
7. This report recommends that ICT Services work with key stakeholders (including the Members ICT Working Group, Group Support Officers and Member Development Officers) to develop a range of ICT service offerings between now and the end of 2011 and that ICT Services report back to January meeting of MMC, to request this Committee's support for the recommendations to inform a Delegated Officer decision.

### **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the support of Member Management Committee for a project to be undertaken to identify technical solutions to support Elected Members more effectively in the various ways they choose and need to work.

### **2 Background information**

- 2.1 Elected Members are currently provided with a choice of ICT equipment: a laptop or PC, a choice of printer (either a mono laser printer or a multi-functional device) and the option of a PDA (Personal Digital Assistant).
- 2.2 Each Member is also provided with a VASCO token, which in conjunction with their network logon credentials, provides secure, authenticated access to the LCC network from any broadband-enabled PC or laptop.
- 2.3 Typically Elected Members require the following end user ICT functionality to support them in their role:
  - Email and calendar functions;
  - Internet access;
  - General office applications (such as word processing and spreadsheet production);
  - Access to the dedicated Member Case Management solution.
- 2.4 The ICT service provision for Members currently includes:
  - A choice of ICT hardware and connectivity to the Council's network from their homes
  - Provision of relevant licensed software;
  - End-to end support of equipment and applications (including a dedicated 24 hour helpline and a home visiting service);

- The secure storage and back-up of information stored on the Council's network and equipment;
- Security measures (including encryption software, anti-virus and anti-spam protection).

2.5 The last major upgrade of ICT equipment and software for Elected Members took place at the end of 2007, migrating Members ICT service to the post-NIP (Network Infrastructure Programme) technical environment using 2003 technologies. The benefits of that project included:

- Producing clear guidelines around Elected Members use of Council-provided ICT Equipment
- Reducing costs in supporting and maintaining old outdated ICT hardware
- Increasing the levels of security of Council-provided ICT equipment
- Enabling enhancements to Members ICT service provision to increase user-functionality

2.6 More recently, ICT Services migrated Members email accounts from Lotus Notes to Microsoft Outlook under the auspices of the ICE (Implementing the Collaboration Environment) programme of works. This piece of work involved a bespoke solution (including the introduction of solid state hard drives to accommodate substantial mail files) and took twelve months to complete.

2.7 Advances in technology and the benefits of the arrangements the Council has entered into with partner organisations such as Microsoft allows greater flexibility around the way in which ICT services can be provided and supported. The Essential Services Programme (ESP) will build on this platform to offer better and more cost-effective solutions to underpin the working practices and improve the user experience of Elected Members.

2.8 A significant amount of work has been undertaken to understand Elected Members current perception of the ICT service provided to them, to consult with them on the areas where improvements can be made and to understand where we can provide more flexible technical solutions whilst maintaining the security of the Council's ICT systems and the integrity of the information we utilise and maintain on behalf of the citizens of Leeds.

2.9 ICT Services are keen to work with Elected Members and other stakeholders to maximise the benefits of the Council's investments in programmes such as the Essential Services Programme to develop appropriate service offerings to meet the needs of individual members, reduce the overall costs of providing the service and provide a platform for future technical advances as they are brought online (e.g. Microsoft Sharepoint, EDRMS (Electronic Document Records Management System), Cloud offerings etc.)

### **3 Main issues**

#### **3.1 Feedback from ICT Survey to determine Members perception of their ICT Service provision**

- 3.1.1 Over the summer, ICT Services undertook a survey to obtain a view from Members with respect to their perception of their current ICT service provision to help develop alternative means by which technology can be used to support the different ways in which they need and choose to carry out their Council business.
- 3.1.2 The survey was comprised of 9 statements ranging from levels of satisfaction with current support arrangements to obtaining information around hardware, software, connectivity and other requirements. The 10<sup>th</sup> element invited respondents to indicate the single change which would improve his or her ICT experience. There was also space for respondents to record "Any other comments".
- 3.1.3 Each of the 9 statements requested a response on a 5 point scale ranging from **1** (disagree strongly with the statement) to **5** (Agree strongly with the statement). There was also an opportunity to indicate "Not Applicable" as it is recognised that all of the questions would not necessarily apply to all Members.
- 3.1.4 The survey was circulated to all Elected Members on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July requesting responses by Friday 26<sup>th</sup> August.
- 3.1.5 There were a total of 32 responses to the survey.
- 3.1.6 The full survey findings are included in a report to the October meeting of Scrutiny Board (Resource and Central Services) referenced in this report as a Background Document (7.1).
- 3.1.7 A summary of the key findings is as follows:
- Overall 67% satisfaction rating
  - Lowest rating 60% satisfaction with the ICT equipment provided and Out of Hours support
  - 77% of respondents were keen to access their Council email and calendar from personal mobile devices
- 3.1.8 In addition there were key themes which could be extrapolated from within the free form responses including:
- Improvement in performance of the current provision including aspects such as length of time to log on and reliability of connection service (particularly from home) as being of paramount importance
  - Increased functionality including specifics such as being able to use WiFi at home and the ability to synchronise email and calendar functions with personal devices.

- Different support arrangements with views ranging from the provision of face-to-face rather than telephone support; extending the ICT support hours to accommodate those who work full-time; and the availability of a dedicated help line (including someone on call). A further respondent indicated that they would welcome an email address for reporting non-urgent support issues.
- Further training was also highlighted by some as the single change which would improve their ICT experience.
- 2 respondents confirmed that on the whole they are provided with a “good service with good support”.

### 3.2 Proposed Members ICT Upgrade Project

- 3.2.1 In recent years a “one size fits all” approach has, by and large, been undertaken with respect to the ICT service provision to Elected Members. This approach has been successful in terms of offering a standardised and cost-effective service; however it is recognised that due to technical advances we are now in a position to be able to offer more flexibility of choice to underpin the way in which Members need and choose to work, whilst being mindful of supportability and security considerations.
- 3.2.2 The current devices provided to Elected Members are approaching end of life and as such are becoming increasingly unreliable and in need of greater levels of support. By refreshing the hardware alongside offering alternative ways of working at this stage will represent a value for money investment as well as preparing the way for alternative, more convenient ways of accessing the Council’s ICT systems as new services are developed and brought on-stream.
- 3.2.3 Increasingly, Members are choosing to integrate their Council and non-Council activities (an example being an increasing number of Members choosing not to use Council-provided ICT equipment and services). ICT Services are keen to encourage such approaches to enhance flexibility and tailored service offerings whilst reducing overall costs to the Council.
- 3.2.4 This, however, will necessitate a full review of the current service including elements such as:
- Working with representatives to ensure that the proposed solutions will meet the needs of Elected Members. It is recognised that the Members ICT Working Group has a key role to play in developing those service offerings.
  - Working up the costs associated with the refresh of ICT equipment and the delivery of the agreed service offerings and developing a business case for the project.
  - Reviewing the current policies and procedures which underpin the current service arrangements (the Members ICT Usage Guidelines, for example) and adapting as necessary.

- Developing materials to enable Elected Members to make informed choices around the equipment and services that they wish to use.
- Ensuring that appropriate training resources are available to assist in the transition to new ways of working.
- Redesigning the ICT support model to meet the requirements of the new service offerings.

3.2.5 It is proposed that this review is undertaken between now and the end of the year with the implementation phase of the project commencing in the New Year.

3.2.6 The project will also incorporate the provision of the service offerings to the New Members following the Local Elections in May 2012.

3.2.7 It is anticipated that in addition to the increased functionality which will benefit Members, the Upgrade Project will also represent significant ongoing savings to the Council. Key areas where savings can be made are in relation to the reduction in revenue costs around the provision of ADSL services to Members' homes and the decrease in costs around the provision of PDA devices. Whilst part of the planning stage of the project will be to ascertain anticipated take-up of the differing service offerings, and therefore the expected budgetary implications, revenue savings of more than £40K are anticipated. In addition, avoiding the costs of providing additional new broadband to Members homes and of refreshing current PDAs will accrue additional savings.

### 3.3 Upgrades to the Council's ICT Infrastructure

3.3.1 In parallel with the project to overhaul the ICT service provision, there will be a significant number of changes and improvements to Council's ICT infrastructure over the coming months, particularly under the auspices of the Essential Services Programme. Some of these changes will be to upgrade the underlying technical architecture.

3.3.2 Other, more visible, changes will involve significant upgrades to the software which Members utilise (including the introduction of Windows 7 operating system and Microsoft Office 2010 on laptops and PCs). Again, the Member ICT Working Group is recognised as a key forum for agreeing the most appropriate means of undertaking the actual upgrade work and associated training which will be required to meet the specific needs of Elected Members to enable them to maximise the benefits of the Council's investment.

3.3.3 Whilst the new service offerings are being worked up, there are a number of changes which we will be able to offer. Where appropriate, these will be made available to Members at the earliest opportunity. These include the facility to access Council email and calendar from personal devices (Smartphones – iPhones, Android devices etc.) and the ability to connect to the Council's wireless network within the Civic Hall. In terms of the first of these a small pilot has already been undertaken and an "Early Adopters" arrangement will be made available to Members shortly.

### 3.4 Members Casework Management system

3.4.1 Following the recommendation of this Committee at the March meeting that the enhancements and developments outlined in that report be progressed, a Project Lead was identified to manage the next phase of the development.

3.4.2 These developments have now been completed and tested and will be made available to those Members and the support officers who utilise the Casework Management system.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 A number of techniques (including Surveys, site visits and meetings) have been employed in recent months to understand Elected Members current perception of their ICT Service provision and to understand where changes can be made to improve that provision are required to assist them in the various ways they choose and need to carry out their Council business.

### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 There are no Equality and Diversity considerations resulting from this report

### **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 There are no implications for Council Policies or City Priorities although, if approved, the Members ICT Upgrade project will involve amendments to the Members ICT Usage Guidelines.

### **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

4.4.1 If the proposed project is approved, an initial investment required to refresh the current ICT hardware in use within Members homes but it is anticipated that significant revenue savings will be realised through the adoption of alternative and more flexible ways in which Elected Members can carry out their Council business. The Upgrade Project would also provide a platform to enable new technologies to be introduced to allow more flexible ways of working. The requirements gathering phase of the project would allow a cost / benefit analysis to be pulled together to identify a range of flexible service offerings which would inform a paper to the January meeting of this Committee.

### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 There are no Legal Implications resulting from this report.

### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 There are no Risk Management issues resulting from this report.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 ICT Services to work with key stakeholders to develop a range of flexible service offerings to support Elected Members in conducting their Council business.
- 5.2 The feedback from the survey undertaken in the summer, together with views obtained through visits and meetings will be used to inform the formulation of those service offerings.
- 5.3 A project to upgrade Members ICT service to be implemented in the new year
- 5.4 In the meantime, developments which technical advances afford to be made available to Elected Members

## **6 Recommendations**

- 6.1 Members are asked to note the content of this report
- 6.2 This report recommends that ICT Services work with key stakeholders (including the Members ICT Working Group, Group Support Officers and Member Development Officers) to develop a range of ICT service offerings between now and the end of 2011 and that ICT Services report back to January meeting of MMC, to request this Committee's support for the recommendations to inform a Delegated Officer decision.

## **7 Background documents**

- 7.1 Report to Scrutiny Committee (Resources and Council Services) on Members ICT Survey (October 2011)