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**AGENDA ITEM: 5**

**PAPERLESS COUNCIL PROPOSAL – MEMBERS ICT PROVISION**

**REPORT OF THE COUNTY CLERK AND MONITORING OFFICER**

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**Reason for report**

1. To update the Committee on progress with implementing the resolution of full Council on the 27 June 2013 to provide ICT devices (Tablets and smart phones) to save money and ensure proper up to date support for Members and to enable them to be less reliant on paper and work in a more mobile way.

**Background**

2. The Council's Corporate Plan 2013-17 includes the commitment to look at "new ways of delivering services" and specifically mentions the example of using technology to become a "paperless council", which would generate savings on paper and printing costs. Spending on printing reports and papers for Members has also been over budget for most of 2013/14. Spending and the administrative costs associated with Members' land telephones and broadband services has also been of concern.
3. As a consequence the Council agreed the Democratic Services Committee's recommendations for the provision of ICT mobile device equipment for all members following a Member Survey and noting the proposed savings this would provide.
4. A Project was set up to start in September 2013. However, it was suspended following a ruling from the UK Cabinet Office which regulates ICT security across the UK public sector. The Council is accredited to connect to the national Public Sector Network (PSN). This network joins a variety of public sector and national government agencies together, enabling data to be shared securely. The UK Cabinet Office has a new 'Zero Tolerance' policy for Public Sector Network (PSN) connectivity in relation to mobile devices.

5. Since September, officers have been re-evaluating the current remote access provided to all users and the proposed access model for Members as part of the Members ICT refresh project.

## **REVISED SPECIFICATION**

6. A revised specification has now been agreed involving a Windows 8.1 Tablet and a 3G Smartphone (Samsung Galaxy Ace 3) with Good Messaging software. Good Messaging should meet the UK Cabinet Office Policy for PSN on Council provided devices implemented following the PSN. This revised specification provides improved member applications in relation to emails and a further cost saving. The Windows Tablet has greater storage capacity than the original iPad specification and allows better access to emails over the internet. They will also allow members to read and annotate documents at Council meetings, avoiding the need to use paper copies. The transition to a Windows based Tablet will also be easier for all Members as they use the Windows operating model on existing council provided personal computers and laptops. A demonstration of the equipment will be available at the Committee.
7. As part of this package, members will have to choose between retaining their existing council funded landlines or moving to a new Smartphone. The business case will not support all members having both home telephones and smartphones.
8. The new tablet devices will provide Members with network access using council wireless systems at wireless enabled council premises or using personal broadband services at home and/or mobile 3G technology using the Council provided Smartphone. Personal broadband service must allow the use of a VPN (Virtual Private Networks). Not all providers allow this. The Council decided to cease funding broadband services for members at home as part of the 2013/14 budget, and this support will be phased out as part of this project.
9. The Tablet can also be easily utilised as a laptop or traditional PC by adding an additional keyboard, mouse and/or monitor at an additional cost. No financial allowance has been made to do this within the existing business case although there is scope to provide this in exceptional cases.
10. However the business case does provide for the package to be upgraded further by adding a SIM card to the Tablet to allow full mobile working if the PSN accreditation later in the year allows for this.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. The business case for the revised specification indicates a potential saving of £124,124 over a three year period. If PSN accreditation is received in May 2014, the additional revenue costs to enable mobile data on the Tablet will reduce the saving to £83,204 over the three year period.

The cost of the new equipment will be capitalised in the current year. As set out in the Budget report, this would be undertaken as an invest to save scheme with the initial cost of the equipment and other facilities being financed from reductions in the cost of printing and other associated revenue budgets.

There is a risk that should member requirements change then this will impact on the model and could result in increased costs. If this occurs, then any additional costs would have to be met from within existing Council budgets or by a drawdown from reserves.

## **DELIVERY PLAN**

12. It is planned to acquire the new equipment and software during February 2014 with roll out of the new equipment with training and induction to Members to follow.
13. All Members will be offered an initial set up meeting to ensure continuity of service and support as the new equipment is provided. Members will have to return existing ICT equipment in exchange for the new set up.
14. An updated members ICT protocol will need to be devised to deal with damaged and lost equipment, appropriate insurance provision and compliance with security standards and data protection.
15. Training will be provided on a individual basis as part of the set up as required with small group follow on sessions being provided on a regular basis. A review of the implementation will be reported to the Democratic Services Committee during 2014/15.

## **CONCLUSION**

16. Members remain committed to working in a more efficient mobile manner making increasing use of new technology and the internet. Delaying the implementation to ensure a PSN secure specification has caused some inconvenience and additional cost in continuing the current arrangements.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Committee notes the current position and approves the approach to delivery and implementation.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

The following background papers are relevant to this report:

- Council Report, 27 June 2013 - Paperless Council Proposal
- Democratic Services Committee Report 19 June 2013 – Paperless Council Proposal
- Council Report, 28 March 2013 – Democratic Services Committee Proposal: ICT Provision for Members
- Democratic Services Committee Report, 22 January 2013 – ICT Provision for Members: Business Case
- Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2012