CITY AND COUNTY OF CARDIFF
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE: **15 JULY 2015**

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR, GOVERNANCE AND LEGAL SERVICES

ICT MEMBER PROJECT UPDATE

Reason for this Report

1.   To receive an update on the ICT Member Project and agree methodology to be used to evaluate its implementation and feedback from Councillors.

Background

2.   Councillors agreed the principles of the ICT Member Project and a 'paper-lite' approach for the Council and the Business Case was signed off on this basis.

3.   The ICT Member Project aimed to deliver a new agile way of working for Councillors using technology, reduce reliance on paper copies and generate savings on printing and postage costs.

4.   The project out-performed the original target to equip up to 35 Councillors. 46 tablets were issued; 5 tablets have been returned; and 1 tablet is to be issued to the newly elected Councillor for Pentyrch. 32 Councillors have either retaining their existing equipment or been reallocated second user devices from the Members inventory.

5.   An evaluation of the project to assess the outcomes, lessons learnt and to enable IT Officers to consider any feedback and actions to be resolved with the vendor has been proposed and will take place prior to the Summer Recess.

Issues

6.   On 25 March 2015 (Minute No: 30) received an update from the ICT Service Manager on the performance of the tablet devices. Members were advised that a number of unforeseen hardware and software faults had occurred during the roll out period which resulted in a reduced performance.

7. All hardware failures and replacements required to date have been rectified under warranty and the hardware is now more stable. The numbers of faults were not untypical to experiences of other Local Authorities in the introduction of new technology from a variety of vendors and the availability of new models being brought to market to meet demand.

8. As part of the project Members of the Committee were aware of the need for the Council to be compliant with National Public Service Network (PSN) and Payment Card Industry (PCI) Regulations and meet the Government security rules, and as a result the password be-crypt log on system for the devices is more cumbersome than previous.

9. Issues also arose with Microsoft Windows Security Patch updates and the changes to the Council Wi-Fi connection. These areas have been dealt with by IT and through one to one sessions with those Members requiring support.

10. On 25 March, 2015 Members sought assurances in the reliability of devices as a long-term solution; the impact the ICT and Democratic Services Officers on the demand of reported faults and issues; and the length of time taken to get devices back up and running if a fault occurs.

11. Following the Committee ICT Service Manager had discussions with the vendor on the matters raised and Officers are currently trialling a new model of the Windows device which if it meets the project requirements could be piloted by up to three Members.

12. The Committee is requested to discuss the methodology for formally evaluating the project and to get feedback from Members. The following methods are for consideration:-

    *   Short questionnaire via email;
    *   Short questionnaire to be circulated at next Council meeting to be returned at the end of the meeting;
    *   Drop In sessions facilitated by Members Services;
    *   Face to face Member engagement in person or by phone;
    *   Through Party Group Whips.

Legal Implications

13. There are no direct legal implications arising from the content of this report.

Financial Implications

14. The original business case indicated a potential saving of £56,204 over a three year period. This includes costs arising from the capitalisation of the cost of the new equipment.

15. This has been 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.

16. Cost savings of £28,680 were achieved in 2014/15 through a combination of reduced printing and postage costs.

17. 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.

Recommendations

(1)   to note the update on the ICT Member Project;

(2)   to agree the methodology to be used for evaluation of the implementation of the ICT Member Project and get feedback from Members;

(3)   feedback from the evaluation be provided to the Chair as soon as practicable;

(4)   the Chair in consultation with the Director, Governance and Legal Services and ICT Service Manager agree the pilot of the updated device if appropriate.

MARIE ROSENTHAL
Director, Governance and Legal Services
9 July 2015
DSC/GN/V1.0