

CEREDIGION COUNTY COUNCIL

Report to: Democratic Services Committee

Date: 7 March 2022

Title: Member ICT Provision post elections 2022.

Purpose of report: To propose future ICT equipment and support

Introduction

The current ICT provision for members is a *choice* of a Laptop or Apple iPad with access to emails and Council documents through the corporate website.

During the last five years, the way that the Council delivers its services has transformed to working digitally and both Council staff and Councillors need to have the appropriate equipment to connect remotely and undertake their business electronically.

Currently all Council meetings are held virtually and a time will come when we will move towards a hybrid solution with Councillors and Officers able to either attend meetings in the Chamber or remotely from either a Council office or home working environment. To enable the new way of working, an appropriate technical solution is needed to allow Members to access the meeting via video and also display all the necessary documents through the new digital platforms used to manage future meetings. The Council continues to transform and make efficiency savings to enable key frontline services and a key deliverable to these efficiencies is to reduce the need for paper copies of documents and work electronically from a safe environment.

Members that are currently not receiving the ICT service are able to access remote meetings by telephone, however they are not able to view documents shared on screen. It is also noted that Section 43, Chapter 4 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires that from May 2022, a principal council must publish an electronic address of each member of the council.

Proposed ICT Solution for 2022

It is proposed that councillors are provided with the same ICT provision as council staff as this is proven to meet modern office and home working requirements. The proposed solution allows safe and secure access to all services and documents needed by Councillors to carry out Council business remotely or in person.

It is proposed that the current solution is replaced with the single option below.

1. A Windows Laptop with the same specification as for council staff.
2. Software configuration to allow access to appropriate internal corporate systems.
3. Two 24" screens with internal docking capability or separate docking station. Allowing the laptop to be connected with a single cable.
4. A keyboard, mouse and headset
5. Carry cases require personal choice to meet the users' needs and preferences. Members should source their own to meet their personal needs. However, a basic laptop case will be provided on request.
6. Ceredigion email address and Office E3 365 account.
7. Use of Microsoft 365 Office applications in line with Microsoft licencing agreement. This will allow Members to install Office application on up to 5 personal devices.
8. Provision of a printing and scanning facility in each of the Members' Rooms in Penmorfa and Canolfan Rheidol.
9. Access to Wi-Fi in all council offices.
10. Secure access to email and Office files from personal mobile devices
11. Appropriate training and briefing on data protection and use of any issued devices.
12. ICT support from corporate ICT service desks and remote support via telephone and remote access during service desk hours.
13. Only agreed software to be installed as with council staff
14. Skype (or equivalent) calling will be provided to enable incoming/outgoing calls
15. Printers will not be provided as we seek to support electronic working and environmentally friendly practices that will contribute to the Council's Carbon Management Plan. Printing of any letters can be sent to the Corporate post room who will print and post the letters on your behalf (the same service as is provided to Council services)
16. All Members must sign and agree to the Council's acceptable use policy and Councillor Data security policy.

This proposal will provide each Councillor with a solution that allows them to remote attend all council meetings through the new chamber remote attendance solution. Other devices such as Android and Apple devices are currently not compatible with the new hybrid remote attendance solution and would provide limited access.

All Members are able to access their emails through the Office 365, where they use their own mobile device to connect to this secure cloud service. Devices must meet the automated security policies at the time of access.

Members are responsible for their own GDPR and policy compliance and should take additional care if sharing, downloading or storing any sensitive data.

All Members are able to opt-in to an allowance scheme towards costs such as telephone usage and they are able to use this towards a mobile data contract for their own mobile device.

The proposed solution will be full managed and majority of issues can be resolved by a technician connecting in remotely to resolve problems (during office hours), thus in most cases, not having to take faulty equipment into either Penmorfa or Canolfan Rheidol for support. Other devices cannot be supported this way and would need to be handed back to a technician for repair.

The solution proposed meets all cyber security standards that protects the authority's services and data.

Existing iPads

From January 2022 all existing iPads are being decommissioned (SIM card removed and council services disconnected) and then handed back to the councillor for their own personal use. Support on these iPads will/has ceased from the date of decommissioning. The iPads can be used using Wi-Fi but will no longer be supported by the Council's ICT service.

Refresh considerations for Members that are re-elected at the May 2022 Local Elections

All Members who are re-elected will be assessed to see if the current laptop solution is appropriate and will be upgraded if necessary.

Non-returning Members

Where Members are not returning after the Local Elections, then they will need to return all issued equipment to either Penmorfa or Canolfan Rheidol service desks, with the exception of the decommissioned iPads. This equipment will be either refurbished and re-issued or disposed of in-line with our usual corporate refresh arrangements.

Recommendations

For Democratic Committee to confirm that the proposal outline above is the most appropriate solution to meet the needs of Councillors and to accept the proposed ICT service provision for all Councillors from May 2022 onwards.

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