

Cheltenham Borough Council
Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 22 February 2016
Members' ICT scrutiny task group – progress review

Accountable member	Councillor Jon Walklett, Cabinet Member Corporate Services
Accountable officer	Mark Sheldon, Director of Resources
Executive summary	<p>At its meeting on 14 April 2015, Cabinet agreed the recommendations from a scrutiny task group set up to consider Members ICT.</p> <p>It has been 10 months since the recommendations were agreed and this report sets out the progress that has been made against each of the recommendations during that time.</p>
Recommendations	That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider the progress that has been made against each of the recommendations and decide whether further follow-up or scrutiny is required.

Financial implications	<p>The rollout of iPads is assisting is driving down the cost of administering meetings which has resulted in a reduction in printing costs as detailed in paragraph 2.3.</p> <p>Contact officer: Sarah Didcote, GOSS Business Partner Manager sarah.didcote@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264125</p>
Legal implications	<p>None directly arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: shirin.wotherspoon@teWKesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272017</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>Capacity for member training on the use of the iPad and the various apps should be kept under review and where necessary additional resource may need to be budgeted for. DSU and Planning teams currently have little or no spare capacity to undertake additional duties.</p> <p>Contact officer: Julie McCarthy, HR Manager julie.mccarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk</p>
Key risks	As set out in the report
Corporate and Community Plan implications	
Environmental and climate change implications	<p>The relative environmental benefits of using paper or iPads is influenced by sourcing, manufacturing processes, energy use and disposal and therefore the environmental benefit of moving to paperless meetings is not clear.</p> <p>Gill Morris, Client officer, gill.morris@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel: 01242 264229</p>
Property/Asset Implications	The use of iPads in meetings will be reliant on ICT ensuring that Wi-Fi facilities are available in the meeting rooms.

1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting on the 3 November 2014, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a task group to review the Members' ICT Policy and the business case for iPads.
- 1.2 The task group report and recommendations were approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2015 and forwarded to Cabinet for approval.
- 1.3 Cabinet noted the report and recommendations of the task group in February 2015, before agreeing them at their meeting on the 14 April 2015.
- 1.4 It has been 10 months since the recommendations were approved and given that from April 2016, ICT will form part of the 2020 Partnership, it was felt timely for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to receive an update on the progress that had been achieved.

2. Progress against recommendation 1: the Members' ICT Policy is endorsed and publicised to all Members, thereby demonstrating Cabinet's support for the move to paperless meetings.

- 2.1 The prime purpose of the policy was to set out clearly what was being provided for Members in terms of ICT and the expectation of them, particularly with the regard to the loan of a council iPad and the move to paperless meetings.
- 2.2 To date, 35 members have moved to paperless meetings.
- 2.3 The original business case for the iPads was based on an annual replacement budget of iPads in the order of £5000. This assumed the iPads would have a 3-4 year life cycle and with some allowances for breakage, repairs or technical failure. The potential saving from external printing was estimated to be in the order of £4000 per annum. Printing costs in 2014/15 were £8,500 and printing costs for 2015/16 date are just under £3000 so we are on target to achieve the estimated printing savings. The actual saving will be known once the full year's committee cycle has been completed.

3. Progress against recommendation 2: in respect of Members signing up to the policy before accepting an iPad (including the retrospective requirements) should be implemented by the Democratic Services Manager

- 3.1 Upon adoption of the policy, Democratic Services undertook to obtain a signed agreement from those members that had already been issued with a council iPad. This process is now complete but has taken some time.
- 3.2 ICT have been tasked with ensuring that members sign an agreement at the point at which they are issued with a council iPad. The policy will be explained to new Members as part of their Induction process.
- 3.3 32 members have been issued with a council iPad and submitted a signed agreement. 6 members use their own device and 2 members have chosen to continue to receive hard copies of committee papers, and therefore, these members do not need to sign the agreement
- 3.4 Although officers endeavour to produce all reports in a form that can be used on an iPad it is acknowledged that there will be some exceptions and in such instances, paper copies will be produced to aid their readability.
- 3.5 Up until January 2016, all exempt documents were printed for members. In January, the

restricted app was launched, initially only to those with a council iPad. The restricted app allows members to access exempt or non-public committee papers on their iPad after entering a password. This will include all working groups that are administered by Democratic Services.

- 3.6 A large proportion of those that registered for the restricted app found the process quick and easy, but there were some members that encountered various difficulties. To date, 20 members have registered for the restricted app.
- 3.7 Members will continue to be encouraged to go paperless through using an iPad, but there are other options for Members who do not want to go down this route. These include:
- continued use of personal home based PC – without utilising a personal or CBC iPad and continuing to receive paper copies
 - use own personal iPad – configured to accept CBC mails and Mod.gov
 - use other personal PSN approved device – such as Smartphones
 - Members with a Council iPad can print papers at home or use Municipal offices based CBC follow me printing to print off selected reports (although there will be a corporate printing cost associated with the latter)
- 3.8 In this respect flexibility is being offered to Members. The only essential requirement as set out in the policy is that Members accepting a Council iPad must be prepared to go paperless.

4. Recommendation 3: Cabinet Member Corporate Services, in liaison with Democratic Services and ICT, to encourage members to participate in training and development designed to enhance their use of ICT equipment and applications provided.

- 4.1 All Members receiving an iPad have been offered training. This was originally offered by ICT and covered the basics of using an iPad. The training has been enhanced to cover the modern.gov app and is now delivered by Democratic Services so it can be more focussed on supporting members in the move to paperless meetings.
- 4.2 Following issues raised at Cabinet in April 2015, Democratic Services reoffered training to all Members in group form or on a 1 on 1 basis and have repeated this offer as and when necessary. Take-up has been low with only 12 members having attended any training. This may be because Members are already familiar with the technology but there are still indications that the facilities on the modern.gov are not being fully utilised so some Members would benefit from attending the training.
- 4.3 Training will be offered to new members following the May 2016 borough elections and the invitation will be extended to existing members as means of a refresher.
- 4.4 Democratic Services are actively increasing their knowledge of the application and seeking good practice from other authorities. This does not however, negate the need for good technical support from ICT in continuing to enhance the iPad facilities offered to members. ICT Support Centre should continue to be the first point of contact for any technical problems with the iPads that members may experience.

5. Recommendation 4: Members' ICT provision to be kept under review in order to take advantage of new developments in technology is taken forward by the Cabinet Member Corporate Services in liaison with ICT and Democratic Services.

- 5.1 It was already apparent when the policy was adopted in April 2015 that the technology and applications move forward quickly; with the iPads issued at the time, being considerably lighter than the ones that were issued as part of the initial pilot in September 2014. In the new shared service we would like ICT to be proactive in recommending future technology which could support members in their role and have already had discussions with ICT along those lines..

- 5.2 Cheltenham Borough Homes' purchase of the modern.gov system enabled the council to secure the restricted app at a more favourable price for a fixed term. The restricted app provides members with access to exempt and non-public committee papers and this includes working groups where agenda packs are currently circulated by email, which does not provide the facilities that the modern.gov app provides to make comments/notes on the document electronically.

6. Areas for further development

Offer further training and support in the role out of the modern.gov restricted app

32 members have been issued with council iPads, 38 are using the modern.gov app and only 12 have attended any training, despite offers to arrange group or 1 to 1 training sessions.

It has become apparent that some members are not using the modern.gov app, but are instead using the link contained within the email alert for new publications, to access committee papers on the public website. This means that they are not able to take advantage of the various means of annotation that the modern.gov app offers or access exempt or non-public committee papers. Democratic Services will look to add a note to the automated email which reminds members that they should be using the modern.gov app to access current committee papers, rather than the public website. They will of course continue to use the website to access historical documents.

Encourage Members to view their email account on a regular basis

An added benefit of the iPad is that members have their council email account included on the device. It was hoped that members would find this more convenient than before, when they would have to logon remotely at home or in the Municipal Offices and would therefore be able to review their emails on a more regular basis. New Members will be encouraged to view their emails regularly, preferably daily as the Members ICT policy suggests.

Offer more facilities on the iPad

This could include facilities like intranet access, ability to edit documents etc. This would require advice and guidance from ICT as to what technologies are available and the implications for cost, security etc.

Consider extending the paperless approach to Planning Committee

Although the complexity of papers for Planning Committee is acknowledged there could be potential savings in moving to a more paperless approach. This is due to be reviewed in 2016 by the Planning team.

7. Consultation and feedback

- 7.1 As the ICT team move into the 2020 partnership in April 2016, ICT will continue to provide strategic direction and advice to members and the group and to keep them informed of any future developments which may prove beneficial.
- 7.2 The Cabinet Member Corporate Services said "I believe this report contains the necessary and appropriate evidence to demonstrate the great strides taken since April 2015 in progressing the Members ICT policy objectives. All recommendations have been achieved by the communication with and engagement of members in this project together with their enthusiastic participation in moving this forward. Whilst a little disappointed with members response to Democratic Services training and development program, am pleased to note that furthest invitations to existing members will be extended as means of a refresher. Clearly fast moving IT technical development needs to be kept under constant review and the recent introduction of the enhanced Modern.gov application demonstrates CBC's capability to meet innovative change."

8. Performance management – monitoring and review

- 8.1 Members ICT provision and support will continue to be monitored by Democratic Services in liaison with ICT where required.

8.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee need to decide whether they feel further scrutiny or follow-up is required on any of the recommendations.

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Appendices	n/a
Background information	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Scrutiny task group report and covering report to Cabinet 10 February 2015.2. Cabinet response to task group report (14 April 2015).