Report of the Strategic Director

MEMBER DEVICES

1. Purpose of report

   The report provides Councillors with options in respect to the provision of ICT devices in order for Councillors to be able to access all relevant Council technology platforms and systems and in addition to have a common supported device to use for Council business in line with their role as Broxtowe Borough Councillors.

2. Background

   The recent Covid-19 emergency has highlighted the disparate range of ICT devices used by Councillors and the difficulty for a small number of Councillors in accessing the new ICT platforms that were established to allow for the democratic process to continue. Moving forward it is recognised that achieving a degree of consistency for Councillors will help to enable generic training to be delivered with the consequent increase in confidence and skills.

   In addition, phase 3 of the implementation of the Committee Management System (CMS) will see the rollout of the solution to officers, who have the responsibility of generating reports and to Councillors, where the goal will be for them to consume Committee and Council agendas electronically. The appendix provides two options that Councillors are asked to consider and decide which best meets their needs and the objectives of the Council's Digital Strategy to increase its use of digital service provision to officers, Customers and Councillors.

3. Financial Implications

   Procurement of the enhanced module for the CMS system allowing for secure remote access to confidential (Section 12 exclusion of public and press) documents is estimated to cost £5,000 plus any ongoing support and maintenance costs whilst the Councillor's devices are estimated to cost £40,000.

   Finance and Resources Committee on 9 July 2020 will be asked to carry forward a net underspend of £45,500 in the 2019/20 capital programme on New Ways of Working (NWOW) Data Server Re-Location and Town Hall Migration schemes for inclusion in the 2020/21 capital programme. As no further expenditure is anticipated on these schemes, this sum is available for use as agreed by Members.

   The total proposed capital cost of £45,000 as outlined above can be met from the £45,500 carried forward from 2019/20. The ongoing support and maintenance costs would be met from the ICT software maintenance budget which is £573,000 in 2020/21.

Recommendation **The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:** **1) The procurement of the appropriate module for the Committee Management System to allow for secure remote access to Section 12 documents.** **2) To determine which option is preferred and RESOLVE accordingly.** **3) To RECOMMEND to the Finance and Resources Committee to include £45,000 in the 2020/21 capital programme as outlined to be funded by a carry forward of £45,500 from 2019/20**

Background papers: nil

APPENDIX

<u>Costs of the Current Arrangements</u>

The cost of the current support for Councillors ICT provision is built into the Member Allowance arrangements. Within the allowance £200.00 is provided to each Councillor each year to invest in ICT facilities. Therefore, £200 x 44 (Councillors) x 4 (years) = <u>£35,200</u> invested by the Council for Councillor ICT provision (excluding telephony and broadband where an additional separate allowance is provided).

<u>Moving Forward</u>

To enable the Council to leverage the investment already made in the CMS and to ensure that all Councillors have access to technology that allows full engagement with the Council's ICT platforms and systems, it is recommended that Councillors consider approving moving towards a Council owned device rather than procuring their own. The capital cost to enhance the CMS solution allowing Councillors to securely access confidential (Section 12 exclusion of public and press) documents electronically is approximately £5,000 with any ongoing maintenance cost being contained within existing revenue budgets. In addition, a capital budget of approximately £40,000 will be required during each Council Term to purchase a new device for each Councillor (the asset life is 5 years equating to £8,000 per year). This latter element may be offset by the removal or reduction of Councillor's ICT allowance.

Option 1:

1. Approach all Councillors and determine which Councillors require the Council to purchase them a device (based on a) no device or b) current device is not fit for purpose i.e. cannot operate with Microsoft Teams or Committee Management System)
2. Purchase a smaller number of devices and allocate accordingly.
3. Remove / reduce the ICT allowance for this smaller cohort of Councillors (remove the whole £200 or reduce it to for example £100 to reflect other costs that may be incurred, for example printer / consumables).
4. At the end of this Council Term (May 2023) the Council purchases each member of the new Council a Council owned device.
5. Apply the allowance arrangement to all Councillors in line with what is decided at 3. above.

Pros	Cons
Ensures that all Councillors have a device that is fit for purpose	Cannot guarantee that the range of technology remaining will work for the full Council term
Reduced initial capital expenditure	

Option 2:

1. Leave the current allowance in place for all Members until the end of the current Council Term
2. Purchase each Member a new Council owned device, allocate the new device and expect Councillors to use the new device
3. At the end of this Council Term in 2023 all of the Council devices are recovered, wiped and rebuilt.
4. The recovered devices are issued to the new Councillor cohort at the beginning of the new Council Term

5. Remove / reduce the ICT allowance for this smaller cohort of Councillors (remove the whole £200 or reduce it to for example, £100 to reflect other costs that may be incurred, for example printer / consumables).

Pros	Cons
The functionality / maintenance / ability to work with the technology platforms in use by the Council can be guaranteed	May be viewed by some Councillors as an unnecessary expense in instances where some have purchased good quality devices that are capable of working with the technology platforms in use by the Council
Consistency of device will allow generic training and support to be delivered	Business use only
Councillors that have invested in their ICT solution expecting to be repaid over the Council Term via the ICT allowance would not be disadvantaged.	