

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES COMMITTEE

18 December 2015

Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services – Karen Jones

Matter for Information

Wards Affected:

All Wards

MEMBERS ICT GUIDANCE AND USAGE

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Member approval to amend the current Members ICT Guidance and Internet Usage Policy.

Background

2. The original Members IT Guidance Note, including Internet Usage Policy, was prepared and circulated to Members in August 2012.
3. With the introduction and transition onto the new Committee Document Management System, Modern.Gov, in October 2014, the ability to offer elected Members improved digital communication channels via mobile software and hardware has now become viable.

4. The current system can now offer significant benefits in terms of receiving Council Papers in a timelier manner, rapid access to the Council's document archives and improved organisation and annotation functionality.
5. In addition, the increased use of Digital Communication tools and technology will also assist the department in meeting its Forward Financial Plan targets by reducing over time the significant costs around print production and courier/postage of Council Papers.

Proposal

6. To enable Members greater flexibility and choice to maximise the use of mobile communication devices and the rapid development in application based software packages, it is proposed to include the following clause within the current guidance and policy document:-
7. "To facilitate use of the Modern.Gov system that has been installed to improve access to the Council's Committee business, Members wishing to operate Modern.Gov as an alternative to receiving information through traditional channels will be eligible for an iPad, additional to the laptop/desktop PC that they opted for at the beginning of their term of office."

Financial Impact

8. The cost of providing Members who chose to opt out of receiving information via traditional channels will be funded via Member ICT reserves. Over the longer term, some savings will be achieved with the reduction in print production and courier/postage costs. (check)

Workforce Impacts

9. Member development activities have been piloted during the trial phase of Modern.Gov. From this trial phase, a good understanding of the support that will need to be in place to support Members electing to move to electronic receipt of papers has been achieved and this support can be delivered between the ICT and Democratic Services teams. .

Legal Impacts

10. The Local Government Measure 2011 places a responsibility on the Head of Democratic Services to ensure that there is sufficient resource in place to support Members in carrying out their roles.

Risk Management

11. There are none.

Consultation

12. There is no requirement for external consultation under the Constitution.

Recommendations

To endorse the proposed amendment of the current Members IT Guidance Notes, Including Internet Usage Policy and rename the policy document the Members ICT Scheme, including Internet Usage Policy and to commend that change to Council in the New Year.

Reason for Proposed Decision

13. To allow Members to discuss the proposed change to the Members ICT Guidance Notes and if applicable approve the relevant amendment.

Appendices

14. Appendix 1 - Members ICT Scheme, Including Internet Usage Policy.

List of Background Papers

15. None.

Officer Contacts

Karen Jones - Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services

e-mail: k.jones3@npt.gov.uk

Telephone: 01639 76

Rhys George - Electoral and Democratic Services Manager

e-mail: r.j.george@npt.gov.uk

Telephone: 01639 763719