

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Technology</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Peter Kendrick</b>
<b>Telephone No:</b>	<b>01785 619274</b>
<b>Portfolio Leader:</b>	<b>Corporate Portfolio Leader</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Cabinet: 12/11/20</b>

**Cabinet**  
**12 November 2020**  
**Technology Desktop Infrastructure Replacement – Permission to Spend**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval to replace the desktop devices with laptops.
- 1.2 To seek Members approval to fund the replacement from the IT Reserve.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Cabinet approves the purchase of appropriate laptop devices to enable officers to work from home, the Civic Centre or any other suitable office.
- 2.2 Permission is requested to spend £204,000 from the IT Reserve. This is to support the profile of the workforce as reported to the Leadership Team on 17 December 2019 and subsequently amended in June 2020 due to the impact of Covid19.

**3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendations**

Key Issues

- 3.1 The computers on the desktop should be replaced with laptops to enable staff to work at any desk and in any office at the civic centre and our other offices. We also wish them to be able to work electronically in meetings. A laptop will also be required to allow staff to work remotely which will mean their homes and the offices of other partners and councils.
- 3.2 We expect to make greater use of video conferencing and computer-based training. We will buy laptops that have the capability to support these systems.
- 3.3 The expected lifecycle of new machines running the most recent software (Windows 10) has improved over the last 4-5 years. The software will be supported by Microsoft until at least 2025.

- 3.4 In a similar way the laptop hardware itself is expected to last longer than its predecessors due to there being few moving parts (apart from the keyboard).
- 3.5 Future application systems (Council Tax, Finance, HR) are likely to demand lower processing power than their current versions. This again will extend the useful life of any new laptop.

#### Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.6 The current desktop hardware is almost at the end of its life and will probably become increasingly faulty.
- 3.7 Since the Leadership report was written in December 2019 the use of video meeting and remote working has increased and we are now almost entirely dependent on these technologies.
- 3.8 It is important to give officers the appropriate tools to support their work within the council.

## **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

- 4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:

Corporate Plan for 2018-2023. Page 25

*"The Council will ensure it has a robust medium-term financial plan and will proactively engage with Government on the proposals for a new funding regime in local government from 2020. The Council will work in partnership with all public bodies to maximise the benefits delivered by public funds."*

(i) To maximise the benefits delivered by public funds, it is important that staff have the appropriate tools to ensure that they work and communicate in an efficient way.

## **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 The office desktop hardware such as PCs, Laptops and Thin clients need to be replaced every four to five years. The replacement is required due to –
- Wear and tear of the physical hardware
  - Processing power and memory to run the newer software
  - Meeting optimal hardware requirement from software suppliers vendors
  - Old underlying operating system becoming a cyber risk, end of life and unsupported software
- 5.2 There is no on-going budget to replace these assets. There has been a similar issue with the replacement of Microsoft Office 2010.
- 5.3 The combination of a standard PC/laptop, Windows 10 and Office 365 will be suitable to support staff requirements for a period of five to six years. Other

emerging technologies may demand more processing power than these new laptops. This would in some cases require another refresh, but this is likely to be required due to general wear and tear on the devices after 5 years of usage.

5.4 The previous profile of the workforce has significantly changed since the original work to establish the requirement for laptops. In December 2019 the plan was for the replacement of 110 desktop PCs and 231 laptops. This would have required purchasing 341 devices. This has now changed to 183 laptops because 92 have been bought since March 2020 and 90 were purchased prior to that. There are an additional 24 laptops required to be purchased because the devices cannot now be shared and there is no 'hot desking' at the current time.

5.5 The cost for the remaining laptops is £135,420. The cost of the laptops bought since March 2020 is £68,080.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

The report requests permission to drawdown funding from the IT reserve for the purchase of laptops. This is both historical as purchases have been made since March 2020 and forward looking to replace for all staff. The budget request is based on replacement of 275 laptops at £740 each totalling £203,500. Of this amount 92 (£68,080 cost) have already been purchased.

### **6.2 Legal**

None

### **6.3 Human Resources**

Computer equipment and particularly laptops and tablets must be used in line with Health and safety guidance.

### **6.4 Section 17 (Crime Prevention)**

None

### **6.5 Human Rights Act**

None

### **6.6 Data Protection**

Data must be kept secure. It is generally agreed by the Cyber security community that a key defence is to ensure that we use modern software and devices that are built to withstand attacks from hackers. The council's policy and the Government's requirement is to use only devices and software that are maintained and updated on a regular basis.

### **6.7 Risk Management**

Cyber security is a strategic risk and is on the register (C8)

6.8 **Equality & Diversity**

None

6.9 **Best Value**

None.

**Background Papers**

None.