

TO:	CABINET
DATE:	6 MARCH 2002
SUBJECT:	PROVISION OF PC'S TO MEMBERS
REPORT OF:	PETER BYARD, HEAD OF IT AND E-GOVERNMENT & PETER FINNIS, HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES
Ward(s):	All
Purpose:	To present proposals for Members' IT provision from May 2002 in line with the E-government Strategy and resulting from the successful IEG bid in respect of e-working for Members.
Contact:	Peter Byard, Head of IT and E-Government, Telephone 01323 415167 or internally on extension 5167. Peter Finnis, Head of Democratic Services, Telephone 01323 415003 or internally on extension 5003.
Recommendations:	<p>1. That Council be recommended to approve the provision of IT facilities for all Members from May 2002 in line with the proposals as set out in paragraph 6 of this report, the financial implications outlined in paragraph 8, and the training outlined in paragraph 9.</p> <p>2. That as a result of the above recommendation, and in line with the example consequences set out in paragraph 7 of this report, Council be recommended to make a commitment to abandon non-IT working wherever possible from May 2002.</p>

1.0	Background	

1.1	The Government has set out a clear policy for responding to the expectations of the citizen and the consumer. The White Paper “Modernising Government” was published in March 1999. This white paper proposes radical change to local government and puts Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at the heart of improving services to the consumer.	
1.2	The implementation of e-government will transform the way the local authority does business. The major business drivers that will fuel this transformation are:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The ability to reach more customers · To offer new forms and levels of customer service · To achieve mass customisation or personalisation of products and services for individual customers. 	
1.3	In adopting e-business principles the opportunities arise for organisations to achieve greater efficiency and effective cost savings. Generally, this is accomplished by extending a company’s IT systems to its customers, suppliers, partners, employees and others outside.	
1.4	Meeting customer expectations about electronic service delivery has potential benefits in four key areas:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Speed of carrying out transactions · Convenience and access · Flexibility in options and hours of service · Empowerment to the public, by bringing services closer to the public and letting them choose how/when to carry out transactions. 	
1.5	Other benefits are the potential for different parts of government to work in partnership: central government with local authorities or the voluntary sector, or government with third party delivery channels such as the Post Office or private sector companies.	
1.6	The Prime Minister has set central government a goal of 100% electronic service delivery capability by 2005. In the government document Implementing e-government: Guidelines for Local Government – it is proposed that each Council sets its own electronic service delivery targets.	

2.0	EBC Members - The Current Situation	
2.1	Eight Members who have access to PCs at home, can access the Council network remotely using direct call-back remote access. Six additional Members have installation of this system pending. All thirty Members have access to Outlook and email via the new Eastbourne Council Extranet system, although not all are using this at the time of writing. There is also a PC available in the Members Room, which is utilised by eight Members for Outlook and for looking at Committee minutes and agendas.	
2.2	Three Members have had PCs or laptops provided by East Sussex CC, as well as they are joint Members of both Councils.	
3.0	The Council's IT Strategy	
3.1	The IT Strategy for Eastbourne Borough Council provides a framework for implementing e-government. Part of the strategy indicates that Members will be provided with electronic access. The Strategy indicates that Members will be provided with PCs with full e-mail facilities to allow citizens to access members and for members to access services.	
4.0	The Council's Internal Communications Strategy	
4.1	Following the Staff Survey conducted in May 1999; one of the key issues highlighted within the survey was a planned approach to internal communications. Although the Communications Strategy is largely aimed at communication between Officers of the Council at any level, Members also need to be directly involved within this information 'loop'.	
4.2	Therefore as with the IT Strategy, Members should be provided with PC's with full e-mail facilities to enable them to access all Officers of the Council and allowing Officers direct access to Members.	
4.3	The introduction of comprehensive Member/Officer interface via electronic means is essential to the future of efficient joint working and in order to fulfil the commitment arising from the IEG bid.	

5.0	Whole Council Elections – May 2002	
5.1	The full Council will be elected on 2 May 2002. This has been identified as an ideal opportunity for all newly elected Members to be provided with PCs on the full understanding in advance that, from May 2002, the Council is committed to e-working for all Members wherever possible.	
6.0	Proposals	
6.1	It is therefore proposed that, following election in May 2002, all new Members will be furnished with a laptop PC. From these devices Members will have full internet capability, and, via the Council Extranet, they will have full e-mail and Outlook access as well as access to the Intranet content. It is, in fact proposed to purchase 30 laptops in the first instance in order that there are a small number of spares should any Member need a temporary replacement at any time.	
6.2	The advantages of providing access to Members in this way will be:- 1. Wider access to Council services. 2. Members seen to be taking a lead in delivering the e-government strategy. 3. Ability to communicate and distribute documents more quickly and efficiently. 4. Uniformity of communication and information provision.	
6.3	In time, it is hoped that the following would be possible:- · Corresponding with constituents via e-mail · Downloading reports, agendas and minutes off the Intranet · Access to other Council information such as Council Tax · Video-conferencing · Electronic voting to support public consultation · Electronic forum for the presentation of Council proposals and Development plans · Use of wireless networking to achieve “paperless meetings.”	

7.0	Consequences	
7.1	<p>The benefits of Member IT provision at, effectively, the same level as Officers, are extensive. However, it is important that there is an acceptance by the Council that this should not be seen merely as a new way of working to be added to existing ways but as a direct replacement to previous ways of working. Examples of such consequences would be as follows:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Most hard copy forms of communication (e.g. letters) to Members would be replaced by e-mails. · Consultation between Members and Officers could be undertaken electronically as a viable method, instead of by letter although personal and telephone contact would continue as now. · Hard copy agendas and reports would normally be produced only for participating Members on Council Bodies pending the longer-term future goal of paperless meetings. · Members other than those on a specific body would need to access information electronically although, if requiring a hard copy of a specific report, would have access to laser printing facilities in the Members Room. · As a result of these consequences, it will be necessary for Members to access their electronic mail probably on a daily basis or, at least, as often as they would currently receive mail by courier. 	
7.2	The above list of consequences are not intended to be fully comprehensive, rather, they are illustrative and seek to mirror the way most business is conducted internally.	
7.3	It is a crucial part of this proposal that the Council approves this new way of working for all Members from May 2002. If e-working for Members is deemed to be optional as opposed to normal working practice, it will be difficult to maintain a consistent standard of service to all Members across the board.	

7.4	It is understood that some Members may have difficulties with these changes. However, as part of this proposal, the required level of training and support will be put in place. Clearly, if there is a fundamental reason why any Member feels unable to work in this way, alternative methods will be explored just as they would be with current ways of working. In acknowledging the fact that this is a major change, it is essentially why it is recommended to take this action at this time when all Members are to be newly elected rather than seeking to impose this change mid-way through any Elected Member's term of office.	
7.5	It is, of course, essential that information is consistently accessible and Officers are working on improvements to the content management of electronic information.	
8.0	Financial Implications	
8.1	<p>The proposed solution will provide all Members with a Laptop PC and a set-up with a free internet access account, which will provide access to the Eastbourne Council Extranet service. This will allow Members to send/receive email and log onto the Intranet to reference committee minutes and agendas. This will use existing systems. Every Member already has the necessary accounts, and following the election a new 27 will be set up. Benefits include:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Every one can log in when convenient and there is no competition for lines. 2) PC can be used for accessing other Internet sites such as LGA, Audit Commission, Central Government, etc. 3) The solution is a step in the direction of e-government. 4) The solution is highly cost-effective. 	
8.2	In addition to the above, wireless networking will be installed in all Council committee rooms and the council chamber. This will allow all Members to log on to the Council network at any time they are in the building and gain full access to all relevant information and documents. This will allow "paperless" meetings where all documents are viewed on-screen. Whilst in any Council building in range of a wireless base station, all Members will be able to directly access their email and outlook accounts without having to go via the Extranet.	

8.3	The full cost breakdowns are given at the end of the report in Appendix 1. It is intended to fund the initial purchase of equipment of around £50,000 from the IEG bid funds. Training costs will be met from within existing training budgets.	
8.4	Given that a typical PC lifespan is four years, the same as a Member's term of office, the intent would be to issue Members with a new laptop whenever newly elected or re-elected. This will result in an ongoing annual revenue cost of around £16,000 based on current acquisition costs. It is important that this provision is made to allow for the on-going replacement of laptops in a four-year rolling programme.	
8.5	It is possible that some of this ongoing funding can be offset by reductions in printing costs for agendas and reports although this would, of course, have an effect on the business of the Council's Printing Section. Current yearly costs for printing and despatching agendas and minutes are in the region of £24,000.	
9.0	Training	
9.1	Members would also be provided with training in Word, Outlook and accessing and using the Internet, ranging from beginner to advanced. Other IT courses may be available on request such as Excel and PowerPoint. The training would be provided in-house by an IT trainer, to be funded from existing budgets.	
10.0	Consultation	
10.1	All Members of the Council have been involved in progressing the IT Strategy in which e-working for Members is a key aspect. Should Cabinet be minded to approve the proposals in this report for recommendation to the full Council, it is intended to hold a presentational seminar for all Members ahead of the Council meeting.	
11.0	Conclusions	
11.1	Cabinet is asked to recommend the Council to recognise the importance of developing e-government to achieve customer-centric service approaches, make a commitment for all elected members to access services electronically and endorse and approve plans to provide Member PC access following the whole Council election from May 2002. As a consequence of this, Cabinet is asked to recommend Council to make a commitment to abandon non-IT working wherever possible in order to maximise the benefits of e-working.	

<p>Peter Byard,</p> <p>Head of IT and E-Government</p> <p>Peter Finnis</p> <p>Head of Democratic Services</p>	
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<p>Background Papers</p> <p>The background papers used in compiling this report were as follows:</p> <p>I.T. Strategy</p> <p>IEG Statement</p> <p>To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please contact Peter Byard.</p>

OpenlinkCFO/reports/Cabinet 020306/Membes IT report Cabinet 6 March 2001

Appendix 1 – Laptop PC’s with Extranet Access

N°	Item	£ each	Costs	
			One-off	Yearly

30	<p>VM8100cXTD -Celeron-1GHz MHz CPU -128MB RAM -10GB Hard disk drive -8x DVD Drive -14.1" XGA LCD Display</p> <p>Modem Standard and Wireless networking.</p> <p>Warrantee: 3 years return to base to represent 27 members with 3 spares to cover maintenance downtime</p>	£1,200	£36,000	£9,000 (replacement/mainte nance allowance)
30	<p>MS Office Standard:</p> <p>Includes: Word, Excel, Powerpoint, Outlook, Internet Explorer</p>	£201.48	£6,044.40	
27	<p>Anti-virus tools (presently eSafe) to be mandatorily installed on all Laptops.</p>	£25	£750	
2	<p>Hewlett Packard Laserjet 4100TN (2 paper drawers and network card)</p> <p>3 Year Support Pack</p>	£1,115.40 £152.90	2,536.60	£650
1	<p>Server PC PIII, 700 MHZ, 128 MB, 10G HDD, CD Rom, 3Com Network card, 15" Monitor, Keyboard & Mouse</p>	Already installed		

6	Wireless networking base stations	500	3,000	
27	At this stage it is not clear whether the Council will pay for additional individual telephone lines from each Cllr or to reimburse the connection cost the Councillors have (see following item)			
27	Costs for calls: based on 4.5 p/min. daytime – 1.67 p/min evening time – 1 p/min. weekend time [i]	234		6,318
	TOTAL		£48,331	15,968

Considering that a Councillor will seldom be home during the evenings (committees, surgeries, etc) it will be prudent to take daytime rates for looking up and responding to emails. Based on an average figure per Councillor 10 min for downloading and 10 min for uploading – reading and writing can be done off-line this would create a daily cost of 20 min. x 4.5 p = 90 p / day. Based on 260 working days / year this would create a call back cost per Councillor of 260 x 90p = £234 / year. For 27 Councillors this will yearly amount to £6,318 (no free calls)