

HAVANT BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

1 June 2022

Creating a Paperless Council

FOR DECISION

Cabinet Lead:

Cllr Alex Rennie, Leader of the Council

Cllr Narinder Bains, Community Safety and Transformation

Key Decision: No

Report Number: HBC/051/2022

1. Purpose

1.1. This paper is submitted to Cabinet:

1.2. To present the recommended approach to provide Councillors a Council-owned IT device and associated support where necessary. Currently Councillors use their own devices. Such provision will ensure all Councillors have the means to work digitally and enable the realisation of the Council's aim to reduce waste and work in a modern, paper-less fashion.

2. Recommendation

2.1. Members are requested to approve:

- a. That a Capita Supported Laptop will be the standard supported device for Councillors who require it.
- b. That Democratic Services define and deliver a plan to remove the distribution of printed agendas for all council meetings on the basis that all Councillors will be able to access this material electronically.
- c. That approval is given to invest in Modern.Gov to provide enhanced functionality to further improve paper-less working.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1. The Council has a goal to reduce the amount of printing and distribution of hard-copy agendas and papers featuring as a priority within the refreshed Corporate Strategy approved by Full Council 23 February 2022. From 8 main committee meetings between June and September 2021 a total of 12,883 pages were printed and distributed. There are at least 48 'Committee' type meetings each year. Based on these sums there is clearly an opportunity to have a positive impact in how the Council operates by changing the way material for such meetings is provided.
- 3.2. Currently Councillors use their own devices, however, there are exceptions where the Councillor does not have access to an appropriate solution thus leading to difficulties working electronically and therefore a continued need to print agendas.
- 3.3. To enable the strategic objective a number of options have been explored, noting the need to balance the fact that many Councillors already have suitable IT and that where a device is needed it is fit for purpose and supported.
- 3.4. The provision of devices creates an additional recurring revenue implication for the Council, which will vary depending on take-up. However, it is envisaged that this cost will be covered through savings made through the reduced need for printing and distribution.

4. Background and relationship to Corporate Strategy and/or Business Plans

- 4.1. This initiative will address the Council's aim to reduce waste by moving towards a modern paper-less way of working, as stated in the Corporate Strategy approved by Full Council in February 2022.
- 4.2. It also supports the digital design principles within the Council's Digital Strategy, 2020-2024, namely:
 - Digital By Default
 - Digital Mindset
 - Digital Workstyles
 - Digital Responsibility – the environment

5. Options considered

- 5.1 Officers have considered the option of providing all Councillors with a standard device. Whilst this carries the benefit of universal support, security and improved data protection, it is a costly option and is an inconvenience for those Councillors who already have equipment which enables them to perform their duties.

5.2 Additionally, alternative devices were also considered. Whilst the cheapest option, i-PADs are not recommended due to the fact that they are not supported under our current contract. Microsoft Surface-Pros were also dismissed on the grounds of affordability.

6. Resource Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

6.1.1 There is no pre-existing budget provision for IT equipment or support for Councillors. Any one-off funding required to enable the preferred solution will be met through the council's 'transition reserve' budget.

6.1.2 In order to deploy a Councillor-set device, a new build will be required. This is estimated to cost £2000. This task will be undertaken once and then replicated. Additionally, £3000 will be required to cover and upgrade to Modern.gov. The costs below are per Councillor/Laptop.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Support & VPN	221	221	221	221
Laptop (Council procured)	644			
Total	865	221	221	221

Table 1

6.1.3 Modest savings associated with print and postage of agendas is estimated to be £1640 per annum alongside being able to re-focus staff capacity on higher priority issues.

Section 151 Officer comments

Date: 23 May 2022

It is envisaged that the on-going costs of providing those Councillors who require a new Council supported laptop will be met through the savings achieved through reduced printing and distribution. This will be kept under review as the demand for new laptops becomes clearer.

Any one-off costs for enabling the preferred solution (such as the £2k estimated 'build' cost) will be met through the Council's 'Transition Reserve' and reported back through regular budget monitoring.

6.2. Human Resources Implications

- 6.2.1 As part of the provision of the laptop, the Councillor will receive guidance on its use and also the use of Modern.gov.

7.2 Information Governance Implications

- 7.2.1 The option to receive a Council-owned laptop will improve mitigation against the security and data protection (GDPR) risks faced by all organisations.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 The reduction of printed agendas will be undertaken in consultation, and with the consent of, Members. This will ensure compliance with the Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015. This provision allows councils to send their members summonses and related papers/reports electronically unless the individual member requests hard copy delivery.

Deputy Monitoring Officer comments

Date: 23 May 2022

The recommendations in this report are supportive of the aim of creating a paperless council by providing councillors with IT equipment and reducing printed copies (a priority in the Corporate Strategy 2022-25). This will also help meet Digital Strategy ambitions by encouraging greater digital awareness amongst staff and councillors.

9. Risks

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Take up is high resulting in higher unbudgeted recurring costs for the Council.	M	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor take-up and re-profile IT hardware budgets as soon as understood
A device is not returned when a Councillor stands-down/is un-elected resulting in financial loss for the Council and delays for other users.	L	M	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ensure devices are controlled assets• Ensure process of returning kit at the end of tenure is in place

Table 2

10 Consultation

10.1 This report and the principles of the scheme have been discussed with the Leader of the Council (Cllr Rennie) and Cabinet Lead for Community Safety and Transformation (Cllr Bains). Also consulted:

- Interim Chief Executive
- Democratic Services Team Leader
- Digital Design Team Leader
- Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- The Task & Finish Group of the above Committee, commissioned to also review options for paper-less methods of working – report considered by Committee 12 April 2022.

11 Communication

11.1 Once agreed, the scheme will be made available as soon as possible and communicated accordingly.

12 Appendices

None

13 Background papers

None

Agreed and signed off by:

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Alex Rennie

Director: NA

Deputy Monitoring Officer: Alan Harrison

Section 151 Officer: Malcolm Coe

Contact Officer

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