Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th September 2018

By the Review of Councillor's Technology Task and
Finish Group

Horsham District Council

Not Exempt

DRAFT Final Report of the Review of Councillor's Technology Task and Finish Group

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Summary

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to review the technology needs of the Councillors', ahead of the 2019 elections, in order to enable Members to carry out their duties effectively and efficiently.

There were common problems amongst the Councillors when using technology for Council business, coupled with the changes to the data protection rules. It was agreed that this subject was suitable for review.

The Review of Councillor's Technology Task and Finish Group was formed with the following Members: councillors Paul Clarke (Chairman), John Blackall, Peter Burgess, Mike Morgan, Godfrey Newman, Kate Rowbottom and Jim Sanson. Councillors Leonard Crosbie and David Coldwell sat as ex-officio Members.

Recommendations

1. That all Councillor held iPads be upgraded or replaced, if applicable, by a more up to date version that allows enhanced functionality, i.e. Office 365. (other functionality as specified in presentation Appendix 2)

2. That Councillors will be enabled to use their own equipment i.e. laptops, smart phones, computers, or own iPad, if they wish to do so. The Council will help ensure adherence to GDPR guidelines, and ensure security of Council data by the IT department checking the equipment for suitability. If it is suitable, the equipment will need to be configured by IT to provide access to a corporate 'container'. Council data will then be secure.

3. A training plan should be devised, then delivered soon after the 2019 elections to ensure that all Councillors have an opportunity to get the best out of their Council devices and from any container facility on their own devices.

4. Further investigation is required into aiding Councillors to be able to print from their iPads within Parkside.

Terms of Reference

The following Terms of Reference were agreed by Members at the Group's first meeting:

1. Identify the needs of councillors' from technology, for example reading papers, writing letters and emails, editing documents, maintaining diaries, taking notes, analysing figures, and matching these to technology solutions.
2. To note any data and security risks with the current technology system and how to reduce or eliminate them i.e. keeping constituents' personal data, in accordance with the new General Data Protection Regulations
3. To recommend to Overview and Scrutiny the technology tools meeting the needs of councillors allowing them to carry out their duties for the next Council term (May 2019 to May 2023) to enable them to work efficiently.

Report

At the first meeting of the Task and Finish Group the Members agreed to send a questionnaire (Appendix 1) to all councillors to identify the following:

1. What type of equipment Members used for Council business, i.e. I-Pad, other tablet, laptop, home PC etc.
2. What the software was used i.e. Word, Excel, spreadsheets, Google Earth, Google Maps, Outlook email, Modern.Gov
3. How successful was it, i.e. trying to identify what councillors couldn't do
4. What additional programs did the councillors use
5. How did they store their data, i.e. addresses, email attachments

Findings
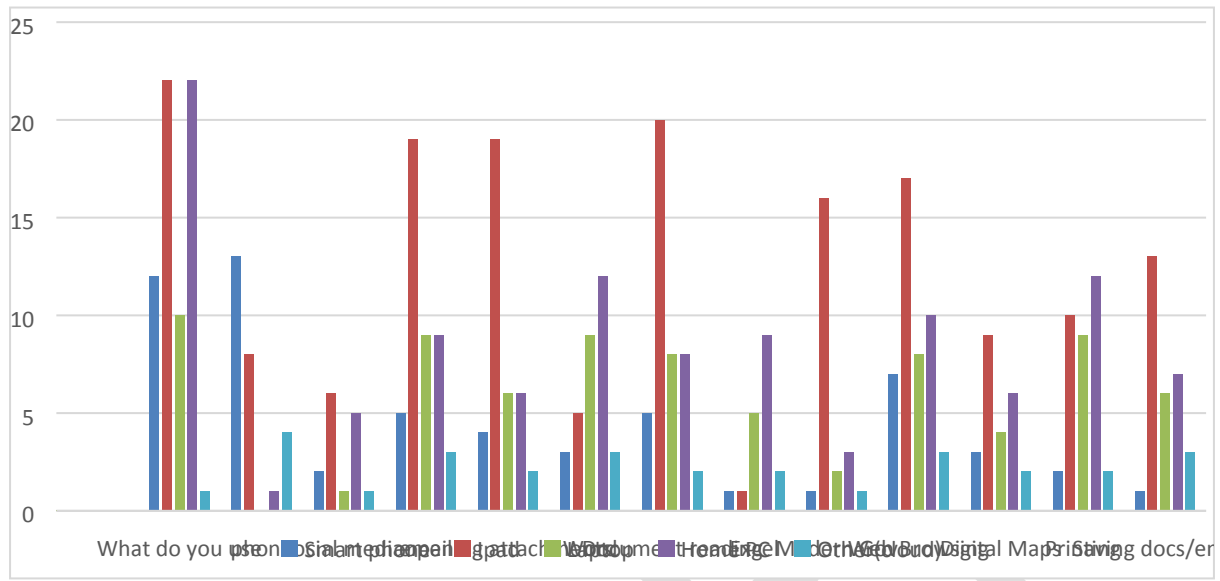
29 out of 44 councillors responded to the questionnaire (66%). All Councillors are issued with an iPad and/or a laptop. 83% of those who responded used their iPad for HDC business such as emails and reading agendas and documents. 76% of respondents also used a home PC or laptop for emails, creating documents, Excel and web browsing.

The officer concluded, from the results of the questionnaire the following points:

- Councillors required a portable device to access emails, ModernGov, read and annotate Council papers and agendas
- They needed to be able to access, edit and create new documents and edit/annotate more complex documents
- To be able to save documents in a manner compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDRP)
- Members needed access to a WiFi printer – possibly in the members' room.
- Further training was also required

Use of own equipment

Over half of Councillors were happy to and already used their own personal IT equipment, however this posed security questions around data protection and others having access to their own personal data.

Training

Training on use of iPads was required, there were a concerning number of misunderstandings around what iPads can/cannot do. In addition the Group supported an ongoing training programme, i.e. training at the beginning of the Council term as a seminar, then ongoing support to be provided on request by IT by

some nominated officers who are expert in the use of iPads and Apple soft/hardware.

Conclusion

The group discussed alternatives to iPads but could see no clear advantage to an alternative tablet, concluding that it supported the Council continuing to provide a newer version of the iPad to all Councillors. However it would be possible for Councillors to use their own personal devices. Should councillors choose to use their own equipment it would be possible to access HDC data in a secure way. The HDC issued iPads would include Office 365, which would enable all Councillors to access emails and 'One Drive' where all data would be stored in a secure cloud.

If Members opted to use their own devices, Councillors would be able to log on to a corporate 'container' which would allow them to access HDC emails and files from either a mobile phone or personal device, including PCs. This would store HDC data separately from personal data and could be wiped in the event of an emergency.

Other options considered helpful for the Members included a Bluetooth keypad (within the iPad cover), a stylus/pencil and a lightning digital AV adaptor – so that larger screens/keyboards could be connected.

With the proposed solution Members would be able to access the corporate container from home devices provided that they were using software no older than Windows 10. Members suggested a minimum specification should be set to ensure that home PCs were compatible for HDC use.

After investigation a wireless printer in the members room would not work, due to the way wireless internet works within Parkside. Other options will be investigated.

Appendices:
1. Questionnaire sent to all Councillors on the use of technology
2. PowerPoint Presentation by the Service Designer to the Task and Finish Group

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