

**COUNCIL SEMINAR
25th March, 2014**

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair); Councillors The Mayor (Councillor John Foden), Ahmed, Atkin, Burton, Clark, Currie, Dalton, Dodson, Ellis, Godfrey, Hussain, Johnston, Kaye, Lakin, McNeely, Pickering, Pitchley, Read, G. A. Russell, Sims, Wootton and Wyatt.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ali, Jepson and Vines.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS.

Councillor J. Akhtar, Deputy Leader of the Council, welcomed Richard Copley, Corporate ICT Manager (Corporate ICT Team, Internal Audit and Asset Management, Environment and Development Services Directorate). Richard had prepared a presentation on the Information Technology that was available to Rotherham's Elected Members to assist them in their duties. Also in attendance were Dave Sissons and Andy Dickinson (Corporate ICT Team) to provide assistance to Elected Members on any specific IT issues they wished to raise.

Richard's presentation outlined the ICT available to Members in Rotherham, and provided further information about how it worked and the external rules and regulations that the Council had to adhere to.

External rules and regulations: -

- Security rules needed for different ICT technology was set by the Cabinet Office as a pre-requisite of membership of the Public Services Network (PSN). The Council needed to have access to the PSN in order to transact its business including in the administration of Blue Badges, Revenue and Benefits and elections business;
- One PSN rule is that Councils must not allow any of their documents to be stored (referred to as 'at rest') on an unmanaged end-point. Technology deemed to be safe was a Council owned and managed laptop or tablet device (including iPads) using the Good for Enterprise App. These were safe because the Council could remotely remove any data contained on a device should it be lost, stolen and so on.
 - The Cabinet Office's PSN security specialists had deemed MyMail to be an unsecure method for Officers and Members to access the Council's information, because documents and data could not be recovered if the technology was lost, stolen or compromised in some way.
 - The Cabinet Office had asked Rotherham to be an exemplar of this policy because Rotherham's 'Bring Your Own Device' policy whereby Officers and Members could access data securely on their own devices through the Good for Enterprise App.

Connecting in the Town Hall: -

- There were three networks in the Town Hall: Public, Private and Corporate: -
 - Rotherham-Public was available to external users for a maximum period of two hours. The network was available during extended office hours between 7.00 a.m. – 7.00 p.m., which prevented the network being used on the other nearby premises in the evenings and weekends.

IT used by Members in Rotherham: -

- Laptops;
- iPad (Apple) or other brand of tablet device – these could be Council-owned or owned personally (Bring Your Own Device policy);
- iPads/Tablets had been in use for one year and had drastically reduced the amount of printing that was done for committee meetings;
- Tablets did have limitations: -
 - Email management, document management, printing, writing lengthy documents and spreadsheets;
 - ‘Hybrid devices’ were available on the market that combined both laptop and tablet functions. They currently cost around £800, but prices would reduce;
 - All Elected Members had access to ‘Touch Down Machines’ – desktop computers in the Majority and Minority Party Rooms.

Some Apps used by Members (and Officers) to do their jobs: -

- Mod.Gov and Good for Enterprise both allowed the safe delivery of information via a secure bubble, Corporate ICT could remotely remove all of the data from the device if needed.
 - The Good for Enterprise App had access to email, calendar, contacts, intranet and filtered internet content;
 - Access to internet was available through both Good for Enterprise and the Safari option on the iPad. Access to the internet via Good was restricted, whereas Safari was unlimited;
 - The Good App had been installed a total of 75 times on devices belonging/used by Elected Members;

- One limitation of Good for Enterprise email management was that the mailbox size limit was quickly reached;
- However, this should become less of an issue as mailbox size was due to increase from 200mb to 2gb, and the maximum attachment size was due to increase from 10mb to 25mb;
- The Mod.Gov App was automatically updated, user friendly and had good annotation tools;
- Other productivity Apps did exist, but they meant that the Council's documents and data would be held outside the secure bubble so the Council were not able to promote these Apps without further security/control additions;
- Social Media platforms could be accessed on the iPads and on desktop computers or laptops) and an e.learning module was available on their best practice;
- In the App store it was possible for Elected Members to use the RMBC account or set-up their own Apple ID and purchase Apps and transfer them between devices.

Other IT developments: -

- VPN was becoming a tokenless system using 'AnyConnect' that was installed on upgraded laptops;
- Follow Me Printing could be used from a council laptop or desktop computer;
- It was not possible to print from iPads to Council printers, the intention of this was to reduce printing and costs;
- Business continuity was being considered and the use of Blackberry handsets was being phased-out and the use of devices that supported the Good for Enterprise App were being promoted;
- VOIP Telephony for Members was being developed with the aim that Elected Members would just have one land-line number that citizens could use to contact them. This would be an 01709 number so it would be a local rate call, and the number could be set to ring-out on any device Members had set it to. This also meant that Elected Members would not have to publicise personal numbers, could change which device rang and divert their calls to voicemail when they were not available;

- Conference Calling was available through Powwow Now and could be used to reduce traveling distances for meetings. Members could request a 'credit card' which had details on how to set-up conference calls;
- Ecasework was continuing to be used to track all casework. The system kept a list of cases and tasks and would automatically assign tasks to the relevant Officer in the Local Authority;
- The IT Service Desk – a separate telephone number for Members to contact would be published shortly;
- The IT Service Desk had a self-serve platform for reporting of faults – 'My IT'.

Discussion ensued on the information that had been presented and the following issues were raised: -

- **Not all members had chipped ID cards so could not use 'Follow Me Printing'** – This was noted by the Officers in attendance;
- **My Mail was a popular and convenient website used by a lot of Elected Members** – This was noted by the Officers, but the reasons why it had to be withdrawn still stood as the Council needed to maintain accreditation with the PSN. The Cabinet Office had been lobbied but had not changed their decision;
- **Information published on the Local Authority's Planning List was not available via the iPad but could be accessed on the laptop** – Officers agreed to investigate this issue;
- **One Elected Member asked for the information presented in the Seminar in a clearer and more easy to follow format;**
- **Making folders in the Good for Enterprise app for email** – Officers believed that this was possible to set up some limited folders and agreed to write and circulate instructions on how to set these up;
- **The technology available to Members who had opted to not have an iPad** – Members should continue using the technology they had as is. Laptops will remain an option for Members for the foreseeable future.
- **It would be useful if the Good App had word processing capabilities** - This could be developed if there were word processing apps that were compatible with Good's security and licensing. It may not be feasible to use an iPad to create a large/complex documents due to the limitation of iPads ;
- **Could Members' iPads be compatible with 3G or 4G instead of having to connect to the available Wifi networks?** – This would be cost prohibitive to take forward;
- **The procedure and protocols for accessing Wifi networks when out and about was considered. Different private establishments had different log-in and use procedures/policies;**

- **Members requested the ability to better manage emails via their iPads, including permanently deleting deleted items in a more efficient way, as they were currently having to delete each deleted email individually to create space capacity** – Officers accepted this but did suggest that Members access the touchdown machines in the Members' rooms to ease this problem;
- **An App for eCasework would be really useful** – Officers had asked for this to be developed and it was currently in the early development stage.

Councillor Akhtar thanked the Officers in attendance for their presentation and help in fixing individual Members' IT queries.

Resolved: - That the information shared be noted.