

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CABINET

JULY 11, 2013

SUBJECT:	Renewal of Computer Equipment
WARD/S AFFECTED:	ALL
REPORT OF:	DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	COUNCILLOR ADRIAN JONES
KEY DECISION?	NO

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report sets out proposals to refresh obsolete IT access devices to improve productivity, reduce the risks to security and permit new ways of working.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That the Cabinet approves the plans to refresh the obsolete IT access devices and associated equipment, as set out at paras 4.3 and 4.4.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 Wirral Council MBC posses over 2,400 old IT access devices, PCs, Laptops and handheld devices, which is just under 70% of its devices. This is unprecedented.

3.2 The problems that occur include:

- They create access problems to the users, for they are slow to respond, and frequently fail, incurring high maintenance costs to keep them going;
- Maintenance is difficult. Parts are difficult to source and it is not possible to load new software onto these old devices;
- The out of date software also allows security standards to be breached. This puts the Council at risk of failing its security accreditation;
- It locks the Council into old ways of working, denying access to the advantage of mobile working.

In 2010 this Council took the decision to refresh all its machines, and allocated funds to achieve this. Unfortunately the project never started.

4.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

4.1 Most of our data access equipment runs on the Microsoft's XP Windows package which has been available since 2001. Microsoft will stop supporting XP on April 8th 2014. Although it can still be used, the particular problem for the Council (and all other Government departments using computers) is the Security accreditation. This depends on us having supported software on all our equipment.

4.2 A survey of all the access computers in the Wirral shows that just under 70% of the devices are substandard, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Risk analysis of access devices

		Number	Percentage
Red	Obsolete	1300	37.1
Amber	Hardware upgradable, but the cost is almost equal to replacement and has a shorter life	1100	31.4
		2400	68.6
Green	Acceptable	1100	31.4
Totals		3500	100.0

- 4.3 Of the 3500 devices reviewed, 1,300 are obsolete (red) and cannot be upgraded to the new operating system Windows 7. Although 1,100 of them are hardware upgradeable (amber) and would be able to take Windows 7 after a hardware upgrade, the cost is almost equal to replacement, which also gives a longer life. The remaining 1,100 are of an acceptable specification (green).
- 4.4 IT will take ownership of all currently used access devices in the Authority. By implication this corporate decision requires IT to maintain the age of access devices at less than 5 years, and to achieve as quickly as possible. Much flexibility will be needed as Departments replace obsolete PCs with laptops, or tablets. Further, there is a request to replace specific functions kit, such as non-access devices like 10 year old scanners.
- 4.2. Most organisations refresh their access devices every 4 or 5 years but this has not happened here. Many machines are seven years and older. To replace the hardware and upgrade to Windows 7, three factors have to be considered
- the applications currently running on the old equipment have to be checked against Windows 7. It is a business decision to decide which applications need transferring to Windows 7;
 - The cost of replacing machines and migrating to Windows 7;
 - The best process to upgrade thousands of machines to the new specification.
- 4.3. It is proposed to engage a company with experience of doing this work, to lead the implementation with a combination of our staff and supplier staff. The reason for this approach is that it is a process we have never done before, and one which is critical to the continued operation of the Council. The process is complex and time consuming. Other Councils that have already been through the process recommend this approach.
- 4.4. It is proposed that Phase 1 of the refresh will start with the 500 access devices which threaten the Council with a failure of the Security Code. Phase 2 will address the red devices, the largest proportion of which are in CYPD and DASS. The programme will need to mesh with the preparation work for the new Social Care application. Phase 3 will address the amber machines. Users with specific early problems, including members, will have their machines replaced in Phase 2

5.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 5.1 IT has already started the preparations to deliver the project. This includes listing all the applications. The number now exceeds 700. IT will be asking Directors and Heads of Service to ensure all applications have been identified and which

applications are essential to their business. Even with this analysis it can still be the case some applications cannot be transferred to the new operating system. Given the security accreditation issue these problems will need to be resolved with alternative software.

- 5.2 The scheduling of work is complicated by the changes taking place. Staff are moving office and we won't want to install equipment more than once.
- 5.3 New Applications are being procured, in particular the new Social Care solution with over 800 users. The new requirements will need to be integrated with the refresh objectives.
- 5.4 Finally, the BT telecoms access technique IP Stream, which links 200 staff and members from their homes into Council systems, is being withdrawn by BT. IT is developing a secure solution to allow users of Council machines at home, to access Council information over their own Broadband system. For those staff and members without their own Broadband access, it is proposed the Council install it for them if the need is agreed with the Director.

6.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 6.1 No other options were identified.

7.0 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The staff and members have been involved in the compilation of this report, which then progressed through the normal consultations channels, DMT's and CESG.

8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 8.1 None, other than improved response times from the Council.

9.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 9.1 There is an ongoing revenue budget of £675k to cover the cost of replacing all obsolete equipment including access devices, held by IT. This coupled with the use of an IT leasing contract will cover the costs of the annual renewal programme.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no legal implications.

11.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 There are no equalities implications.

- 11.2 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)

(a) Is an EIA required? No

12.0 CARBON REDUCTION IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 All new equipment uses less energy than the old equipment in the Council. This will be beneficial to the carbon targets for the Council.

13.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 There are no planning or community safety implications.

REPORT AUTHOR: Tony Glew
Head of IT Services
telephone: (0151) 666 3485
email:

APPENDICES - none

REFERENCE MATERIAL

- IT research data
- File: 130619

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date