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**Report to Emergency Decision Making Forum**

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**Date of Meeting: 3 April 2020**

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**Subject: IT Capital Programme**

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**Report by: Strategic Director, Partnership & Performance**

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**1.0 Issue**

- 1.1. On 27 February 2020, the Council agreed its capital plan which included £1,174,000 investment in IT infrastructure for 2020/21. This included a phased replacement of laptops and associated infrastructure to support a move from the Windows 7 operating platform which is being phased out in 2021.
- 1.2. Over the past few weeks, given the current Coronavirus crisis, IT staff have worked long hours to enable an increased number of staff to work remotely. Whilst this continues to be challenging, it is in essence a rapid acceleration of plans to digitise the Council's operations as part of Be the Future programme.
- 1.3. Towards end of last week, a further 38 laptops were set up and distributed for remote working, which means we now have 260 staff set up with remote working capability. A further 36 priority laptop issues are being prepared this week, and another 20 laptops are on order for the next tranche.
- 1.4. In a normal business as usual day, we would expect about 500 users to be logged on to our Citrix IT system. At this stage, we are not clear how long the current lockdown will last, however there is a risk that it may be prolonged, in which case we estimate that we will likely need to enable around a further 100 staff for home working. There will also be demands on older laptops to be replaced in order to prepare us for a move from the current Windows 7, which as mentioned above was already planned.
- 1.5. It is proposed therefore, as part of a wider package of measures, to procure an additional 150 IT devices for more rapid deployment than was originally planned to support the current response, whilst also accelerating our Be the Future efforts. The estimated capital cost of this is approximately £65,000.
- 1.6. At this stage, given current uncertainties, it is not known how much of the current year's capital allocation for IT will be required. What is sought therefore is agreement to proceed with the accelerated programme of deploying remote capability and, in addition, flexibility to vire budget from underspends elsewhere in the capital programme should it be needed to meet costs outlined at 1.5.

- 1.7. A decision is sought as this paper proposes a potential amended approach to the 2020/21 capital plan for IT which was agreed by Council in February 2020.

## **2.0 Options and Impacts**

### **2.1. Option 1**

Agree that the Council's capital plan can be amended for expenditure of approximately £65,000 to enable capability of deploying an additional 150 IT devices for remote working should it be needed.

#### Impact

Increases Council's resource and resilience capacity. Allows more staff to support the response to the pandemic and to continue with business as usual work where required. Expedites a planned approach to the shift to mobile working in the IT infrastructure, providing a mechanism for staff to access systems securely.

It may require a re-profiling of the recently approved capital programme. The current capital programme would likely see some slippage in any event given the focus on pandemic response.

This would require a change to a Council decision within a 6 month period.

### **Option 2**

Accept the limitations of current remote working deployment

#### Impact

Less costly, however, there is a risk that significant number of staff could be forced to remain at home for an indefinite duration with limited capability to contribute to the response and or business as usual need.

### **Option 3**

Seek revenue funding for additional remote working capability through the Covid cost centre.

#### Impact

There is likely no appreciable difference to the outcome, however, given it is a legitimate capital spend item, this option would seem to place unnecessary strain on the revenue budget at a time of significant uncertainty.

## **3.0 Recommendations**

- 3.1. It is recommended that the EDMF agree option 1

## **4.0 Implementation**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Place purchase order for IT equipment under existing framework</b>	<b>Senior Manager P&amp;T</b>	<b>w/c 6/04/2020</b>

## **5.0 Resource Implications**

### *5.1. Financial Details*

- 5.2. The full financial implications of the recommendations are set out in the report. This includes a reference to full life cycle costs where appropriate. Yes x
- 5.3. Finance have been consulted and have agreed the financial implications as set out in the report. Yes x

## **6.0 Exempt Reports**

- 6.1. Is this report exempt? Yes  (please detail the reasons for exemption below) No x

## **6.0 Legality**

- 6.1 It has been confirmed that in adopting the recommendations contained in this report, the Council is acting within its legal powers. Yes X

### **Author(s)**

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