

Report to the Cabinet

Report reference: C-030-2010/11

Date of meeting: 13 Sept 2010



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Legal & Estates

Subject: Desktop Hardware Upgrade

Responsible Officer: David Newton (01992 564580).

Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470).

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) To agree the replacement of all 5 year old desktop hardware and;
- (2) Endorse the continued use of Thin Client Technology (TCT), which uses a low-end computer terminal to access ICT functionality held on a centrally based server, allowing a cheaper and more manageable desktop solution.

Executive Summary:

The Council have a large number of Personal Computers (PC's) and Laptops that are 4 or 5 years old. The industry recognised lifespan for hardware reliability is 4 years. These units are now becoming unreliable and costly to repair and maintain.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

Maintaining unreliable equipment is not cost effective, both in repair costs, ICT support and user productivity loss.

Other Options for Action:

Replace PC's as they fail, but this is not cost effective.

Report:

1. Information and Communication Technology is intrinsic to all aspects of the Councils work. Constant changes in technology make it difficult to source spares for the older PC's, which sometimes results in staff being unable to carry out their duties fully, whilst awaiting a repair or replacement PC. In addition, Microsoft are de-supporting their XP Operating System (OS) this year, in favour of their new offering, Windows 7. This new OS requires a far higher PC specification and it will not be possible to upgrade the majority of the older PC's cost effectively.
2. ICT currently has 137 desktop PC's & 11 laptops that have already exceeded the aforementioned lifespan. Next year, an additional 171 units will also fall into this category. During the last financial year 204 helpdesk calls related to hardware failure.
3. In accordance with the current ICT strategy, it is proposed to replace the obsolete

hardware with Thin Client Terminals (TCT's). The purchase price of a TCT is considerably less than that of a standard PC. Ease of support and reduced power consumption makes the Total Cost of Ownership far lower than that of a standard PC. Currently we have 301 thin client users out of a user base of 710. The majority of the Planning staff have been using this technology very effectively for approximately 3 years.

4. With the security controls necessary for connection to the Governments secure extranet and the development of TCT's, thin client technology can now offer the same functionality as a standard PC.

5. The cost of this proposal would be approximately £23,000 in 2010/2011 and £26,000 in 2011/2012 for TCT replacement, as opposed to £39,000 and £45,000 respectively for PC's.

Resource Implications:

The new hardware for both financial years can be funded from within the existing capital programme. The exact level of funding required will be determined following a tendering exercise using the existing Essex Online Partnership and Buying Solutions Frameworks.

Legal and Governance Implications:

None.

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

New PC's & TCT's require far less power and will aid the reduction of the Councils carbon footprint.

Consultation Undertaken:

None

Background Papers:

Desktop Hardware & Software Management Policy

Impact Assessments:

Risk Management

If not approved, potential loss of productivity from affected staff members.

Equality and Diversity:

Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties, reveal any potentially adverse equality implications? No

Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?
None.

How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?
N/A.