

# Member Connectivity Scheme

This document provides information on the member connectivity scheme.

## Introduction

The Connectivity Scheme has been introduced to enable members to receive electronic notification of and Internet access to papers for Council meetings and associated information. The scheme has been made possible following the introduction of the Committee Management System (CoMS) which publishes our publicly available agenda to the Internet via the Council's website. The Connectivity Scheme will, however, provide members with access to a wider range of information including agenda planning, up to date notification of publication, call-in and portfolio holder decision-making.

## The Agreed Scheme

The Connectivity Scheme provides members with an additional allowance (payable as part of the existing Scheme of Members Allowances) towards acquiring computer equipment and to use this equipment to access information on the Council's Agendas and Minutes via the Internet.

Members would be expected to use this system to access all agenda and minutes information **and** cease to receive hard copy agenda (except for those of which they are a member or required to attend by virtue of a position).

Under the scheme you will receive £500 per annum (payable normally quarterly in arrears) from which members will be expected to assist with the cost of a Personal Computer (PC) (if necessary); Internet connection and any consumables. This sum will be subject to tax and National Insurance.

## Equipment Specification

The minimum specification required for PC equipment is:

- (i) A PC that can access the Internet;
- (ii) A broadband connection to your home;
- (iii) A valid email account
- (iv) Internet Browser software; and
- (v) A printer capable of printing A4 pages.

## Data and Equipment Security and Use Guidance

The equipment is the individual members property and can be used for non-council activities. Members must adhere to:

- (i) The User Policy Statement for the CoMS system;
- (ii) Issued Standards Committee Guidance on the Use of IT by Members ;
- (iii) The Council's other adopted ICT related policies including the security of any data and remote working policies;

- (iv) The provisions of the Local Government Act 1972 regarding the transmission of Exempt Business as defined in Schedule 12A outside of the Council.

**What the Council will provide:**

The Council will:

- (i) Provide an 'extranet' (a private intranet) connection using a 'token' scheme to control access and a user name and password for each member;
- (ii) Training on the use of the system;
- (iii) IT helpdesk support relating to (i) above and advice from RDS on (ii) above;
- (iv) A paper copy of the agenda to members of each Committee (unless the member indicates in writing otherwise);
- (v) A system of email notification of publication of agenda and minutes to all members.
- (vi) Headed paper and envelopes for use by members for Councillor correspondence.

**What the Council will not provide:**

The Council will **not**:

- (i) Provide IT helpdesk support for PC's or any peripherals purchased by members under the scheme;
- (ii) Advise on purchase of equipment or choice of ISP.
- (iii) Provide a paper copy of agenda for other Committees if you are not a member. Paper copies of Agenda will be available at the meeting in small quantities.
- (iv) Plain paper and print cartridge consumables.

## **Glossary of Terms used in this document**

**Broadband** – a system of connecting to the Internet that allows voice, data, and video to be broadcast over the same medium at the same time. They may also allow multiple data channels to be broadcast simultaneously. It is much faster than traditional dial-up methods of connection.

**Browser** – Software that allows a computer user to find and view information on the Internet.

**Committee Management System** – A computer system used by EFDC to publish and archive all Agenda and Minutes of Council's meetings and publish these to the Internet and intranet.

**Email account** – An account provided by your ISP by which you can receive email. Your current or chosen ISP will be able provide details of how you can set an account up.

**Extranet** - an extension of the Council's intranet giving authorised people controlled access to the intranet from outside of the Council's network.

**Exempt Business** – Items of business on an agenda that are confidential to the Council and should not be disclosed to third parties.

**Internet** – a network that links computer networks all over the world by satellite and telephone, connecting users with service networks such as e-mail and the World Wide Web.

**Internet Browser** – See Browser

**ISP** - Internet service provider. A company that provides internet connection services

**IT helpdesk** – The Council provides a helpdesk to supports its applications. It contact number is 01992 564321

**Password** – In this case means a word that when entered on the password screen allows access to the extranet

**Peripherals** – a piece of computer hardware such as a printer or a disk drive that is external to but controlled by a computer's central processing unit.

**Personal Computer (PC)** – a computer with its own operating system and a wide selection of software, intended to be used by one person

**Portfolio holder decision-making** – Means a executive decision made by a member of the Cabinet

**RDS** – Research and Democratic Services at EFDC

**Remote working** – is another ways of describing someone accessing the Council's network from outside of the building i.e. remotely.

**Token** – A piece of equipment that provides a secondary form of identification when accessing the Council's extranet.

**User name** – In this instance means your name on the system. Normally a combination of your initials and your surname.