

REPORT TO CABINET

Open		Would any decisions proposed:			
Any especially affected Wards	Operational	Be entirely within Cabinet's powers to decide		YES	
		Need to be recommendations to Council		NO	
		Is it a Key Decision		NO	
Lead Member: Harry Humphrey E-mail: harry.humphrey@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Cabinet Members consulted: None			
Lead Officer: Richard Godfrey E-mail: richard.godfrey@west-norfolk.gov.uk		Other Members consulted:			
		Other Officers consulted: Lorraine Gore. E-mail: lorraine.gore@west-norfolk.gov.uk Michelle Drewery, michelle.drewery@west-norfolk.gov.uk Sam Winter, sam.winter@west-norfolk.gov.uk			
Financial Implications YES	Policy/ Personnel Implications NO	Statutory Implications NO	Equal Impact Assessment YES/NO If YES: Pre-screening/ Full Assessment	Risk Management Implications YES	Environmental Considerations NO
If not for publication, the paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A of the 1972 Local Government Act considered to justify that is (are) paragraph(s)					

Date of meeting: 18 April 2023

REFRESH OF MEMBERS ICT

Summary

This report outlines a proposal to provide Members with an ICT solution following the 2023 Elections.

It reviews the current provision of Members ICT equipment and examines the results of a questionnaire that was sent to all Elected Members during February 2023.

Recommendation

It is recommended that each Elected Member is provided with either an iPad tablet or laptop after the 2023 elections.

A 4G sim card can be provided in cases of poor connectivity, access to Microsoft Portal and where required a sim card to replace the current Council supplied mobile phone.

If a 4G iPad or laptop sim card is provided the cost of this will be deducted from the Members allowance.

Reason for Decision

To ensure that Members have access to ICT with a secure and efficient solution that reflects up to date technical advancements and good practice.

1 Background

At the 2019 election from the general feedback received, the ICT solution offered to existing members was seen as still fit for purpose and would be so for another 4-5 years thereby reducing the potential financial expenditure at a time of decreasing budgets. In that:

- It met ever growing ICT security requirements. (Including PSN (Public Services Network / PCI Payment Card Industry legislation) and provided ICT support in an efficient way for all Members.
- All members equipment that may have deteriorated over the previous term was replaced with new iPad models to ensure compatibility with software, apps, and security. Equipment that was still in good working order was reused for staff.

1.1 Current ICT Solution

Since the 2019 elections the ICT solution offered to Members is outlined below. This comprises of the following:

- iPad 6th Generation with case and charger.
- Members ICT allowance.
- Headphones for Meetings (optional)
- Mobile phone and sim card
- Access to Microsoft Office 365 via Portal using own equipment.
- 14" Laptop with case and charger - offered to Cabinet Members & Panel Chairs to enable Members to chair meetings and write reports more easily.
- A 4G sim - only where there is no broadband or in areas of particularly unreliable connectivity.

1.2 Current ICT Support Arrangements

All Members are currently offered ICT support from the Service Desk, the hours of operation are:

Mon-Thurs (8am - 5.15pm) & Friday (8am - 4.45pm)

Once a Member is elected, ICT currently supply the equipment required and provide initial training and 'drop in' sessions as requested to help those less familiar with ICT.

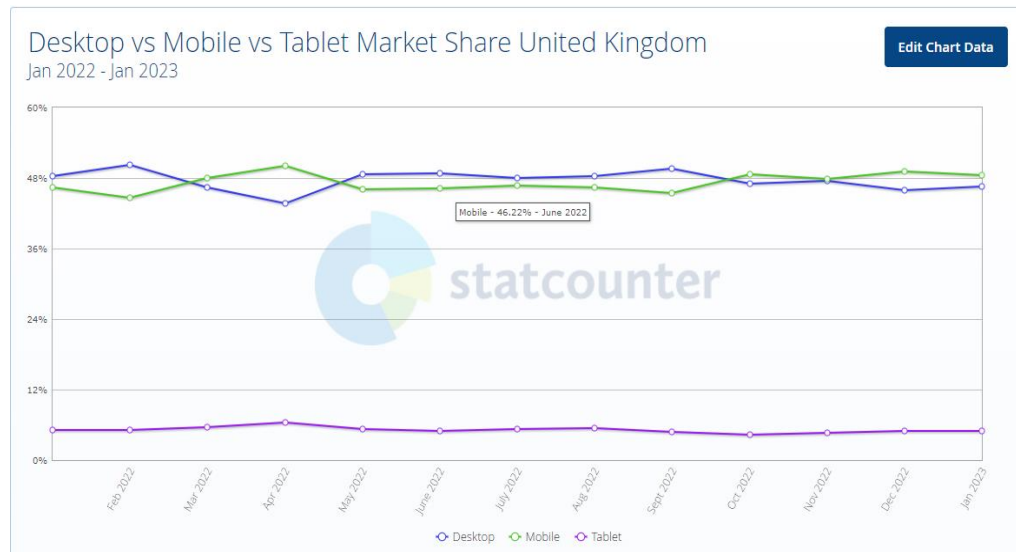
1.3 Setting the scene – current trends regarding ICT device usage

With each passing year, the device technology landscape keeps changing, providing different ways for people to access the Internet and services. According to the latest data from Internet World Stats, there are now over 4.53 billion people (about 58.8% of the world's population) who have access to online services.

It was found that 48% of all devices were smart phone users plus 5% tablets. The same study also found that 90% of the time spent by mobile users goes

to using mobile-dedicated applications. Although the desktop usage is relatively high at 47%.

One of the main reasons why mobile usage is so popular is portability. An increasing number of users are undertaking tasks via apps such as browsing, social media, crafting emails, reading news, and online shopping.



Product	Market Share 2023
Desktop/Laptop PC	47%
Tablet	5%
Smartphone	48%
Total	100%

Source: IDC Worldwide Quarterly Smart Connected Device Tracker. / Statcounter.com / Broadband Search

App Stores and the Apple Effect

The arrival of the Apple App Store in 2008 marked a new way to look at applications. In a shift of the established order, iPhone and iPad users could now acquire applications on an instant basis. Apple has made it so easy for an ordinary user to click on an app and download it. Mobile app store downloads worldwide now top over 200 billion.

The ongoing challenge for the Council is to adapt to market changes by giving our users flexibility whilst keeping sensitive information safe through secure systems all on a tight budget.

In consultation with Democratic Services, ICT have taken into account these trends and have conducted a survey to ascertain Member's views on some of the devices available and the responses to this survey have been used as the basis for the recommendations in this report.

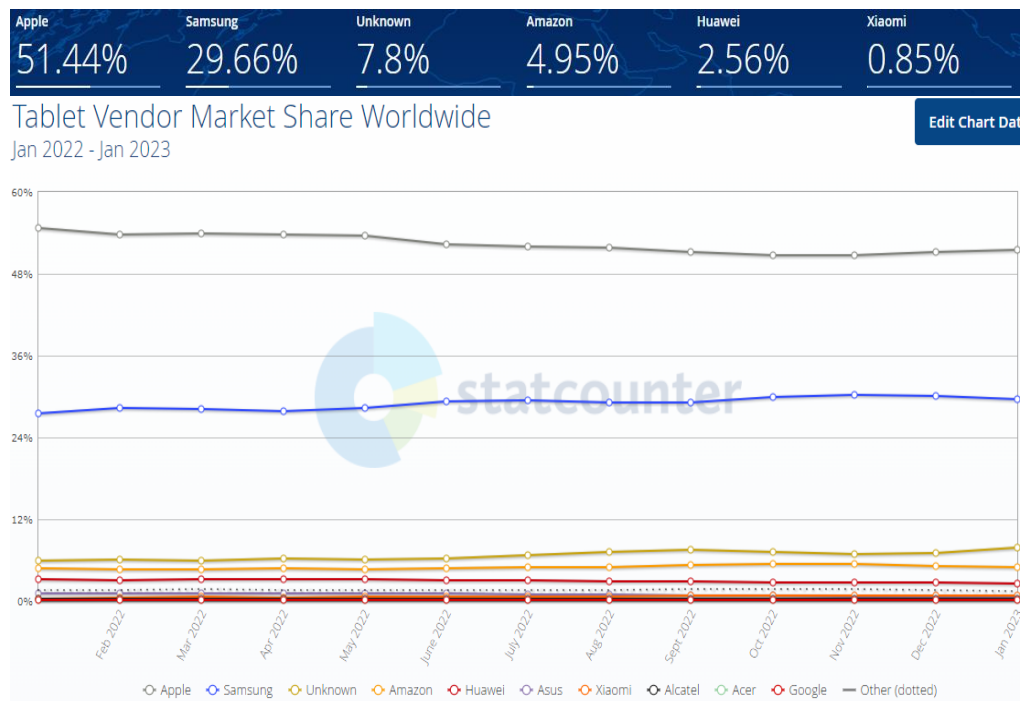
2 Options Considered

2.1 Overview

Tablets/iPad

- Generally cheaper than a laptop.
- Generally longer battery life
- Portability - iPads are more mobile than even a small laptop and easier for those Members who are on the move.
- Requires less space
- iPads are familiar to existing Members who may have been using them for some time.
- Easier to take photos
- Could be said to be the best solution for 'light use'.
- Usually weigh less than a laptop, approx. 477grams.

Apple Tablets are the current market leaders with market share at over 50%. (see table below) Because they only offer a 'closed', simple to use operating system and only offer very few device models, they are easier to support and secure. iPads also tend to receive security patches for much longer than the equivalent android devices.



Android tablets were considered, but they are harder to secure and due to the many variants of android on offer, as well as the various models in the market, it would be more difficult to ensure compatibility and support for the applications we provide.

Laptops.

We have already rolled out over 350 14” laptops to staff and some Members, and generally these have been well received. The laptops we provide are 14” models which are the best compromise between size and weight.

- Laptops are more fully functioning with the suite of applications we use in 2023.
- Laptops run a full version of Microsoft Office which makes it easier to navigate documents and provides the full features available in apps such as Outlook and Word.
- The full keyboard on a laptop makes text input much easier, especially for Members using an iPad without an external keyboard.
- Online meetings (Zoom and Teams) are now commonplace, and a laptop is better suited to this, having a larger screen, better positioned webcam, and enabling the use of a proper USB headset.
- Mod Gov is easier to navigate using the web version on a laptop. It does not require Members to subscribe to committees or organisations and all the information is always available to them, as documents don't 'expire' as they do on the iPads. The web version of Mod Gov can be accessed using their network password, rather than a separate password, meaning there is one less password to remember.
- Compatibility of existing applications - Insite (Our Council Intranet) works as intended in its current form using a laptop. An updated version is planned which will work with iPads in the future.
- Multitasking on laptops generally offers more advanced capabilities compared to iPads which means that software such as Outlook, Mod.Gov and more can be run at the same time with more ease to swap between them.
- More storage. In the past we have had some issues with storage space on iPads which is unlikely to happen with laptops since the storage is nearly 4 times as much.
- IT can use remote manager software to 'dial in' & support Members should they have issues with their devices – could save a trip into the Council Offices!
- Updates will happen automatically – with iPads Members sometimes need to manually update.
- 14” laptops supplied are quite light at 1.4kgs
- Members can access ICT's Self-Service (Service Desk) portal on a laptop but not on an iPad to log and get updates on a fault or query.

2.2 Member Survey February 2023

In February 23 we asked Members for their feedback on which device they would prefer and left space for suggestions or improvements that Members felt we could make to the proposed solution.

24 of 55 questionnaires have been returned. The full responses are outlined in [Appendix 1](#). Of the 24 responses we received, 14 said they would be happy with a laptop solution, 9 said they would prefer an iPad and one said either

device. Whilst 3 Members still use their council supplied Mobile phone, the vast majority do not.

Given the feedback we have received, it is evident that some Members still wish to continue using iPads for various reasons, some of which are listed below. Whilst this means that ICT / Democratic Services will continue to support 2 sets of devices and software applications, it is important that we do not compromise Member's ICT experience in the process.

The main benefit of the proposed solution is that it enables Members to choose the device that suits them, perhaps a lighter more mobile tablet solution with a keyboard or a more fully functioning set of applications using a laptop. ICT can continue to offer comprehensive support to Members and provide a secure and proven uniform set of equipment. Quick replacement of this equipment can be offered from stock should an item become faulty.

By continuing with some of the proven parts of the existing system and adapting to changes in the device and technology landscapes (whilst recognising the economic and governance challenges) the new proposal should continue to:

- Reduce set up delays.
- Continue to allow for minutes and agendas to be viewed on the device.
- Continued mobility - improving productivity.
- Provide email/apps synced when on the move with Wi-Fi and if applicable 4G.
- Less equipment taking up space at home for Members.
- Offer a paperless option for meetings, with the option to follow the agenda easily on an iPad or larger laptop screen display.

2.3 Proposed Solution

a) Provision of an iPad OR Laptop.

iPad option includes:

iPad, charger, case, keyboard, headphones for meetings if required

Apps and software included with this option

- Office365 (mobile app versions) – including Outlook (email) & Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneDrive (file store)
- Modern Gov app (minutes and agendas)
- Edge corporate browser (also used for viewing PDFs)
- Member Expenses
- Intranet (Corporate Documents and Information) – Not currently compatible. Being developed, to come later in 2023.
- Member Expenses
- Zoom

The Council will continue to support current iPads but will not replace equipment until it stops functioning as intended or is out of support/does not continue to receive updates. It is prudent given the council's financial

challenges to 'sweat the asset' as opposed to purchasing new tablets. This will lead to some Members having newer iPad models than others.

Current model supplied to Members is iPad 6th Gen. These were purchased in 2019 but the version was released in 2018 (with iOS 11.3). Apple usually supports their devices for 5 years but can go to 7 years (they don't publish the exact date). The 6th Gen can be updated to the latest IOS which is 16.3.1.(released Feb 2023). Based on this the current iPads may stop receiving the latest IOS updates when version 17 is released which most believe will be September 2023. Our Microsoft software will currently support the last two versions of the IOS. So currently we do not know at this stage how long the current iPad will be supported and this will be kept under review.

Laptop option includes:

14" Laptop, charger, case, headphones for meetings if required.

Software included with this option

- Office365 (full desktop versions) – including Outlook (email) & Teams, Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, OneDrive (file store)
- Modern Gov (minutes and agendas)
- Adobe Reader
- Edge corporate browser
- Staff Directory
- Intranet (Corporate Documents and Information)
- Member Expenses
- Zoom
- SonicWall VPN

b) **4G for iPad / Laptops**

There is an option of a data sim card for the iPad/Laptop giving Members flexibility outside Wi-Fi enabled zones. Most BCKLWN buildings have Wi-Fi availability.

iPads/Laptops can connect either via Wi-Fi hotspots or via mobile phone network 4G.

If a Member requests a sim card for their iPad/Laptop device due to poor Wi-Fi coverage, it is recommended that this cost will be deducted from their Member's ICT allowance.

Data roaming is applicable in the UK. For use outside of the UK, it recommended that Wi-Fi only be used as charges apply.

c) **Supply of a sim card only - for a mobile phone**

A sim card for those who prefer to use their own 'dual sim' phone for convenience. Calls and Texts only, excludes data.

d) **Access to Office 365 via portal.office.com on own device.**

For convenience it is recognised that Members may prefer to use their own device, on the understanding that ICT cannot support their own hardware or software.

ICT Support

Any equipment / software supplied by the Council such as laptops, iPads and sim cards will continue to be supported via telephone or email (if applicable), however it will be the responsibility of Members to bring items into the main Council offices should a problem persist, or telephone assistance (remote access for laptops) not be viable.

Although there is an understanding that during the transitional stages, ICT will be on hand to assist with technical queries and give advice.

2.4 Process moving forward if iPads & laptops are agreed.

Directly after Elections. New Members receive returned equipment.

- 1) Devices/ICT equipment used by Members not re-elected or standing will need to be brought back to Democratic Services/ICT as early as possible to reconfigure for newly elected Members
- 2) Supply reconfigured iPads/laptops to newly elected Members, – those Members who already have a device will retain them.
- 3) Train new Members (May/June)

During September/October –scheduled device replacement.

- 4) During September/October – once we know how long the current iPads will be 'in support', send out questionnaire to all Members to ask if they would prefer a replacement laptop or iPad. (iPads replacements are dependent on support window)
- 5) Invite Members into drop-in sessions to look at device options to help them decide. Allow them to get 'hands on' with new devices.
- 6) Order and configure laptops/iPads to match requirements.
- 7) Setup training sessions for laptop users and offer refresher training for iPad users.

3. Policy Implications

This document will form the basis of the recommended ICT solution for Members.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 Proposed Solution Costs

Costs of providing the various equipment solutions (for each Member) are as follows:

<u>iPad</u>	
Without 4G	
iPad 10 th Gen	£405
Case	£35
Keyboard	£90
Total	£530
4/5G options	
5G iPad 10 th Gen	£559
Sim card (data 2gb/8gb/128gb)	£3/£7/£15 (offset against allowance)
<u>OR</u>	
<u>Laptop</u>	
Without 4G	
14inch Laptop	£596
Laptop bag	£25
USB Headsets	£25
Total	£646
4/5G options	
14inch Laptop (4G enabled)	£691
Sim card (data 2gb/8gb/128gb)	£3/£7/£15 (offset against allowance)

The costs listed above are subject to change dependent on time and size of order. Maximum total capital if all Members choose highest cost 5G laptop option with peripherals £40,800. We have £55,000 set aside in earmarked reserves which is sufficient to cover this.

<u>Mobile phone sim cost</u>
£2.25 for voice and texts

We current supply mobile sim cards to Members at an overall cost of £1290 per annum (this predominantly excludes data). If all Members take up a phone sim, there will be a revenue cost of £1650 per annum.

5 Personnel Implications

None identified

6 Environmental Considerations

N/A

- 7 Statutory Considerations**
None identified
- 8 Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)**
A pre-screening assessment has been completed and no issues were identified.
- 9 Risk Management Implications**
Delay in old equipment being collected / returned to redeploy. This could cause a delay in the initial changeover just after elections. It is recommended to have a few devices in stock to counter any late returns.
- 10 Declarations of Interest / Dispensations Granted**
None identified.
- 11 Background Papers**
Member Survey / Sample Letter & Questionnaire post elections.

Pre-Screening Equality Impact Assessment

Borough Council of
King's Lynn & West Norfolk



Name of policy/service/function	Members ICT				
Is this a new or existing policy/service/function?	Existing				
<p>Brief summary/description of the main aims of the policy/service/function being screened.</p> <p>Please state if this policy/service is rigidly constrained by statutory obligations</p>	To enable Members to use ICT to access Council Services				
Question	Answer				
<p>1. Is there any reason to believe that the policy/service/function could have a specific impact on people from one or more of the following groups according to their different protected characteristic, for example, because they have particular needs, experiences, issues or priorities or in terms of ability to access the service?</p> <p>Please tick the relevant box for each group.</p> <p>NB. Equality neutral means no negative impact on any group.</p>		Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
	Age			✓	
	Disability			✓	
	Gender			✓	
	Gender Re-assignment			✓	
	Marriage/civil partnership			✓	
	Pregnancy & maternity			✓	
	Race			✓	
	Religion or belief			✓	
	Sexual orientation			✓	
	Other (eg low income)			✓	

Question	Answer	Comments
2. Is the proposed policy/service likely to affect relations between certain equality communities or to damage relations between the equality communities and the Council, for example because it is seen as favouring a particular community or denying opportunities to another?	No	
3. Could this policy/service be perceived as impacting on communities differently?	No	
4. Is the policy/service specifically designed to tackle evidence of disadvantage or potential discrimination?	No	
5. Are any impacts identified above minor and if so, can these be eliminated or reduced by minor actions? If yes, please agree actions with a member of the Corporate Equalities Working Group and list agreed actions in the comments section	N/A	Actions: None
		Actions agreed by EWG member:
If 'yes' to questions 2 - 4 a full impact assessment will be required unless comments are provided to explain why this is not felt necessary:		
Decision agreed by EWG member:		
Assessment completed by:		
Name		
Job title		
Date		

Background Papers (appendices)

- 1 Member Survey Results
- 2 Sample Letter and Questionnaire

Appendix 1

Councillors ICT Equipment Survey Results			
			<u>Results</u>
			Responses: 24
			Happy with laptop: 14
			Happy with iPad: 9
			Use Council mobile: 3
Happy with laptop?	Experience with PC/laptop?	Using Council mobile?	Comments made
No	Limited	No	iPad is easy to use and secure. Use my personal phone.
No	Lots	No	Too heavy to carry around. I would need reasonable adjustments as I have a disability. I keep my laptop at home. I do not have a Borough Council phone. I use other phones. I will need to have a laptop provided to use at Council meetings as I would not be carrying a laptop around. It would be better to keep the IPADS but provide a keyboard, as one Councillor has purchased for his IPAD
Yes	Limited	No	Through Emails or private phones. Not standing for Council in the next period.
No	Lots	No	When visiting parish councils or outside bodies an iPad is far more flexible. Often when sat in a village hall you don't have a table to work from. My NCC think pad gets left home in preference to the iPad. I have a borough council sim card in my own smart phone. When working remotely on Teams or Zoom having a laptop as well as an iPad gives flexibility of displaying agenda on one device while showing virtual meeting on another, this also takes up less space than multiple monitors.
Yes	Limited	No	Needed to replace leads to iPad several times
Yes	Lots	No	I mostly use my personal mobile ...vary rarely use the council issued mobile to ring out but residents do ring it and again. Would be happy to use a laptop.

Yes	Lots	Yes	I have diverted my Council mobile calls to my own iPhone as nuisance carrying two cellphones. I haven't a keyboard for iPad and using iPad for some Expenses on Demand updates re insurance etc is a nightmare even though I used computers daily at work. I resorted to having to take photos of documents via the App on my own iPhone . Although I doubt I'll stand for reelection in May 2023 , I would endorse the switch to a smallish lap top . Using iPad for Teams and Zoom worked well on iPad but very easy to cut the link off when trying to access ModGov during a virtual meeting maybe I'm just getting a grumpy old man!
Yes	Limited	No	My home phone landline is in the BT Phone book for all to find and use. I have my mobile phone but I do not use it for council business. My BC email address is easily available from the website and my business cards obviously have it as well as my landline number. I am not aware that there have ever been problems for people trying to contact me by either method. I don't use a mobile phone for council work so that I have some peace and relief from being contactable 24/7! An earlier question refers - I have a BC laptop as I am a Panel chairman and I much prefer it to my Ipad. I really only use the Ipad when trying to update my car/driving licence details and as Chloe and Donna will confirm, I need their help every time!
Yes	Lots	No	My private mobile with council phone number transferred
No	Lots	No	I have used both and found the iPad easier to use when away from home, it's lighter, easier and quicker to reply to emails. I do not mind having the keyboard on the same screen as the email etc. Huge majority of my contacts use email or phone my mobile. I couldn't use the iPad at external meetings or whilst on the car until I had a SIM card, I believe it's the name of it, installed.
Yes	Lots	No	Personal phone, the phone supplied is too basic. If we are supplied laptops can they not be too bulky
Yes	Lots	No	Use my own phone. A power pack would be very helpful in case of a lack of power supply and reduces extension leads.
Yes	Lots	Yes	
No	Lots	No	I already have a Council laptop as Chair of a Panel. If I did not have my iPad I could not easily take my laptop with me when I travel and hence answer the many queries that come my way. I also can connect to meetings and briefings via my iPad when travelling. I use my own mobile phone. I also use a landline as many of my ward members do not have mobiles and have difficulty hearing over the mobile. Please bear in mind that as a councillor I am constantly on call even on holiday or when away for any reason. Ward members get anxious (rightly so) if they feel their concerns are not being heeded.

Yes	Lots	No	I use my own Mobile Phone and Council iPad . I personally would rather a lap top than an iPad, I have a lap top at County, but in the present economic situation we find ourselves in I don't think the council should spend money on laptops.
No	Lots	No	There are some restrictions having just an iPad but it is more convenient having to take to meetings. It is very basic and not easy to use for text messages. It's not a Smart phone so not much use at all. I use my landline for Council related calls but also have a mobile phone for personal use. It would be very useful to have a SIM card for the iPad for use out of home. I have been unable to be connected via my own phone for my online diary and have not been able to accept emails whilst out and about.
Yes	Limited	No	Using my own personal private mobile. As council phone to small unable to hear. Phones would need to be of a better quality. I have experienced so many issues. Not being able to connect to Teams Zoom. At present unable to connect to your account. Error 404. Unable to always connect to a particular planning documents.
Both			When I became a Borough Councillor, I was given a computer which was hard wired along with a hard wired mouse which to be honest took up more space than my wife wanted, then along came an I-pad which changed everything. I am in favour of a laptop having used them for my business along with I-pads and to be honest I would like to have both as I tend to take my I-pad with me when I attend all my Parish meetings. Would it be possible to have both ?
Yes	Lots	No	My own phone
Yes	Lots	No	Use my own mobile number. The Council phone i was issued with had really poor coverage so I wasn't always able to use it. I would prefer a council phone if the coverage was better. Please make the expenses forms much more accessible and user friendly. Thank you
Yes	None	Yes	Are the laptops a lot heavier than the iPad as I have to carry mine a lot further then other Councillors as I don't drive.
No	Lots	No	Less portable, harder to use on lap in a parish meeting. Personal phone as Borough phones are awful and I can't be bothered to carry 2 phones.
No	Lots	No	Inconvenient size . I use my iPad in all sorts of places where a laptop would not be useful. A laptop can be more fragile. The windows operating system is increasingly becoming a pain due to necessary updates. I use my own phone. I set my council number to transfer to my phone over 6 years ago. It seems to work given the number of calls I get. The process of saving files on the iPad needs to be looked at . iPads should have the capacity to connect to the web without WiFi. I believe some Members enjoy this function now.

No			<p>Not at all interested in a laptop. More wasted money on equipment and ease of iPads to use and put in bags re portability is a plus.</p> <p>We should not fritter tax payers money on vanity projects when the iPads are still in going usage. People need to earn money before they spend it, value how hard pressed our residents are and be frugal . It should not be such a throwaway item. and nothing suggested has made me think this is progress. I get on very well with my iPad and my Ward work is not impacted by not having a laptop.</p>
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Appendix 2

Sample Letter and Questionnaire

May 2023

Dear Councillors,

ICT Training Requirements.

In order to assist Councillors in your new role, you will be issued with an iPad tablet with Microsoft Office365 (email, teams and calendar) and Modern Gov (minutes and agenda) software. You will also be provided with a sim card for your mobile phone for Council business and access to Council services via your own ICT equipment at home should you wish to use it.

ICT Services in conjunction with Member Services will provide training to all new members. These are: -

- A Beginner Session.
- A General Session

Members familiar these systems and iPads will be asked if they wish to attend a 'fast track' training session.

A 'drop-in' session will also be held on 6th June/4th July and Councillors are invited to call in at any time during that period when officers will be available to answer questions or to provide one-to-one training. It would be helpful if you could let us know on the attached questionnaire if you would like to attend on this day. If any Councillor would like to receive training but cannot attend the 'drop-in' session, this can be arranged by contacting Rebecca Parker on 01553 616632.

In order for us to plan these sessions, I would be grateful if you could complete the short, attached questionnaire.

Yours sincerely
Richard Godfrey
ICT Manager

COUNCILLORS ICT EXPERIENCE QUESTIONNAIRE

Councillor Name:.....

Please could you complete and return this quick questionnaire so that we can identify any particular ICT training needs.

Please tick the statements below that apply to you.

1 Using an iPad

I have used an iPad previously and know my way round it.

I have not used an iPad before

2 Using a laptop/desktop

I have my own computer and know my way round it well.

I can access emails, websites, and apps on a computer

I have experience of Microsoft Office 365 on a computer.

I don't have/have limited experience of using a computer

I have experience of using Zoom and Teams to access virtual meetings on a computer

3 Broadband/Wi-Fi

I have a Broadband Landline Connection at Home

I have a Broadband 3/4G Connection at Home

I don't have a Broadband Connection at Home

4 Do you wish to attend a fast-track session aimed at Members with experience in using ICT iPads / Apps or would you prefer to attend the 2 separate sessions

I would like to attend the 'fast track' session

I would prefer to attend the 2 dedicated sessions

5 Will you be attending the drop-in sessions on the 6th June or 4th July?

Yes,

Please indicate the date you expect to attend

Please provide details of anything else you would like to make us aware of in relation to any ICT:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.
Would you please return it in the prepaid envelope provided in your induction folder by xx May 2023 – Thank you.