

Report on	Member Support and Member IT Allocation
Date of Meeting	Thursday 7 th November, 2019
Reporting Officer	P Moffett, Head of Democratic Services B O'Hagan, Head of ICT
Contact Officer	E Forde, Member Support Officer

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	To consider the provision of IT equipment and allocations for each category IT provision.
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>The Policy & Resources Committee at its March 2017 meeting recommended and subsequently agreed by Council that members could avail of IT equipment to assist in the undertaking of their council business up to maximum thresholds set. In summary, the Council will arrange to provide the following on a request basis for a Member:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mobile computing device (iPad, Windows based or Android) up a maximum of £500 for the term of the Council • A Sim free smart phone device every 24 months up to a value of £250 • A Multi-Functional Device (MFD) i.e. a printer every 4 years up the value of £150, with consumables to be incurred by the requesting councillor <p>The full text associated with the above is attached as appendix A to this report.</p>
2.2	The Elected Member Development Steering Group at its September 2019 meeting discussed the current IT Allocation for members. The Steering Group recommended that Policy and Resources Committee be requested to review the current allocations, with a view to allowing for a wider scope for expenditure on items, that <i>"....may assist members to carry out their duties as a representative, such as a data projector or other such devices....."</i>
2.3	The report of the September Elected Member Development Steering Group meeting was considered at October Policy and Resources and approved by Council.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	Officers have considered the action stemming from the Elected Member Development Steering Group to allow for a wider scope to access items that may assist members to carry out their duties. In reflecting on the current arrangements/provisions (see Appendix A) and the request coming through from the Elected Member Development Steering Group (EMDSG) the following is being proposed:

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Council provide one mobile computing device (iPad, Windows or Android Device) up to a maximum of £500 or other agreed figure every 4 years (48 months) for each Member wishing to avail of same. Council to provide support, maintenance and economic repair of that device to the Member for the 4 year period. 2. Council provide one SIM free smart phone device up the value of £250 or other agreed figure for each Member seeking a mobile device every 2 years (24 months). Support and configuration will be provided but any costs in relation to its replacement, loss and damage to be incurred by the Member. 3. Council provide additional digital requirements up to a maximum of £350 or other agreed figure every 4 years (48 months) to accommodate items such as stylus pens, digital projectors and other digital accessories to assist members in transacting council business and in carrying out elected representative duties. This excludes items covered under points 1 and 2 above and this allocation cannot be used against or transferred to same.
3.2	A specific reference to Multi-Functional Device (MFD) has been removed and replaced with 'additional digital requirements' to facilitate and reflect changing Member needs. The opportunity has been taken to review and refresh the full text in line with experience of practice to date.
3.3	In the financial year to date, additional equipment and resources bought by IT services has amounted to just over £12,000. In meeting new Councillor requirements and the replacement of significantly older hardware of existing members has placed a higher than anticipated cost pressures on the IT Equipment Replacement budgetary provision in this financial year.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Increased allowances and the replacement of aging and new member equipment has increased the pressures on the IT equipment budget this year as detailed above.
	Human: minimal though greater involvement by Officers in potentially sourcing items and recording expenditure
	Risk Management: Adequately resourcing members to efficiently communicate and receive Council business is integral to the seamless operation of Council. The proposal seeks to mitigate risk presented by older equipment from members undertaking their roles.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: none
	Rural Needs Implications: none

5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	That the committee considers and approves the revised IT Allocations, wording and monetary limits.
5.2	To facilitate this the committee also considers and approves the necessary release of monies from council reserves to accommodate additional digital requirements within the current Council Term, noting that the first six months has been up to £12,000.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	Appendix A – IT Allocations previously agreed and approved in March 2017

Appendix A

ICT Provision from Mid Ulster District Council for Elected Members

ICT Allowances

As agreed at the Policy & Resources Committee on 9 March 2017, ratified by Council on the 23 March 2017. Members' may avail of the undernoted:

- (i) Council provide one mobile computing device (IPAD or an alternative Windows based/Android device as listed in appendix) up to a maximum £500 or other agreed figure per term of the Council for each member wishing to avail of same. Council would provide support, maintenance, repair and replacement of that device to members for the term of the Council i.e. every 4 years.*
- (ii) Council provide a sim free smart phone device for each Member seeking a mobile device every 24months up to the value of £250 or other agreed figure. Support and configuration would be provided but any costs in relation to its replacement/loss and damage would be incurred by the Member.*
- (iii) Council provide a Multi- Function printer (MFD) device for each Member seeking same every 4 years up to the value of £150 or other agreed figure. Consumables to be incurred by the member. The machine will be maintained and supported in accordance with its warranty*