Hackney

Title of Report	MEMBERS USE OF ICT | 12TH ANNUAL REPORT
For Consideration By	Standards Committee
Meeting Date	8 February 2024
Classification	Open
Ward(s) Affected	All Wards
Group Director	Dawn Carter-McDonald, Interim Chief Executive

1.   Introduction

1.1.   This annual report provides the Standards Committee with an update on Members' use of the ICT services provided by the Council.

1.2.   This report covers the following topics:

- Members' use of ICT during the 2022 and 2023 calendar years
- Delivery of Data Protection training for Members
- Members' ICT provision
- Support for hybrid committee meetings (including live streaming for public viewing)

2.   Recommendations

2.1.   **That Standards Committee is invited to:**

- **Note the update on Members' use of ICT, Data Protection training and provision of ICT equipment for Members**
- **Note the continued use of virtual committee meetings and live streaming**

3.   MEMBERS' USE OF ICT DURING THE 2022 and 20233 CALENDAR YEARS

3.1.   Hackney Council's Councillor Code of Conduct, which covers the Elected Mayor, Councillors and Co-optees, provides that a Member must act in accordance with the Council's requirements and ensure that Council resources are not used for any unauthorised or political purpose (unless that use reasonably facilitates discharging the

Council's functions). This includes Information & Communications Technology (ICT) resources.

3.2.   Members' use of the Council's systems and information is covered by the Council's policies for *Using Systems and Data* and *Information Classification and Marking*.

3.3.   Members are provided with access to the Council's email and productivity systems (based on the Google Workspace service).

3.4.   Monitoring of compliance with the guidance for Members' use of ICT is carried out by Corporate ICT staff. All potential incidents are reported to the ICT Services team, recorded on the ICT service management system and passed to the ICT cyber security team for investigation and follow up.

3.5.   There were two incidents relating to Members' use of the Council's ICT systems recorded during the 2022 and 2023 calendar years:

Category	Number of incidents	Description	Action taken
Telephony	0	n/a	n/a
Web / internet	0	n/a	n/a
Email	1	Misdirection of member email	Other recipient was a council which promptly confirmed deletion of email
Information security	1	Lost / stolen iPad	Lost device was remotely locked and wiped to secure data
Total Incidents / Breaches	**2**		

3.6.   The table below shows the historical pattern of incidents relating to Members use of ICT:

Year	Incident category				Description	TOTAL
	Telephony	Web / internet	Email	Info security		

2023	0	0	1	1	Misdirected email Lost / stolen iPad	1
2022	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
2021	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
2020	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
2019	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
2018	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
2017	0	0	0	2	Lost / stolen iPads	2
2016	0	1	0	0	Inappropriate content	1
2015	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
2014	0	0	0	1	Lost / stolen laptop	1
2013	0	0	0	0	N/A	0
2012	0	0	0	1	Lost / stolen laptop	1
Total	**0**	**1**	**0**	**5**		**6**

4. DATA PROTECTION GUIDANCE FOR MEMBERS

4.1. As noted in previous reports, the UK's data protection laws (including the Data Protection Act, 2018) place a number of requirements on elected Members, who handle information in three distinct roles:

- As Members of the Council, where the Council is responsible for the safeguards that are put in place, including the responsibility for any fines relating to breaches of the Data Protection Act.
- As members of political parties, where Members handle information such as canvassing information on behalf of their party.
- As Ward Councillors, where Members are **personally responsible** as Data Controllers for the safeguarding of information that constituents share with them. This includes **personal liability** for any fines for breaches of the Data Protection Act when Members are acting in this role.

4.2. To help Members fulfil their obligations as elected Members, the Council has arranged to register each Member as a Data Controller

with the Information Commissioner's Office. This is a mandatory requirement for all Members and is renewed annually.

4.3.   An adapted version of the Council's online Data Awareness Training is provided to cover Members' responsibilities and the contexts in which they handle personal data. Arrangements are made to provide this training to all new and returning members (as a refresher).

4.4.   Members are also welcome to request in-person advice where required by contacting the ICT Services team. They will be able to advise on Data Protection considerations where the Council is responsible for information and indicate other resources that Members might find useful in other contexts that apply to Members' use of data.

5.   MEMBERS' ICT PROVISION

5.1.   ICT equipment and support provided for Members continues to follow the agreed model, which covers:

Equipment

- Members are offered a choice of a Chromebook or an iPad Pro (11" or 12.9") with keyboard and case.

Services

- Members are provided with access to the Council's Google Workspace tools (including email and calendar) and Committee papers system.

Support

- Members are provided with ICT support services. These include a "home working check-in" service to help with access to services from home.

6.   VIRTUAL COMMITTEE MEETINGS

6.1.   Following the ending of the temporary legal provisions which enabled the Council to hold meetings remotely or in a hybrid way, with some members attending in person and some remotely, the Council has returned to 'in person' meetings. However, the Council has continued

to offer the option of people attending meetings remotely, albeit for Members with clear guidance as to their inability to vote and the fact that they are not counted as being present for the purposes of s85 Local Government Act 1972. This option is provided, as during the period of Covid-19 lockdown restrictions, via the Council's Google Meet service. Meetings are also livestreamed on the Council's YouTube channel.

6.2. Updates to Google Meet mean that it is now possible to livestream to YouTube direct, without needing separate add-on software, simplifying the process and improving the quality and reliability of livestreams.

6.3. Further investments in the audio / visual equipment in the Council Chamber and Committee rooms remains subject to confirmation of detailed proposals and identification of funding. Funding bids will be produced in due course.

7. Comments of the Interim Group Director of Finance

7.1. This report asks the Standards Committee to note the update with regards to Members' use of ICT.

7.2. Costs of any upgrades to Members IT equipment are expected to remain within the approved budget.

7.3. Any proposed upgrades to ICT and audio / visual equipment required for use of hybrid meetings will be subject to the identification of funding and appropriate budget approvals.

8. Comments of the Acting Director of Legal, Democratic and Electoral Services

8.1. The Members' Code of Conduct provides that it is to be read in conjunction with other codes and protocols adopted by the Council as supplementary guidance; one such document is the ICT Policy. This provides that Council resources must be used for carrying out Council functions and restrictions are imposed on any significant personal use of such resources. The policy specifically addresses how Members should use Council provided ICT resources. There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

Appendices

None

Background documents

No documents which require listing have been relied upon in the preparation of this report.

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