

Cabinet

16 March 2023

Refresh of Surface Pro Devices

Recommendation

That Cabinet authorises the Strategic Director for Resources to undertake an appropriate procurement process, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation, and to enter into all agreements that he considers necessary for the replacement of the Council's current end user devices as set out in paragraph 1.3.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council deployed Surface Pro devices in 2019/20 as part of the Microsoft 365 transformation programme and has subsequently realised the benefits of this approach. This initial 3-year lease was extended in 2022 for 1 year to avoid significant pricing changes due to inflation.
- 1.2 The Surface Pro device has supported the Council's approach to flexible and agile working, enabling colleagues to work in a style which suits them. They have proven to be highly reliable devices, reducing pressure on our ICT support and benefit from being a familiar device to all colleagues. Having a standard device simplifies support arrangements and contributes to financial savings.
- 1.3 The recommendation is that the Council should lease replacement Surface Pro 7+ devices on a 4-year basis to continue to provide all users with a safe, flexible, and familiar device that serves all key business purposes.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The 2022/23 budget includes £1.040m for the annual leasing cost of our devices. The budget will be reduced to £0.890m in 2023/24 delivering the £0.150m saving from devices agreed as part of the 2023/24 budget approved by Council on 7 February 2023.
- 2.2 The proposed lease reduces the annual cost for devices from £1.040m to £0.910m. The £0.020m annual shortfall resulting from the lease will be funded from efficiencies within Digital & ICT.

- 2.3 Considering the increase in the number of devices required, this represents a 24% reduction in lease cost per device.

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 The Council's current devices will be returned to the leasing company and re-sold when refreshed. The devices will not be disposed of which will help reduce any environmental impact.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1 The Council initially deployed Surface Pros in 2019, financed through a 3-year lease arrangement, expiring in November 2022. The 2019 lease provided a total of 4,250 devices at an annual cost of £1,040m. Pricing uncertainty in the market due to global factors meant the decision was taken to extend the lease by 12 months, ending November 2023.
- 4.2 The Council's Digital Strategy approach is to deploy a single corporate device to colleagues. This approach has delivered efficiencies in support and management and provides best value from the market achieved by leasing at volume.
- 4.3 The current devices are used extensively and have a limited useful life before issues increase. As such, it is the appropriate time to refresh them on a new lease which makes financial sense for the Council.
- 4.4 Consultation with HR has identified the current organisational device need (based on establishment and headcount totals) as 4,867, an increase of 617 devices from the previous lease in 2019. The increase in need has resulted from service response to the Council priorities such as Children and Families, Adult Social Care, and Environment Services. The increase in the number of employees with different working patterns also contributes to this demand.
- 4.5 A market review has been undertaken to establish the options open to the Council to replace more devices at a reduced annual lease cost.
- 4.6 The market review identified alternative devices. Testing of these did not deliver on the high expectations the Council has for its devices. As the Surface Pro is familiar to users and has served all types of uses, from desk-based to remote work, it is recommended as the best available device considering the work the organisation undertakes and good experience over the last 4 years.
- 4.7 There are a small number of users (estimated at below 1% of the Council's staff) where their work requires a different device, usually because of specific application requirements. These will be identified and considered during the refresh and an alternative solution identified.

4.8 Procurement advice confirms that using the Crown Commercial Services Technology Products and Associated Services RM6068 Framework is an acceptable route to market and will enable a competitive process to be conducted for procurement of the 4867 Surface Pros.

5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- Cabinet – 16 March 2023
- Procurement completed by end of May 2023
- Device rollout begins June 2023
- Device rollout completes November 2023

Appendices

None

Background Papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Not applicable. This is a countywide matter.

Other members: Councillors Jerry Roodhouse, John Holland, Jonathan Chilvers, Adrian Warwick, Parminder Singh Birdi, Sarah Boad, Caroline Phillips, and Will Roberts