



RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Public

DATE OF MEETING: 6th December 2012

TITLE: Saving Paper

REPORT OF: Saving Paper Task and Finish Group

REPORT REFERENCE OS35/12

Summary:

This report paper has been prepared to detail the findings and recommendations of the Saving Paper Task Group. The Task Group was established to undertake a short piece of scrutiny looking at how the Authority could save paper, printing and distribution costs within the Democratic process. The Task Group considered how technology can be used to assist in making these savings and conclude that the Authority should look at introducing a mechanism to enable Members and Officers to utilise technology to access Committee Papers.

This paper looks at the broad budget implications and highlights the potential risks and issues of introducing a scheme whereby Councillors access agendas, reports and minutes electronically rather than printed copies.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to

- Approve/amend the report and recommend it to the Executive, requesting a formal response.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. A paperless meeting is a move away from the traditional format for Member meetings which involves the printing and distribution of a significant amount of paperwork in favour of electronic means, eg a laptop or a tablet. For legal reasons a limited number of paper copies will still be required to enable members of the public who attend meetings to follow the agenda but on the whole participants at the meeting will use technology to access documents.
- 1.2. Members of Resources O&S Panel requested that a Task Group be set up to look further into saving paper within the democratic process. Cllrs Craig (Lead Member), Franklin and Watson volunteered to undertake the work and welcomed the input of the Cllr Dr Tickner, Portfolio Holder, Finance, Governance and Resources.
- 1.3. The Task Group held their initial meeting on 27th September 2012 in order to consider background information and scope their review.
- 1.4. It was agreed that the Terms of Reference for the Task Group would be:
 - To investigate the potential of using technology as a means of saving Democratic paper, printing and postage costs.
 - To evaluate the potential savings, costs and environmental implications of moving towards paperless committees.
 - To undertake research on how other Local Authorities have moved towards paperless committees and examine how lessons learned could be transferred to Carlisle City Council.

2. BUDGET

- 2.1. The current annual budget for Democratic Services for Printing and Photocopying stands at £42,500. The spend over the past 5 years has reduced year on year with a significant fall in 2011/12.

Year	Budget	Spend
2007/08	42,500	54,405
2008/09	42,500	39,396
2009/10	42,500	38,120
2010/11	42,500	37,278
2011/12	42,500	23,387

- 2.2. Costs for reports with regard to Development Control are shared with Economic Development Directorate.
- 2.3. Task Group Members were informed that the Governance Directorate examine the distribution of Papers at the beginning of each Civic year to determine whether any reductions can be made. However Task Group Members were aware of many Members and Officers receiving packs of Committee Papers that they were not

directly involved. It was requested that a thorough look at the distribution be re-examined and during the course of this review all Members and Officers who receive Committee Papers were explicitly asked which papers they required in future. There are signs that this work will produce further savings.

- 2.4. The postal spend for Democratic Services which covers the postage costs of committee papers to Councillors was £8,983 in 2010/11 (budget £9,900) and reduced in 2011/12 to £3,840 (budget £10,400). Clearly other correspondence is distributed to Councillors but the bulk of postage can be attributed to Committee Papers.
- 2.5. Task Group Members were informed that the reduction in postage spend can be attributed to (a) reduction in number/volume of reports, (b) more Members collecting their mail and (c) standard Member mail post reduced to once per week (Friday, rather than Tuesday and Friday).
- 2.6. To put this into context Members were informed that for the Executive meeting on 2nd July 2012, the papers cost £9.62 to be supplied and printed. The postage cost for each set of papers was £4.57. Copies of the Executive Papers are provided to:

	Num of Copies
Executive Members	6
Other Members (for information)	9
Officers	9
Spare	4
Press and Public	5
Total	33

Distribution of Executive Papers NB: press and public do not receive Part B reports

A full set of Draft Executive Papers are also distributed to 16 recipients (Executive Members and Officers).

Using the meeting of the Executive held on 2nd July 2012 as an example the approximate cost of producing reports is **£470** (excluding postage).

- 2.7. Task Group Members were also keen to look at the printing costs further and as an example printing costs for the Members of the Task Group in 2011/12 were calculated. The costs which could be attributed to Cllr Tickner were also calculated if he had been Portfolio Holder in 2011/12.
- 2.8. The Table below summaries the printing and paper costs only. Paper costs are based on white paper which is purchased at £2.43 per ream. Coloured paper can be more expensive and is used for the printing of agendas but has not been calculated into these costs. Postage and staff resources are in addition to these basic costs. It should also be noted that this does not account for all Committee of the Council, only those that the Task Group Members sit on.

Costs of Committee Reports 2011/12

	Council	Minute Book	Executive	Resources O&S	Environment & Economy O&S	Development Control	Licensing	Regulatory	Audit	Total amount of paper	Total printing costs	Total Paper Costs	Total Cost
Cllr Craig	29.04	43.44			18.03	58.46			24.60	8923	173.57	43.37	£216.94
Cllr Franklin	29.04	43.44				58.46	1.40	2.78	24.60	8274	159.72	40.21	£199.93
Cllr Watson	29.04	43.44	45.54	26.43	18.03					8276	162.48	40.22	£202.70
Cllr Tickner	29.04	43.44	91.08	26.43						9259	189.99	45.00	£234.99

Average cost for Councillors listed = £213.64

Printing per committee	1,510.08	3,258.00	2,914.56	634.32	437.70	1,987.64	33.60	66.72	811.80	Cost of Printing £11,654.42		Total cost for all Committees listed in 2011/12 £14,182.11
Paper per committee 2011/12	73,632	156,384	86,272	27,216	20,592	110,398	1,680	3,336	40,590	Total sheets of paper 520,100	Total cost of paper £2,527.69	

- 2.9. Task Group Members were also informed of an exercise undertaken in July 2012 by the Service Support Team to determine how much time is attributed to the printing, collation and distribution of Committee papers.

Date	Committee/Panel	Officer Time (hours)
2 nd July 2012	Audit Committee	11.75
4 th July 2012	Development Control Committee	0.75
6 th July 2012	Council	22.00
9 th July 2012	Community O&S Panel	4.00
16 th July 2012	Resources O&S Panel	2.75
23 rd July 2012	Environment & Economy O&S Panel	3.00

- 2.10. Members of the Task Group also recognised that there is also an environmental cost of producing Committee papers and were keen that this was also reduced as part of this work.
- 2.11. The Task Group were interested in how these costs could be reduced further and wanted to give consideration to how technology could be utilised by Members and Officers in the Democratic process. They were informed that a MyCMIS App had recently been developed by Astech, the software company behind CMIS (Committee Management Information System).
- 2.12. The Task Group made arrangements for a demonstration of the product by representatives from Astech on 24th October 2012. An invitation to this session was extended to all Members.
- 2.13. Members were shown all of the different functions on MyCMIS including the meetings pages and how to access Committee reports. Members were informed that the App was compatible with all operating systems, whether this be iOS, android or windows. Therefore users were not tied to a particular product or manufacturer.
- 2.14. Members were shown how the documents could be annotated and were informed that this was dependent on the PDF reader used. Adobe Acrobat was used for the purposes of the demonstration but it is a decision of each Authority or individual which reader is used. Members would be required to download their documents (usually via wi-fi) to their device prior to the meeting and would be alerted as to when reports were available. MyCMIS is user specific and Members themselves would decide what information they required over an above the Committees or Panel they sit on.
- 2.15. Although the session was only attended by 7 Members, the initial feedback was extremely positive with Members indicating that they would be happy to access their Committee Papers and information in this format.

- 2.16. Members suggested that they would possibly use a tablet rather than their Council provided PC for their Council duties. Members indicated that the majority of use for their PC was to access, create and respond to emails and this could be done quicker with a tablet with the added benefit of being able to access outside of the home.

Wrexham County Borough Council have recently undertaken a pilot of Members using iPads rather than a home PC and taking into consideration the feedback from Members of their requirements identified by Members, the conclusion was reached that the iPad will meet most Members' requirements. Members involved in the pilot stated that they liked the ability to be alerted to incoming emails without having to power up and login to a laptop / pc which can be a lengthy process.¹

- 2.17. The costs associated with the MyCMIS app are:

£2,000 (one-off) installation costs		Number of users	Support Costs per annum
		10	£500.00
		20	£500.00
		30	£600.00
		40	£600.00
		50	£750.00
		60	£900.00
		70	£1050.00

Number of Users	License Costs per user
1-9	£200.00
10-34	£100.00
Over 35	£75.00

- 2.18. Thus costs for MyCMIS per annum are as follows:

Number of users	Support Costs per annum	License Cost per user	Installation Cost	Total Cost Year 1	Total Cost Year 2 onwards	Cost per Member Year 1	Cost per Member Year 2 onwards
9	500	200	2000	4300	2300	477.77	255.55
20	500	100	2000	4500	2500	225.00	125.00
35	600	75	2000	5225	3225	149.28	92.14
40	600	75	2000	5600	3600	140.00	90.00
50	750	75	2000	6500	4500	130.00	90.00
60	900	75	2000	7400	5400	123.33	90.00
70	1050	75	2000	8300	6300	118.57	90.00

¹ Wrexham County Borough Council report to Democratic Services Committee October 2012

- 2.19. As calculated earlier in the report the average cost of printing for the sample of Councillors on the Task Group in 2011/12 was £213.64.

Number of users	Cost per Member Year 1	Cost per Member Year 2 onwards	Saving per Member year 1	Saving per Member year 2 onwards	Total Saving Year 2 onwards
9	477.77	255.55	264.13	41.91	377.19
20	225.00	125.00	11.36	(88.64)	(1,772.80)
35	149.28	92.14	(64.36)	(121.50)	(4,252.50)
40	140.00	90.00	(73.64)	(123.64)	(4,945.60)
50	130.00	90.00	(83.64)	(123.64)	(6,182.00)
60	123.33	90.00	(90.31)	(123.64)	(7,418.40)
70	118.57	90.00	(95.07)	(123.64)	(8,654.80)

- 2.20. Clearly there are savings which can be made by moving to paperless working and the model benefits from economies of scale. If Members who move to Tablets decide that they do not have a requirement for a home PC provided and maintained by the Authority then there are further savings which can be made.
- 2.21. Task Group Members are aware that several Members already own a personal tablet device and other Members have indicated that they would prefer to own their own tablet so that this can be used for other activities other than official Council work.
- 2.22. All Members receive an annual allowance to assist them financially in their duties as a Councillor. Members are required to pay for any Broadband and telephone calls from their allowance and the provision of home based computer facilities is provided by the Council. Task Group Members agree that each Councillor who wishes should be able to purchase a device of their choosing from their allowance. Arrangements should be made for a scheme whereby the Council purchases the tablet and the Member pays this back over a number of months. This could be automatically deducted from their Allowance. The Council should then provide the MyCMIS app and cover associated costs. The Member should then no longer be issued with paper reports.
- 2.23. Due to the amount of reports distributed to Senior Officers who regularly attend Committees, Members agree that those who own a tablet should also have the option to have the MyCMIS app on their personal device. Again they will no longer be provided with paper reports.
- 2.24. During the Course of the review the Task Group noticed that several times a year they receive an amended Council summons. This is usually due to the fact that

motions, questions from Members or questions from the public have been received on the deadline day which is a different deadline for distributing reports. If possible, Members would wish to see the deadlines aligned if possible so that the need to amending, reprinting and distributing the Summons is avoided.

3. Recommendations to the Executive

The Task Group make the following recommendations to the Executive:

1. That the Council should move towards moving to using technology in order to save paper, printing and postage of Committee Papers. Initially a pilot should be undertaken with volunteers who own or who have access to a tablet. As this pilot should concentrate on issues around accessing, reading and annotating reports before and within Council meetings it may be possible to undertake the pilot without the initial purchase of MyCMIS.
2. Should the pilot be successful then MyCMIS should be purchased and rolled out to all Members and Officers who indicate that they wish to move to paperless working. These Members and Officers should no longer be provided with paper Committee reports.
3. A mechanism whereby Members can purchase a suitable device via payments from their allowance should be explored if Members indicate that they wish to have their own tablet. Consideration needs to be given to how this is rolled out to Officers.
4. That regardless of the move to paperless Committees, consideration should be given to the amount of minute books produced by the Authority. The Task Group recommends that a small number be made available in each group office and not routinely produced for all Members of the Council.