



Report to:

Northwards Housing Board
15th January 2008

Item No:

5a

Title:	IT Provision for Area Panels		
Date:	10 th December 2007		
Author:	Steve Wood	Tel No:	0161 227 3018
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Confidential:	No		
For: (Please tick action required)	NOTING	DISCUSSION	APPROVAL ✓
PURPOSE OF REPORT			
<p>To present to Board the outcomes of discussions with Area Panels about the provision of IT following discussion at the Board on 13th November and subsequent consultation.</p> <p>The attached report is a copy of the paper sent to Area Panels asking them for comments.</p>			
RECOMMENDATION			
<p>The Board are asked to approve the decision of Resource & Audit Sub-Committee that the provision of IT equipment for Area Panel Members should not be included in Budgets for future years.</p>			
IMPLICATIONS			
Equality & Diversity:	None directly		
Financial:	The costs of this IT provision are not currently covered by the budget		
Staffing:	None directly		
Decency Target:	None directly		
Governance:	Communication is a key issue for working with Area Panels		
Risk Assessment:	Not assessed as a primary risk		


Equality & Diversity Implications (Please tick where relevant):

BME	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Parents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Violence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcohol / Drug Mis-use	<input type="checkbox"/>

Consultation/Consideration:

	Yes, No or N/A:	Name:	Date:
Sub-Committee:	Yes	Resource & Audit Sub-Committee	27 th November 2007
Area Panels:	Yes	All Area Panels	November meetings
Task Groups	N/A		
Ward Councillors:	N/A		

1. At the November Area Panel meetings, following discussions in previous months, the attached report was considered.
2. A clear consensus was arrived at by each Area Panel that the provision of IT equipment for all Area Panel Members was not a priority.
3. Some associated issues were raised in relation to Tenant and Resident Groups and these will be followed up. The Board should note that Northwards continues to provide IT equipment to Tenant and Resident Groups and is reviewing where this is up to at the present time.
4. Resource & Audit Sub-Committee, having received the reports from the Area Panels, have concluded that there is no priority to the provision of IT equipment for Area Panel Members and therefore that this matter should not be included in Budgets for future years.
5. **The Board are asked to approve this decision by Resource & Audit Sub-Committee.**

		Report to: Area Panels November 2007		Item No: Board Appendix 5a	
Title:		IT Provision for Area Panel Members			
Date:		9 th November 2007			
Author:		Mike Stevens/Diane Roberts		Tel No: 0161 227 3016	
E mail:		m.stevens@northwardshousing.co.uk			
Confidential:		No			
For: (Please tick action required)		NOTING	DISCUSSION √		APPROVAL
PURPOSE OF REPORT					
To inform panel members of officers' findings in relation to the provision of IT for panel members; and invite panel members to comment on those findings.					
RECOMMENDATION					
Panel members are invited to comment on the findings. Panel members' comments will be reported back to the Board Resource and Audit Sub Committee.					
IMPLICATIONS					
Equality & Diversity:		None directly			
Financial:		These costs have not been budgeted for and funding would have to be identified			
Staffing:		Any additional staffing costs have not been budgeted for and funding would have to be identified			
Decency Target:		None directly			
Governance:		The report considers if governance could be improved by providing IT to area panel members			
Risk Assessment:		Not assessed as a primary risk			

Equality & Diversity Implications (Please tick where relevant):

BME	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender	<input type="checkbox"/>	Single Parents	<input type="checkbox"/>
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	Domestic Violence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcohol / Drug Mis-users	<input type="checkbox"/>

Consultation/Consideration:

	Yes, No or N/A:	Name:	Date:
Sub-Committee:	Yes	Resource and Audit	24 th July 2007
Area Panel:	Yes	All	September 2007
Task Groups:	No		
Ward Councillors:	N/A		

- 1 This report informs panel members of officers' findings in relation to the provision of IT for panel members; and invites panel members to comment on those findings.
- 2 The Resident Involvement Officers have carried out an audit of panel members' access to IT:
 - 21 have a PC and internet access at home - either their own or provided by Northwards (in connection with tenant and resident group activity) or the Council (in the case of Councillors).
 - 3 have access by virtue of their involvement in a tenant and resident group, but not in their own home
 - 9 have no access (other than the access available to all Manchester residents at local libraries)
- 3 The cost of providing IT (ie a new PC and b/w laser printer) works out as £700 set up cost per panel member plus £510pa running costs (this includes hardware maintenance and software support but does not include Northwards IT staff time - see paragraph 6 below - or printer consumables such as toner and paper). This works out as a total set up cost of £18100 and annual cost of £13300 to supply all panel members (excluding councillors who already have PCs and web access provided by MCC).
- 4 These costs have not been budgeted for and funding would have to be identified.
- 5 As PCs have an anticipated lifespan of 5 years the set up cost would be required again around 2012.
- 6 The cost of support from Northwards IT staff is not included in the above figures. This could not be resourced from within the existing staffing establishment which is fully committed and likely to remain so; and would require additional staffing resources to be purchased. If all panel members (excluding Councillors) were to require support this would necessitate an additional member of staff in the ICT Team.
- 7 Officers have reviewed the running of the panels and considered whether it might be improved by providing IT facilities to all panel members. They have concluded that it would not: the current arrangements work well, and it is not

thought that there would be any significant advantage in terms of the running of the panels in providing panel members with IT facilities at home (assuming they would want it). It is likely that the existing paper systems would need to remain in place; and there would therefore be no efficiencies to be gained by providing panel members with home IT access. Experience elsewhere suggests that where there has been a move from a paper-based to an electronic system, this has not been successful and a paper-based system has had to be reintroduced.

- 8 With all this in mind officers have concluded that it would not currently be justified to provide panel members (other than the Chairs) with IT.
- 9 Panel members are invited to comment on the findings. Panel members' comments will be reported back to the Board Resource and Audit Sub Committee.