

IT equipment support for Saltash Town Council members

This report outlines the options available to STC to support council members with accessing information and emails. The purpose is to see if there is anything that can be done to ensure members have the appropriate level of access to information needed to enable them to carry out their roles as Town Councillors.

At all times we should be aware that members will have different preferred access methods, from mobile phone, tablet or computer, and beyond that members may have different accessibility requirements that must be taken into account. It is unlikely that there is any 'one size fits all' solution.

This report does not discuss budgets, but please assume that option 1 is the most expensive, with option 3 do nothing, obviously the least.

1. Buy equipment for all members.

The council could buy equipment for all members, this could be a tablet or computer. The council could choose a specific type of equipment, or could allow members to choose what best works for them.

With such a small number of members, it is unlikely that there would be any significant savings in bulk buying 16 identical pieces of equipment and would almost certainly result in members not getting the equipment that is most appropriate to them.

Councillors could be offered a number of options or asked to specify equipment up to a certain value, and then the town council could purchase it on their behalf.

The equipment would at all times remain the property of the town council and would be retrieved should the member cease to be a town councillor.

2. Allow an enhanced allowance to cover IT equipment

Such a scheme would allow members to ask for an optional additional payment, that would allow them to purchase the appropriate IT equipment for them to carry out their role.

The choice would be entirely up to the member, and they could choose to supplement the budget if they wanted to.

A slight alternative could be to increase the normal councillor's allowance, but in either instance the allowance is optional, and we might expect some members not to take up the offer.

3. Do nothing option

The council could of course choose to do nothing to support members and assume that all members already have the appropriate IT equipment for them to carry out their roles.

Councillor Richard Bickford
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