Meeting of:	**Democratic Services Committee**
Date of Meeting:	**Monday, 12 July 2021**
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	All Scrutiny Committees
Report Title:	ICT Update for Members
Purpose of Report:	To inform Members of any new developments or issues within the ICT service and how they relate to the services provided to them
Report Owner:	Rob Thomas, Managing Director
Responsible Officer:	Head of Digital and Innovation
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	None
Policy Framework:	The terms of reference of the Committee include responsibility for overseeing The Council's approach to Member Development, including Member ICT.

Executive Summary:
- This report provides a general update in relation to ICT provision to Members, and the key programmes being undertaken by the service.

Recommendation

1. That Members note the contents of this report.

Reason for Recommendation

1. To ensure Members are made aware of any developments to ICT Services across the wider Council

1. Background

1.1 The Committee's terms of reference include responsibility for overseeing the Council's approach to Member Development. As part of its role, the Committee has agreed that a Members' ICT update be a standing item on the agenda for each meeting.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1 The rollout of Microsoft Office 365 has now been completed, and has transformed the way the organisation has been able to communicate, especially in the last 12 months where Members and Officers have almost exclusively been based at home.

2.2 This suite of tools has also enabled colleagues to collaborate in ways they've not been able to previously, both internally and also with external partners and organisations, using collaboration software such as Microsoft Teams.

2.3 The Council is also benefitting from several other tools such as Bookings and Forms, both of which have been used extensively in managing the response to COVID-19.

2.4 Work has also continued in upgrading key elements of the Council's technical infrastructure, to improve performance and user experience. These upgrades include a new Microsoft Exchange system for email, and networking optimisations for split tunnelling and traffic management.

2.5 Infrastructure upgrades have also been extended to all school sites across the Vale, as part of the Welsh Government funded Hwb Programme. Over the last 12 months, 52 schools have been cut over to a completely new computer network infrastructure, many of which required to be completely re-cabled. Thousands of end-user devices have also been procured, built, and delivered to schools, staff and pupils.

2.6 Over the past few months, a technical proof of concept has been completed in relation to enabling a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) option for non-council owned mobile devices to access the Microsoft 365 suite of products and services. This will provide an additional facet of flexibility for staff and Members should they wish to use their personal devices in a professional capacity.

2.7 While the infrastructure and services to enable BYOD will be supported by corporate ICT services, end-user personal devices will not. Corporately-owned devices will continue to be maintained centrally, and use of the BYOD service is entirely voluntary.

2.8 A new BYOD and security policy has been created and is being finalised via the Council's Information Governance Board, paving the way for a formal BYOD pilot to test use cases across directorates. Following this, the option will be made available to all staff and Members in the coming months.

2.9 Work is in the final stages to enable live streaming of remote Council meetings, including Cabinet from May. Recordings of meetings will continue, and these will be uploaded to YouTube as they are currently.

2.10 Work is also underway to facilitate the live streaming and recording of hybrid Council meetings, where attendees can either take part in the meetings remotely as they are now, or in person in the Council Chamber, as Covid-19 rules are relaxed further.

2.11 Additional resources have been brought in to cope with the extra demand across the ICT the service, including the new Kickstarter initiative. As part of this scheme, the service has employed a number of new colleagues between the ages of 18 and 24, to assist in areas that have experienced greatest demand over the last 12 months.

2.12 The ICT Service Desk logged 38,766 tickets in 2020/21 and resolved 35,874 within agreed SLA timescales (92.54%).

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

3.1 This will allow the Council to communicate and collaborate efficiently into the future and facilitate transparency for the democratic process.

3.2 This will prevent the likelihood of a cyber-attack(s) and safeguard the council's data and computer infrastructure.

3.3 To help integrate processes, both internally and externally with partners and other organisations.

3.4 This will allow internal departments and external partners and organisations to collaborate efficiently and securely into the future.

3.5 To ensure that all stakeholders, internally and externally will be remain involved and able to deliver their outcomes and goals.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

4.1 There are no such implications that arise as a result of this report

Employment

4.2 There are no such implications that arise as a result of this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

4.3   The Council will need to enter into a contract for the supply of Microsoft licences under the terms and conditions of a Crown Commercial Services Framework Agreement with the winning supplier.

5. Background Papers

None.