

**IT INFRASTRUCTURE FOR DUNOON MEETINGS**

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**1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of the report is to update Members in relation to the provision of IT infrastructure to support meetings of the Area Committee and business day. Provision has already been made at a number of meeting locations across Argyll and Bute but difficulties have been encountered in progressing with provision at Castle House, Dunoon due to particular IT challenges within the building.

Members are asked to note the up to date information provided by IT in regards making suitable, effective and reliable infrastructure provision for internet access at either Castle House or the school hostel and identify a preferred way forward.

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**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members note the current position in regards provision of IT infrastructure at Area Committee meetings in Dunoon and identify a preferred way forward.

**3.0 DETAIL**

- 3.1 Customer and Support Services have been delivering a programme of provision of IT infrastructure at Area Committee meeting locations, primarily to provide Lync conferencing facilities into meetings, thereby reducing the amount of travel undertaken by officers attending meetings, and to widen opportunity for remote participants to be involved in discussions with elected Members. In addition to the roll out programme which IT are undertaking, there have been requests from elected Members for wifi provision to be available at all meeting locations.

- 3.2 In Bute and Cowal this technology has been provided within Eaglesham House, and it has similarly been provided at locations in other parts of Argyll and Bute.

- 3.3 Members have had a number of discussions about the best way to progress provision of this infrastructure in Dunoon, recognising that the current meeting place, Castle House, has particular IT challenges which require to be overcome. One option explored by Members was the possibility of holding meetings in the school hostel in Hunter Street, and the May business meeting took place there on a trial basis. The overall facility at the hostel was good and generally well received, however the speed of connection to IT systems at the location was poor, and Members were not able to access the corporate network.

- 3.4 During recent discussions suggestion was made of linking into the Broadband provision currently available within the Castle House Museum, and advice on this possibility has been sought from IT. They have advised that such an arrangement would mean that Lync could only be accessed via a Virtual Private Network, which would make it very difficult for IT to provide adequate support to conferences/Lync calls, and the quality would be very patchy and likely to be of an unacceptable standard to Members.

Given the advice provided in respect of this suggestion IT were

3.5 invited to provide updated advice on the best way forward for this matter, and have once again confirmed that the best option is to install SuperFast Broadband (once it is fully available in Dunoon). Costs are difficult to confirm, but are estimated at £634 for one off costs (subject to technical survey of buildings), and somewhere in the region of £700 per year recurring costs for line rental and unlimited business Broadband provision. Clearly, if this was the agreed option such provision could be made either at Castle House or at the school hostel, dependant on which meeting facility Members feel is preferable.

3.6 There is a limited budget held by Customer and Support Services to cover the capital costs of provision of infrastructure, and it is likely therefore that the Service Department will require to fund a portion of capital costs associated with this. Ongoing revenue costs associated with the new technology will require to be met by the Service Department, ie will have to be covered within the Elected Members agreed budget.

3.7 BT have for some time been predicting that SuperFast Broadband will be available imminently, and provision has been made available in parts of Dunoon over recent weeks. Given the community wide expectation of the new technology it can be anticipated that there may be significant demand for its use/provision, and therefore there may be a delay in all service requests being progressed. This could lead to a delay in the actual provision being made at either Castle House or the hostel, were Members minded to agree that this is the best option.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

4.1 Members are asked to note that the option of linking into another user's IT facility within Castle House is not recommended by the IT service, and that their advice on best options is to install SuperFast Broadband once it is fully available in Dunoon. Members are further asked to note that provision of this technology is expected to be completed across Dunoon very soon, but that there is a potential for delay in individual installation if the level of demand by the community is high.

#### **5.0 IMPLICATIONS**

Policy:	In keeping with the Council's commitment to improve communication and reduce costs associated with attendance at meetings.
Financial:	Capital costs will be covered within agreed IT capital budget, ongoing revenue costs will be included within the agreed Members budget
Legal:	None
HR:	None

Equalities: None  
Risk: None  
Customer Service: Improved access to meetings will enhance the service provided to customers.

**Executive Director of Customer Services**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015**

For further information contact: Shirley MacLeod, Area Governance Manager, 22 Hill Street, Dunoon - Tel 01369 707134