Argyll and Bute Community Planning Partnership

MAKI Area Community Planning Group

11 November 2015

Agenda Item

VC/LYNC FACILITIES IN THE COUNCL CHAMBERS UPDATE

1. Purpose

1.1 This paper provides an update on the on-going monitoring of the Video Conference and Lync facilities in the Council Chambers and across the Council's Wide Area Network (WAN). The paper provides a summary of the conferences across the WAN, with work by the IT Service providing a focus on managing the performance of the equipment in the Council Chambers.

1.2 The IT Service have been supporting and monitoring, and will continue to do so, the VC facilities on behalf of the Council which has led to a more robust and reliable set of VC resources being available for use by the Council, Elected Members and Partner organisations.

2. Recommendation

2.1 MAKI CPG is asked to note the detail provided and the on-going improvement in the management of the performance of VC calls.

3. Background

3.1 The IT Service is constantly monitoring the performance of the VC/Lync facilities in the Council Chambers and, along with Members Services, work to ensure that the VC facilities are configured and supported to ensure maximum utilisation of these resources and improve the experience of staff, Elected Members and Partner organisations when using the equipment.

3.2 Changes have been made to the way in which bookings are made and supported by IT staff, with a regular testing regime having been established, as well as changes having been made to the configuration of the VC equipment, to ensure better overall performance.

4. Detail

4.1 Analysis of calls made between 1st June and 27th August 2015 show that of the 62 calls over that period, four calls experienced difficulties: one session was disrupted due to far-end broadband circuit problems outwith the Council's network, and one was disrupted due to updates having been applied by Nuway on the VC equipment as part of regular management duties. One further call was disrupted due to equipment failure at the Chambers and one due to

changes made by the 3rd party VC Bridge supplier Videonations changing their configuration without having informed us.

4.2 Analysis of the calls made between 27th August and 22nd October show that of the 37 calls placed over that period, one session was disrupted due to an issue with audio performance in the Council Chambers: it transpired that audio settings on the equipment in the Chambers had been changed by an attendee at a previous session and these settings had not been re-set prior to the meeting on 24th September.

4.3 Several changes have been made to the booking and support arrangements for VC conferences. The IT Service Desk now takes responsibility for all VC and Lync bookings across all Council sites. Members Services continue to support the administration and management of calls involving Elected Members.

4.4 Nuway, the 3rd party supplier of the equipment, modified the configuration of the equipment in the Chambers to allow for a nightly reboot of the system and ensure we have a "known good configuration" on a daily basis. This has helped to reduce on-going issues and has seen service standards stabilise.

4.5 The IT Communications Team have a scheduled test slot for the VC Facilities in the Chambers on a weekly basis, with a detailed log being completed to cover the Chambers and all connecting VC sites across the Council's network.

4.6 A call from Islay to the Chambers on 17th August was reported as experiencing difficulties that pointed to local broadband circuit issues at the remote end. This emphasises previous riders around the performance of VC services from outwith the Council's network. Conversely, IT staff have participated in VC calls using recently deployed Superfast Broadband circuits and the quality of the connection during the test calls was regarded as excellent, which may indicate that better levels of service can be provided in future from outwith the Council's WAN.

5. Conclusions

5.1 The overall improvement in performance of the VC/Lync equipment in the Chambers and at other sites suggests that, for the most part, the equipment works well and offers the type of time and cost-reducing service that it was designed to deliver. The changes that have been made at both a management, procedural and technical level indicate that the VC resources available to staff, elected members and partner organisations are a more reliable resource and will continue to develop as a strategic business tool over the years across the Authority.

6. SOA Outcomes

N/a

Name of Lead Officer:- Paul Cairns, IT Production Manager

For further information please contact:- Paul Cairns, IT Production Manager – 01546 604053