



POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 13 JUNE 2013

TRANSFER OF FUNDS FROM RESERVES FOR SCHOOLS EQUIPMENT

1. Recommendations

1.1. The Committee is recommended to:

- 1. Approve the investment in modern technologies that support learning and teaching in schools.**
- 2. Approve the transfer of £700,000 from reserves into the ICT budget to undertake a hardware improvement programme in schools during 2013/14.**

2. Background / Discussion

- 2.1. ICT plays an important part in the delivery and administration of the curriculum in schools, consequently the provision of ICT resources is vital. The EL&L and ICT Services have worked closely over the last 2 years to improve the use and quality of technology in classrooms to support learning and teaching across Aberdeenshire. There is now an increasing demand for additional and improved ICT resources in schools which is integral to delivering Curriculum for Excellence.
- 2.2. There is no overall Council wide PC refresh programme across schools. As a result of this there are issues with the quality and standards of desktop equipment in use. Work now needs to be undertaken to improve the age profile of equipment across schools.
- 2.3. Changes in learning and teaching also mean that PC's may not always be the preferred option for delivery of learning. There is an increased demand and need for laptops, netbooks and tablet devices. Pilots for tablets are on-going, as is work to introduce new ways of learning.
- 2.4. Constructive discussions have taken place between the Heads of Service in EL&L, ICT and Finance regarding pulling together budgets and putting in place a replacement programme for equipment.
- 2.5. This work identified a budget of £700,000 that was placed into reserve funds in order to take this work forward in 2013/14. This fund will allow around 2000 devices to be replaced across schools during the current financial year.

- 2.6. This replacement programme will include working with each school to identify which equipment is most appropriate for that individual school.
- 2.7. Committee is therefore asked to approve the transfer of £700,000 from reserves into the central ICT budget in order to allow this programme of work to begin and be completed in 2013/14. Further work is underway to investigate how on-going funding can be achieved from 2014 onwards.

3. Staffing, Financial and Equalities Implications

- 3.1 Funding of £700,000 has been identified and placed into reserves as agreed at the April meeting of this Committee. Any additional funding requirements for future years will be presented to Policy and Resources Committee.
- 3.2 **An equality impact assessment is not necessary for the purpose of this report as the recommended actions do not have a differential impact on people with protected characteristics.**
- 3.3 The staffing implications arising from this initiative will be met from existing resources.
- 3.3 The Head of Finance and the Monitoring Officer within Corporate Services have been consulted and their comments incorporated in the report.

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