# IT Provision Survey – Service Managers

A survey designed by the Value for Money Council Scrutiny Committee subgroup was circulated to service managers during October to gather the views of ESBC managers in relation to the current ESBC IT provision.

9 (of 13 service managers) completed the questionnaire.

The names of services, sites and service-specific software have been removed to preserve anonymity.

## Question 1: How long have you been in your current position with ESBC for?

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2015 | 3 October 2022 | 11 years |
| 18 Years | Approximately 3 years | 12 years |
| 8 Years | 10 years | 7 years |

## Question 2: The pandemic has had a considerable impact on the working environment. In your managerial role what impact do you perceive the current IT hardware & software provision has had on your team's ability to complete work tasks during Covid? Note, these could be both positive and negative.

| |
|---|
| Difficult to get equipment for officers to work from home when testing positive for Covid. exceptional support from the team with ICT queries |
| No issues encountered, all services have continued without interuption |
| The agile ICT facilities already in place at the Council allowed for a relatively seamless transition to full time working from home during the Covid Pandemic. From my knowledge of many other similar sized authorities this is a stark contrast, as many authorities have significant difficulties with service delivery for my particular area. |
| I understand that ESBC has a limited number of corporate Zoom accounts and so I have had to set up a personal zoom account, as a consequence, meetings are limited to 40 minutes. I have previously used MS Teams which is much easier to navigate as it appears in the email header (menu bar) and is linked to your Microsoft calendar. |
| All officers in the team were well adapted to working from home prior to the pandemic and were already working on a hybrid approach utilising a mixture of in the office and at home working. The shift to full homeworking was therefore fairly minimal, and the hardware and software continued to work positively with no significant issues being highlighted. |
| Ability to work remotely from home |
| IT delivered a seamless transition from office-based working to home working. The fact that the change barely registered was testament to the planning IT employed pre-pandemic. |
| Generally, there has been minimal disruption to service delivery with all staff able to work adequately from home or in the office. The IT systems have demonstrated that homeworking can work for the Authority. Significant problems have been experienced with the use of MS Teams in the office environment. The signal continually breaks. All the other Staffordshire Authorities use Teams so its use cannot be avoided. By contrast Zoom is stable, but the other LAs will not use this platform. |
| Crucial positive impact, offering flexibility and connectivity as needed. |

**Question 3: Do you have ideas for future innovation in IT provision within ESBC?** These could for example come from your experiences working for other organisations.

NA

Not at this time, the current ICT provision is fantastic and the team do an excellent job, a real credit to the council

There is always room for improvement, however any investment needs to be able to demonstrate a business case for change and the examples we have explored to date have not been able to do this.

Please see above - use of MS Teams

It could be beneficial to investigate any products that further improve virtual / hybrid working now that this is more prevalent

Improved use of Dynamics with seamless integration with other microsoft products such as outlook

Personally, all I need is more storage space. My current limit is circa 500mb. One recent period of leave saw me receive 250mb of emails over a two-week period. Consequently, time is lost as these e-mails need deleting or moving so that important ones can be answered. Not being able to send an e-mail causes stress and creates work inefficiencies. I have asked for an increase but this has not been forthcoming.  Mobile working, the ability for officers to report in real time any issues that they observe. Band-width has often been cited as the main barrier to this being possible. It appears that in some cases officers have to return to the office to dock or download devices.   Working from Council buildings other than the Town hall can be problematic. For example, I have had to abandon a number of Zoom and Teams calls as the internet connection is so slow. This can also hamper ███████ operations when trying to use the ██████ database.

███████ Provision - wifi should be reintroduced at the ██████ The current set-up requires users to continually plug their laptops into hard connections during meetings. This is particularly frustrating when multiple people wish to connect at the same time.  More agile working in terms of being able to connect to the network whilst away from the office (e.g., in other non-council buildings).  Deployment of a large screen for ██████████ connected to ██████, so it may be viewed simultaneously by all office staff.

Those colleagues on desktops should be upgraded to laptops where they are regularly home working.

**Question 4: Do you believe there is any software that ESBC does not currently use that should be investigated relating to the work either you, your department or ESBC undertake?** Please give an indication of how ESBC would benefit from such software, for example would it save time, reduce errors, improve resilience etc.

NA

Nothing immediately obvious

Not at the current time - see answer to question 3

As above

As above

Dynamics 365 which would give integration with emails, calendar etc which would massively reduce officer time and increase resilience for the ██ service, especially in relation to ████.

This is a question of resource, neither the individual teams nor IT have people available to research best practice. Adopting any software is likely to be through a third-party recommendation- such as a neighbouring authority- or the result of a procurement exercise. The recent transition from Safety Media to Xcenta is a case in point.

None currently

None.