

Southend-on-Sea City Council

**Agenda
Item No.**

Report of Executive Director (Growth and Housing)

To

Cabinet

On

21st February 2022

Report prepared by: David Webb
Team Leader – Facilities Management

Notice of Motion - Webcasting

Relevant Scrutiny Committee: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee
Cabinet Member: Councillor Collins
Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report is in response to the reference back at Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd February 2022 concerning the Notice of Motion - Webcasting.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **Officers to continue to engage with the third-party provider Public-I to ensure that the viewers experience is acceptable.**
- 2.2 **Investigate feedback that remote viewers are unable to control the volume output on their device to a desired volume level.**
- 2.3 **On completion of the review of using the Jubilee room for webcast meetings, the results are presented to the Corporate Matters and Performance Delivery Party.**

3. Background

- 3.1 At a meeting of Full Council held on 20th October 2022 a Notice of Motion concerning the webcasting of meetings was referred to the Corporate Matters and Performance Delivery Working Party held on 7th December 2022 for consideration.
- 3.2 The recommendations of the Working Party were approved by Cabinet held on 12th January 2023. The matter was then called-in to Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd February 2022 and the matter was referred back to Cabinet for reconsideration.
- 3.3 The project to install the infrastructure in the Jubilee room which gives the ability to host webcast meetings has not been fully signed off with the supplier as there

are some intermittent connectivity issues in relation to sharing presentations and other content to remote viewers.

- 3.4 Officers from Property & Estate Management and ICT are also continuing to monitor meetings in addition to feedback following member engagement. To date, there have been a number of subtle system changes and physical additions to enhance both the experience of those in the room and those viewing remotely.
- 3.5 Officers are in regular communication with the council's third party provider and a site visit is scheduled to investigate the audio and visual issues we have experienced. This includes questioning if there is a reason for the slight delay in the camera picking up the following speaker other than the fact the microphones are wireless compared to hard wired microphones in the council chamber.
- 3.6 When the current connectivity issues have been overcome, training is being organised for officers so they have the ability to use the software available for managing hybrid meetings. This will allow officers and guest speakers to seamlessly join meetings in one software solution and remove the reliance on using the MS Teams trolleys to attend remotely.

4. Other Options

None

5. Reasons for Recommendations

To respond to the reference back from Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee held 2nd February 2022 and continue to refine the webcasting and audio system in the Jubilee Room.

6. Corporate Implications

6.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

Not applicable

6.2 Financial Implications

The financial position will be fully understood as the work progresses and officers will appreciate to what extent existing issues and preferences can be met as part of the existing support agreement in place or if further investment would be necessary.

6.3 Legal Implications

None

6.4 People Implications

None

6.5 Property Implications

None

6.6 Consultation

None

6.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

There is an induction loop available in both the Jubilee room and the Council Chamber to amplify audio that is heard from the speakers in the room to anyone wearing a hearing aid. Any meeting attendees who have expressed that they are hard of hearing yet do not currently use a hearing device are provided with their own microphone at meetings. This gives the ability to plug in headphones if desired.

Power sockets have been added to each table for attendees to charge their device to avoid needing to be able to reach to floor level or leave wires trailing to the wall sockets.

Modesty screens are to be purchased and are to be added around the internal edge of the tables in the Jubilee Room during public meetings.

A revised guide on how to use the microphones is now provided with each microphone in the Jubilee room.

An additional monitor screen is part of the standard room preparation. This is positioned in front of the seating positions where attendees have their backs to the projector screen.

6.8 Risk Assessment

None

6.9 Value for Money

None

6.10 Community Safety Implications

None

6.11 Environmental Impact

None

7. Background Papers

None

8. Appendices

None