

Health & Care Professions Council – 18 October 2012

Laptop Allowance for Council and Committee members

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

1. In October 2009, with the view to reducing costs and to support sustainability, Council approval was given to a laptop allowance for members of Council and Committee. On receipt of a signed “contract”, members were given an allowance of £1,500 for the cost of purchasing a laptop (hardware, software, warranty, etc.) for the purpose of reading electronic Council and Committee papers. The contract, which is appended to this paper, sets out the responsibilities of the member in terms of ensuring the maintenance and security of the laptop for a three year period.
2. In December 2011, the Department of Health (DH) announced plans to restructure the Councils of the GMC, GDC and HCPC with a proposed composition of between 8 and 12 members. The DH did not believe that it was the right time for legislative reform to reduce the size of the HCPC’s council in 2012 as we were occupied in terms of taking on responsibility for the regulation of social workers in England. However, they stated that they expected to introduce legislation to do so by Summer 2013.
3. On the basis that HCPC will be reduced in size by at least 40% and given that we are anticipating some turnover in terms of composition of Council, the Executive do not consider it prudent to continue with the laptop allowance scheme for the time being. However, mindful that we are approaching the end of the three year allowance period for some members and that it is likely that any warranty will only be in place until the end of that period, the Executive are recommending the following:-
 - (i) That the laptop allowance scheme be temporarily discontinued until such time as the Council is restructured;
 - (ii) That approval be given to, where possible, Council members extending the warranty and anti-virus software on their laptop for a further year, the cost being covered by HCPC (up to a maximum amount of £200);

- (ii) Where laptops bought under the laptop allowance are not functioning correctly and no warranty is in place, members receive hard copies of Council and Committee papers with effect from the three year “anniversary” of receiving their allowance.

Decision

The Council is invited to discuss and agree the recommendations set out in paragraph 3.

Background information

None.

Resource implications

None.

Financial implications

Included within the 2012-13 budget.

Appendices

Council and Committee laptop allowance contract.

Date of paper

24 September 2012