

Decision maker: Resources Portfolio

Subject: Replacement of Civic Office Telephone Exchange(s)

Report by: Mel Burns, Head of Information Service

Wards affected: None

Key decision (over £250k):

1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval from the Portfolio Holder for Resources to award a contract to the preferred supplier and proceed with the implementation of the capital scheme for a replacement telephony system serving the Civic Offices and adjoining City Council properties.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended:

- 2.1 That approval be given to the implementation of a replacement telephone exchange serving the Civic Offices and adjoining Council property at an estimated cost of £960,000 funded from the capital estimate provision for this scheme contained within the approved capital programme.
- 2.2 That approval be given for the Head of the Information Service to enter into a contract for the provision of a replacement telephone exchange system, as described in this report, subject to the terms and conditions of contract being in a form agreed by the Head of Legal, Licensing and Registrar's.

3. Background

The Civic Offices is served by two connected telephone exchanges: -

- 1. The BTEX exchange, installed in 1989. This originally served less than 800 extensions and now has in excess of 2,800 extensions. The exchange caters for the needs of the Civic Offices (including passing calls to the City Help Desk) plus the Central Library, Chaucer House, the Guildhall and the main Car Parking office located in the Isambard Brunel Multi-Story Car Park. The BTEX exchange is now effectively obsolete, whilst the maintenance supplier is able to obtain spare parts to repair the system, they are no longer able to offer a fixed schedule of repair costs.

2. The AVAYA exchange was installed in 2002. This is connected to the BTEX and was primarily installed to meet the City Help Desk customer service requirements. This system is no longer able to provide the level of reporting information required by the City Help Desk. Repair and maintenance costs are rising due to the age of the system and associated reliability issues. This is undermining the effectiveness of the service.

A capital estimate provision of £960,000 was approved by City Council in February 2009 to replace these telephone exchanges as they no longer meet our business telephony requirements.

4. Reasons for recommendations

The Information Service has conducted a thorough evaluation of the two market-leading suppliers for IP Telephony (Avaya and Cisco) through a mini-tender competition on the Hampshire Public Services Network (HPSN2) framework.

Both companies were invited to submit proposals, based on the service requirements and specification defined by PCC. These proposals were reviewed in detail by the project team along with reference sites and visits to both companies to research the future roadmap for the technologies being proposed.

As a result of this evaluation work, the Information Service is now in a position to recommend a Cisco solution implemented by Virgin Media Business, to replace the existing telephony infrastructure which supports the Civic Offices, Chaucer House, Parking Office, Guildhall and Central Library.

- This solution represents best value for the council as the technologies are market-leading, in use in thousands of businesses and governments across the world.
- Cisco are a world market leader in network and data technology and PCC already has a well-established Cisco data network.
- Cisco have demonstrated a very strong future for the proposed products, the company is committed to developing its telephony platform with continued improvements and additions which will benefit customers and improve access to City Council services
- The solution will empower Council employees through flexible working, encouraging collaboration which is simply not possible with the current telephony infrastructure.
- By procuring this contract through the HPSN2 framework the City Council have been able to secure unprecedented competitive pricing, enabling the Council to choose products that were found to be significantly over-budget during the soft-market testing phase.

- As a result of this competitive pricing, the City Council are in a position to replace the existing telephone exchanges *and* implement IP telephony across the 'campus' (buildings mentioned above) within the approved budget.

5. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

This report has undergone an effective Equality Impact Assessment and it has been concluded that no groups would be disadvantaged by the new system but care should be taken when selecting handsets to ensure there are models available for staff with impaired vision.

6. Head of legal services' comments

The City Solicitor is satisfied that it is within the powers of the Resources Portfolio holder to approve the recommendations as set out above.

7. Head of finance's comments

The City Council approved a capital bid of £960,000 to fund this scheme at its budget meeting in February 2009. The scheme remains within the approved capital programme for Resources Portfolio in 2010/11. The proposed source of funding for this scheme is corporate capital receipts. In addition to the capital budget, there is an ongoing revenue budget of £160,000 contained within the approved cash limits for the Information Service to fund both the external and internal support costs.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/
rejected by on

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Signed by: