

NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Policy and Resources Cabinet Board

14th June 2017

Report of the Head of ICT and Corporate Procurement

Stephen John

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All

Replacement of the Council's Telephony System with a Unified Communications Solution

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek approval to grant delegated authority to the Head of ICT and Corporate Procurement to procure a replacement Telephony System and associated systems for the Council.

Executive Summary

2. The current telephony system is no longer supported by the providing supplier and there are significant additional services that are available in a modern telecommunications system.
3. The report seeks authorisation to grant delegated authority to the Head of ICT and Corporate Procurement to procure a modern Telephone and Communications System for the Council. The new facility to include mobile integration, video conferencing, remote access via "soft" phone clients,

auto attendant capability, social media integration and a new system to underpin the Contact Centre.

Background

4. The Council is currently operating its desktop telephony system via a Seimens HiPath 4000 System which delivers a voice service across the Council's data network.
5. This is the second system installed by the Council since its inception in April 1996 and was first installed in the Civic Centre at Neath during the Summer of 2006 but has since been re-located to The Quays.
6. This HiPath 4000 has now reached end of life and although it continues to operate across our main civic buildings the company has ceased support for our version of the system.
7. The HiPath also operates across a Microsoft Windows platform which itself has fallen out of support and for which Microsoft no longer issues security patches and this adds another level of risk to the service.
8. Technology moves apace and telephony is no exception. The system installed in 1996 facilitated wired desktop extensions with a limited facility set. Each main civic building retained its own PBX system and these were linked with specific, high capacity connections which allowed internal calls to be passed between staff. This was expensive in revenue terms.
9. Replacing that system with the HiPath increased the facilities available to staff and reduced costs. All buildings are facilitated by a single system backed up in resilience terms with a smaller platform based in Port Talbot Civic Centre. All calls within and between buildings are passed across the Council's data network thereby removing the need for specific connections. Staff are able to "bring" their number to any handset and this was a cornerstone of the Council's agile working strategy. The revenue cost was also reduced.
10. Replacing the HiPath 4000 provides the opportunity to procure a modern solution which builds on current capability but also allows for the introduction of collaborative facilities which will deliver true Unified Communications. These new facilities can be embraced by Directorates to

re-engineer their processes and delivery to improve services and reduce costs and to support this full training will be provided to all staff.

11. The ICT Division has also consulted with the two neighbouring Western Bay Councils and ABMU to ensure that any solution considered will be capable of supporting a wider collaboration.
12. It is expected that the new system will be procured during the Summer with the first of the phased implementations taking place this Autumn.

Financial Impact

13. Budgets to purchase the replacement system and associated technologies are already in place as part of the budget setting process.
14. The annual cost of the existing systems amount to £126k and it is envisaged that there will be a revenue saving delivered as part of this exercise which will be built into future budgets.

Equality Impact Assessment

15. There is no requirement under the Constitution for an Equality Impact Assessment on this item.

Workforce Impacts

16. Continuity of supply is critical to ensure efficient management for all Council service users.

Legal Impacts

17. The Head of ICT and Corporate Procurement will utilise compliant frameworks to procure the replacement system.

Risk Management

18. This Report seeks to minimise the risk to the Council by ensuring continuity of its Telephony Service and associated systems.

Consultation

19. There is no requirement under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

Recommendations

20. It is recommended that the Head of ICT and Corporate Procurement is granted delegated authority to procure a replacement telephony system for the Council.

Reasons for Proposed Decision

21. To ensure the Council continues to operate a fully functional unified communications system that meets the demands of the service users.

Implementation of Decision

22. It is proposed for the three day call in period to apply.

Appendices

N/A

Officer Contact

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