

Cabinet 24/8/17 - Comments from O&S Panels

Part I

Children's Services

School Catering – Request to go to Tender

None received

Corporate Services

Financial Update

None received

Telephony Options

Cllr C Rayner asked a number of questions and received the following responses from officers:

Question	Answer
This proposed telephone system - what other Councils are using the new proposed system?	Beckett would only know about other councils they directly support. The Siemens 4000 is used by many organisations of all sized over the globe.
What happens if it does not work?	<p>We have been using the Siemens product for over 12 years, it is a global system. The version of software the council has is seven major releases behind the current version available.</p> <p>The functionality has been described, and if it does not physically work as articulated once upgraded then engineers will roll the system back to what we have now until it can be established why it does not work.</p>
What are the hidden costs?	The costs for the upgrade, hardware, software, support, maintenance and training have been established and are within the Capital Bid.

	<p>The costs of the line rental and calls are from a different provider and have also been established and savings calculated on the volume of calls currently received and made.</p> <p>We are not aware of any other hidden costs and we have asked the supplier that direct question.</p>
What is the break clause in the contract?	The contract is for 3 years, and we review the licensing quantities annually in advance to reduce or increase as the size of the organization changes. The licenses are on a subscription service.
Who is doing the legal contract?	Shared Legal Services will draw up the relevant contracts with input from procurement and the business owners.
Is the telephone system compatible with the phone systems of out-sourced services?	Siemens is a global product and calls can be routed, with any outsourcing provider it will be ensured that any systems are compatible. In phase 2 we will be implementing SIP, so this will be able to connect into 3 rd party phone systems.
What happens if we out-source all the staff and are only left with Directors and we are left with a telephone system that is not fit for purpose?	<p>The licensing model is flexible and scalable so as the numbers using the system changes the costs will change accordingly.</p> <p>During previous procurement exercises when delivery differently was starting we would have entered into contracts for 5+1+1 with no ability to reduce the license numbers. By continuing to invest in the core platform (implemented in 2005) we have the ability to shrink the licenses within the system on an annual basis.</p>
In which Council building is the equipment going to be for this new telephone system?	The core telephony platform will be installed in the ICT data centres in Maidenhead Town Hall & Tinkers Lane.

	The handsets will be installed in RBWM outstations as currently configured- there is no change to the handsets apart from a firmware upgrade.
What are the training costs?	We have allowed 10 days so £10k to cover administration of the core platform, CSC agent and CSC team leader. There is some contingency within the training to cover any additional requirements post implementation.
What are the costs of getting out of the old telephone contract?	The existing maintenance contract is being co-terminated with the new contract, so there are no additional costs.

Councillor C Rayner subsequently made the following comments:

I am very concerned that no one in the Council has spoken to any of the customers of the telephone supplier to see if they are happy with the system and that it is Suitable for Council use.

My recommendations to Cabinet:

- 1) The telephone company must give a list of customers that use this new system
- 2) Council officers and lead members visit these customers to see the system working in a Council situation.
- 3) Check they are no county court judgments against the telephone company
- 4) Ask if any customers have terminated their contract after three years
- 5) What dates is the planned change over
- 6) The answers to my questions above will be sent to cabinet as well

The Executive Director provided the following response:

Points 1-4 would apply if the council was going to the market for a completely new provider and officers would do this work as part of the procurement process. However, the paper is proposing an upgrade to the existing Siemens telephony system (hardware and software) and not the procurement of a new one and therefore, I believe there is no requirement to gather this additional information as part of this process.

With regard to point 5 the plan is to upgrade the telephony system by 31 October 2017.