

CABINET

17 May 2012

PURCHASE OF IDOX SOFTWARE FOR PLANNING

REPORT OF HEAD OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY

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RECENT REFERENCES:

None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Under the Council Constitution, decisions made under Section A.2 of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers (use of Chief Executive's emergency delegated powers) should be reported to Cabinet or the appropriate Committee as soon as practicable after the decision was taken.

The Chief Executive was requested to use his delegated powers to approve the expeditious purchase of software and services from incumbent supplier IDOX at advantageous prices, for the enhancement of public-facing, and back-office, information processes.

Members are asked to note the Decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Decision made under Section A.2 of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers, as detailed in Appendix 1, be noted.

**OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:****1     SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLAN  
(RELEVANCE TO):**

1.1     n/a

**2     RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:**

2.1     The decision commits the Council to a one-off capital spend of £17,000 with the incumbent supplier, with an annual revenue impact of £3,000. The purchase has been made from the IM&T capital budget, with a request to be made for an equivalent increase to the IMT budget for 2012/13 when the outturn position is known for 2011/12.

2.2     The Prudential Indicators are as follows:

**Financial Appraisal**

	2012/13	2013/14	TOTAL + Ongoing
	£000	£000	£000
<b><u>Capital Expenditure Proposals:</u></b>			
Purchase of Enhancements to IDOX System	17		17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>17</b>
<b><u>Virement from Existing Capital Programme Budget:</u></b>			
ICT Equipment	(17)		(17)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>(17)</b>		<b>(17)</b>
<b><u>FUNDING</u></b>			
Revenue Contribution to Capital	17		17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>17</b>		<b>17</b>
<b><u>Revenue Implications:</u></b>			
<b><u>Growth:</u></b>			
Annual Maintenance charge	3	3	3
<b><u>Funding:</u></b>			
Existing IMT Software Maintenance budget	(3)	(3)	(3)
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(3)</b>
<b><u>PRUDENTIAL CODE</u></b>			
<b><u>Interest on Capital</u></b>	<b>0.50%</b>	<b>0.50%</b>	<b>0.50%</b>
<b>Full Yr Effect on Council Tax (Band D, £)</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>

### 3 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 3.1 The purchases covered by this decision are designed to mitigate the risks inherent in the current support model for the Council's property-based software application.

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

#### APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 - Decision under A.2 of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers

## **Decision under A.2 of the Scheme of Delegation to Officers**

**Date: 27<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

### **PURCHASE OF ENHANCEMENTS TO THE IDOX PROPERTY SYSTEM**

#### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 IDOX Uniform is the corporate land and property IT application. It provides back-office information services to around half of the Council's users, with feeds to the website allowing the public to view planning applications and local map-based services.
- 1.2 This third-party product is under continuous development and enhancement for both improved functionality and to implement statutory changes.
- 1.3 In-house developments
- 1.4 The general public can access the information held in the Uniform system through a computer interface developed by the IM&T Service. While successful, the solution is costly to support and maintain, and depends on local skills for its development. This skill-base is likely to be severely reduced in the near future.
- 1.5 The documents behind the workflow in Uniform are held in the 'Retriever' electronic document management system (EDMS). The link between the two systems has similarly been subject to bespoke development by the IM&T Service, and is subject to significant supportability problems.
- 1.6 Improving Consultation
- 1.7 With limited development resources, improvements in the public and stakeholder consultation process are unlikely to take place. This is especially significant given the potential for greater consultation with national bodies with interests in South Downs National Park.
- 1.8 IDOX's own product mix
- 1.9 Since the IM&T developments, the suppliers of IDOX Uniform have continuously developed the public and consultee access modules which allow consultation on-line. For consultation with national bodies they have also developed the "Consultee Cloud" which allows bodies such as the Environment Agency to comment on-line. It is likely that for such bodies this will be the preferred method for consultations.
- 1.10 IDOX also have an integrated document management system which creates a link between Uniform and supporting caseload. Maintenance of this integration is part of the standard support offering. The workflow is managed through a visual caseload management tool called Enterprise.

2 **REASONS FOR THE EXERCISE OF EMERGENCY POWERS**

- 2.1 The Planning Service has been evaluating these systems with the intention of creating a more sustainable applications workflow environment. An opportunity has arisen to acquire licences for all these products at a most advantageous price that is significantly discounted for a limited time, due to the timing of IDOX's financial half-year and the pressures of commercial targets needing to be achieved. The retail value of the purchase is £35,000 which was offered to the Council at £17,000 (saving of £18,000) subject to an order provided before the end of April 2012.
- 2.2 To take advantage of this the purchase has been made from the IM&T capital budget, with a request to be made for an equivalent increase to the IMT budget for 2012/13 when the outturn position is known for 2011/12.
- 2.3 The purchase has been made as an enhancement to the existing system and its implementation will be done in accordance with standard project management procedures.

3 **OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED.**

- 3.1 The Council is committed to the use of IDOX products for its property systems for the foreseeable future. However, the alternative, in-house development and support of "bolt-ons" to that system, has always been considered before external purchase. This situation is no longer sustainable if the service to the public and attainment of national targets is to be improved.

4 **MEMBERS CONSULTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

- 4.1 In view of the short time available, Councillor Godfrey as Portfolio Holder was consulted.

5 **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DECLARED BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED**

- 5.1 None

6 **TARGET DATE FOR REPORT TO CABINET/OTHER APPLICABLE COMMITTEE FOR INFORMATION:-**

(Signed) ..... Date.....

Chief Executive