

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD1167

Title: Supply, Implementation and Support of Remote Access System

Executive Summary:

The GLA uses an IT system for providing staff, Members, suppliers and partners remote access to the City Hall IT network, data, systems and applications. Owing to the age of the current system, advancement of technology in this area and a number of vendor software changes, a new and up to date system is required to be procured, implemented and supported.

Decision:

That the Director approves expenditure of up to £80,000 for the procurement of a new IT system for providing remote access to the City Hall IT network and software applications.

AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.
It has my approval.

Name: Martin Clarke

Position: Executive Director - Resources

Signature:

Date: 19 February 2014

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

The GLA has had a flexible working policy in operation for over 7 years. A key part of this policy is the ability for staff and Members to remotely access the City Hall IT network from multiple local, national and international locations and access their data stored on network drives and software applications such as Microsoft Office, Outlook and the Intranet.

The full remote access service at the GLA consists of two specific parts:

- A “gateway” system that allows PCs secure access to the City Hall network and keeps the user’s connection secure for the duration of access.
- A collection of servers (called Citrix servers) that provide users with a full desktop of PC applications very similar to their City Hall PCs. This collection of servers is accessed via the gateway device and provides the majority of IT services that users require when working remotely.

The current system has lasted well for a number of years but a re-procurement of a system has been deemed necessary for the following reasons:

- The advancement of technology in this marketplace
- The increase in the number of users of the system, not just from home but regularly from partner offices such as LFB’s offices in Union Street and TfL offices at Palestra.
- A radical change to a key item of software (called Java) that underpins the current remote access system and consequent difficulties caused to users.

Java is a key component that has to run both on the remote PC as well as on the collection of Citrix servers at City Hall. From around November 2013, the vendor of Java software (Oracle) has forced PCs to upgrade the Java version very much more frequently than was the case previously. This has been very disruptive not just to users but to the organisations such as TfL and the LFB who have had to continually upgrade their software with minimum testing (which risks breaching their security policies). As a further consequence, the vendor of Citrix servers has announced that it will stop supporting Java software in mid-March 2014. This means that Citrix servers could develop IT security vulnerabilities over time and further changes to Java may make the GLA’s Citrix servers inaccessible remotely.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

The objective is to procure a remote access gateway system that:

- Uses the newest developments in remote access technology
- Overcomes the issue of the change to the Java software and
- Fits with the technology software infrastructure that both home users and organisations support for the foreseeable future.

The anticipated outcomes from a successful procurement and implementation are:

- Continuity of user access to the GLA’s IT systems from remote locations
- The same if not better performance than is currently the case
- Ease with which users at partner organisations can continue to work and gain access to the City Hall IT network.

3. Other considerations

a. Key Risks and Issues

- The speed with which the GLA must act in the present circumstances risks that a system is procured that does not fully meet the objectives. This is being mitigated by prioritising this project and ensuring that a full complement of Project and Technical staff are assigned to this project to ensure its success.
- The migration of users from the existing gateway system to the new one risks confusion. In mitigation, clear documentation and communications will be issued to all staff and Members and additional support and information provided as required. The new system will also be tested using a subset of users, including those who regularly work from partner organisations.

b. Links to Strategies

- Flexible working is a key GLA policy and a robust and reliable remote access system is central to that policy.
- The support of flexible working at the GLA through the effective use of technology is also a key objective in the GLA IT Strategy

c. Impact Assessments and Consultations

There are no equalities or environmental impacts anticipated from this project.

This procurement has been discussed and approved by the Technology Group Management Team. The Executive Director of Resources has also been consulted and has approved this project.

d. Procurement

This procurement will be conducted in accordance with the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. TfL Procurement will carry out the competitive exercise using up to 5 companies with appropriate experience and expertise.

4. Financial comments

4.1 Approval is being sought for the Technology Group to carry out a competitive procurement for a new IT system to provide remote access to City Hall; network and software applications.

4.2 The total estimated cost of the procurement and implementation of the system is £80,000 which is made up of the following elements.

4.2.1 The total costs for technical support and maintenance is £5,000 per annum which will be funded from Technology Programme Delivery Revenue Budget for a period of 3 years.

4.2.2 The capital cost comprises of hardware and software for the remote access system of £40,000.

4.2.3 Implementation costs of £10,000 and

4.2.4 the cost of user and device licences of £15,000.

There is currently sufficient budget in the Technology Group capital programme budget to cover this expenditure

4.3 All appropriate budget adjustments will be made.

- 4.4** Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process.
- 4.5** Technology Group is reminded to ensure that all the proposed expenditure complies with the Authority's Financial Regulations and the Contracts & Funding Code. In addition officers are advised to liaise with the legal, procurement and finance teams as appropriate in relation to the procurement of goods and services for the above mentioned works.
- 4.6** Training costs have not been quantified in this paper but should costs be incurred, they will be revenue in nature.
- 4.7** Technology Group within the Resources Directorate will be responsible for managing the proposed contract.

5. Legal comments

5.1 Sections 1-4 of this report indicate that:

5.1.1 the decisions requested of the Director relate to expenditure for the commissioning of supplies and services which fall within the Authority's statutory powers to do things facilitative of and conducive to the discharge of its general functions; and

5.1.2 in formulating the proposals in respect of which a decision is sought officers have complied with the Authority's related statutory duties to:

(a) pay due regard to the principle that there should be equality of opportunity for all people;

(b) consider how the proposals will promote the improvement of health of persons, health inequalities between persons and to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development in the United Kingdom; and

(c) consult with appropriate bodies.

5.2 The services required must be procured by Transport for London Procurement who will determine the detail of the procurement strategy to be adopted in accordance with the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code. Officers must liaise with Transport for London Procurement in this regard. The contract terms should provide for service levels.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract [for externally delivered projects]	February 2014
Announcement [if applicable]	N/A
Delivery Start Date [for project proposals]	Feb 2014
Final evaluation start and finish (self/external) [delete as applicable]:	Early March 2014
Delivery End Date [for project proposals]	March 2014
Project Closure: [for project proposals]	End March 2014

Appendices and supporting papers: None

Public access to information

Information in this form (Part 1) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and will be made available on the GLA website within one working day of approval.

If immediate publication risks compromising the implementation of the decision (for example, to complete a procurement process), it can be deferred until a specific date. Deferral periods should be kept to the shortest length strictly necessary.

Note: This form (Part 1) will either be published within one working day after approval or on the defer date.

Part 1 Deferral:**Is the publication of Part 1 of this approval to be deferred? YES**

If YES, for what reason: The procurement will be subjected to a competitive exercise without indicating the GLA budget.

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring) 31 March 2014.

Part 2 Confidentiality: Only the facts or advice considered to be exempt from disclosure under the FOI Act should be in the separate Part 2 form, together with the legal rationale for non-publication.

Is there a part 2 form – NO

ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:

Drafting officer to confirm the following (✓)

Drafting officer:

Duminda Baddevithana has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

David Munn has reviewed the documentation and is satisfied for it to be referred to the Sponsoring Director for approval.

✓

Financial and Legal advice:

The Finance and Legal teams have commented on this proposal, and this decision reflects their comments.

✓

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, RESOURCES:

I confirm that financial and legal implications have been appropriately considered in the preparation of this report.

Signature

Date