

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD1229

Title: Upgrading the Webcasting service and replacing the City Hall TV service

Executive Summary:

To upgrade existing City Hall broadcast IT systems and integrate the systems and services for the provision of a replacement to the current City Hall TV system and upgrading the webcasting of Mayoral and Assembly meetings. This project will further allow GLA staff and broadcast contractor to upload, manage and present videos to internal and external audiences in a higher definition and more co-ordinated manner than is currently the case.

Decision:

That the Executive Director approves expenditure of up to:

1. £25,000 on video streaming, video management and load balancing software and hardware required for webcasting and replacement City Hall TV service that is used for viewing Mayoral and Assembly meetings; and
2. £120,200 for services to be commissioned by way of variation of the GLA's current contract (ref:80007) with its broadcast supplier, Bowtie TV as follows:
 - £77,000 for the analysis of requirements, installation and configuration of software and services to provide an integrated solution for webcasting, storing and managing video content via the GLA Intranet and www.london.gov.uk website.
 - £14,400 per annum for the duration of Contract 80007 (3 years – March 2017) for all support and maintenance of all hardware, software and technical services being implemented.

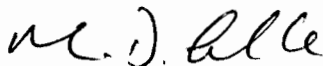
AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

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 of Resources

Signature:



Date:

17.6.14

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

The GLA broadcasting services provide three related services which have been developed over the last 11 years. These are:

- a. Distribution of webcasts (both live and archived) of Mayoral and Assembly meetings through www.london.gov.uk.
- b. Providing a service known as City Hall TV, which broadcasts key meetings at City Hall via the data network to PCs
- c. A growing requirement for video and media content produced by the GLA to be available to both internal and external customers, through the GLA Intranet and www.london.gov.uk respectively.

These three services have been developed largely independently of each other but there are many similarities and economies that could be (but have not been) taken advantage of. Additionally, there are a number of issues with the current service that need addressing:

- a. The current live webcasting service via www.london.gov.uk requires both the GLA broadcast supplier (currently Bow Tie) and (Mayoral) External Relations Web Team members to work in a way that risks the live webcast not appearing on time. This risk has become an issue on a number of occasions. Further, the new London.gov.uk website (as approved by MD1326) is being designed to make much more use of video content, of higher quality and to more platforms (Tablet and mobile as well as PC) throughout the website than is currently the case.
- b. The video encoding equipment used by Bow Tie to convert videos to multiple formats has come to the end of its life (not supported by the manufacturer) and require replacing.
- c. The technology used for the City Hall TV service has also become end of life and requires replacing.

Whilst each of the issue can be addressed in isolation, there is an opportunity to simplify, consolidate and improve all three services and address all the issues set out above.

2. Objectives and expected outcomes

- a. Procure up to date equipment (hardware and software) that fits within existing technology at City Hall.
- b. Implement an integrated service combining 1a – c as a variation to the current service provided by Bow Tie.

Officers will work with TfL procurement to procure the video streaming, video management and load balancing software and hardware required.

The Bowtie Broadcast contract was competitively sourced on a pan- EU, regulated basis in accordance with applicable EU procurement law and the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. The contract allows for the commissioning of such additional supplies and services.

3. Equality comments

There is one key equalities impact arising from this procurement and project; that of accessibility. One of the primary outputs from this project is to enhance the quality of the live and archived webcasting of Mayoral and Assembly meetings. The outputs of this project will be integrated into the new London.gov.uk website. One of the stated objectives of the new website is to achieve a AA standard of the World Wide Web Council's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative. Compared to webcasting currently being provided, this project will deliver far sharper and clear webcasts, with the ability to integrate captions and transcripts of videos.

4. Other considerations

a. Outline of the proposed new service

Components

The proposed new service will consist of the following elements:

- A full requirements analysis (in consultation with FM, TG, External Relations, Internal Communications and Assembly External Relations) and detailed technical solution design
- Video streaming system for multiple platforms (PC, tablet and smart-phones)
- Load balancing system (for managing the throughput from the streaming system)
- Video management system
- Cloud based hosting of video content
- A web based (integrated to the intranet and London.gov.uk) schedule of videos
- Additional bandwidth for the expected increase in user numbers (particularly London.gov.uk)
- Implementation (installation, configuration and testing) of the all components listed above
- Migration of existing content to the new storage and service.

The Service

- *Webcasting of Mayoral and Assembly meetings.* The new service will have Bow Tie managing the full service without the need for the GLA Web Team needing to intervene on each occasion. The new service will also provide video outputs in high definition as opposed to the current standard definition.
- *City Hall TV.* The new service will be a complete replacement of the current technology at the GLA (which has reached end of life) with a fully web based service which will not require the installation of software on each City Hall PC.
- *Video management.* All videos produced / consumed by the GLA will be centrally managed through the video management system, with the GLA's taxonomy system used to classify, categorise and display video content in both the intranet and London.gov.uk website.
- *Video distribution and quality.* The quality of current videos on London.gov.uk is considered very low by today's standards. The new service will enable high definition (HD 1080p) quality videos to be output, using the additional bandwidth.

b. Details of the contract variation

Set out below are the relevant provisions of Contract 80007, procured via an OJEU competition, and the proposed variations:

Reference	Current provision	Proposed variations
Schedule 3. Section 19.3	To provide a webcasting service of Mayoral and Assembly meetings	• Provide a high definition (1080p) output. • Provide all webcast outputs for multiple viewing platforms (PC, Tablet and Smartphone) • Provide increased storage and bandwidth to cater for the increased size of video content files as well as an expected increase in viewer numbers. • Design and produce a web interface showing the schedule of future, current and past recordings available for viewing. • Provide new video streaming, video management and load-balancing systems to cope with increased users and higher definition output. • Integrate the web schedule with www.london.gov.uk website.
Schedule 3. Section 19.4	To provide a broadcast feed for the City Hall IPTV system.	• Provide a fully managed IPTV system that is integrated with the webcasting service, including a web based schedule. • Integrate the web schedule with the GLA Intranet website.

The proposed variation to Schedule 3 Section 19.3 provides for the upgrading of webcasting services currently provided under contract. These new components, with some further technical changes can be directly used to replace the current City Hall TV service in its entirety.

c. Costs and Funding

The costs of this proposal fall into four categories, as set out below:

Items	Cost	Supplier	Funding
Commercial video streaming, management and hardware/software load balancing systems	Up to £25,000	Competitively Procured	TG Programme Delivery Budget
Installation and configuration of all hardware and software,	Up to £77,000	Bow Tie	TG Programme Delivery Budget

provision of additional storage and bandwidth			
Full management, maintenance and technical and operational support	£14,400 per annum for 3 years	Bow Tie	Costs to be met by the Technology Group but funds moved to FM budgets annually.

d. Consultation

This proposal has been formally discussed with and approved by the Technology Group, FM Contract Manager, Assistant Director of External Relations, Executive Director of Secretariat and Executive Director of Resources.

e. Key Risks and Issues

- Integration with the new London.gov.uk. The timing of the work will need to be carefully managed to ensure that the upgraded webcasting service is integrated with London.gov.uk.
- The current City Hall TV service is end of life. Its replacement is therefore an urgent priority. If the proposed work is not carried out, and the existing system fails, there is a risk of the City Hall TV service not being available for a period of time.

5. Financial comments

- 5.1 Approval is being sought for expenditure of up to £145,200 for the provision of a replacement to the current City Hall TV system and to upgrade the webcasting of Mayoral and Assembly meetings.
- 5.2 The expenditure required to provide an integrated solution for webcasting, storing and managing video content via the GLA Intranet and www.london.gov.uk website of £77,000 and £25,000 required for webcasting and a replacement to the current City Hall TV service will be funded from the existing 2014/15 TG Programme Delivery Budget. The on-going annual support and maintenance costs of £14,400 for three years up to March 2017 will be contained within the existing TG revenue budget.
- 5.3 All appropriate budget adjustments will be made. Any changes to this proposal, including budgetary implications will be subject to further approval via the Authority's decision-making process.

6. Legal comments

- 6.1 The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:
- 6.1.1 the decisions requested of the Director relate to expenditure for the commissioning of services which fall within the Authority's statutory powers to do things facilitative of and conducive to the discharge of its general functions; and
- 6.1.2 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

- 6.2 Officers have indicated (at section 1 above) that the Authority's current contract with Bowtie Television was competitively procured in accordance with the requirements of EU procurement law and the Authority's Contracts and Funding Code and contains express provisions enabling the commissioning of the supplies and services in question. Therefore, the Mayor may approve the proposed expenditure.
- 6.3 Officers must ensure that:
- 6.3.1 the video streaming, video management and load balancing software and hardware required are 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;
- 6.3.2 appropriate documentation is prepared and executed by the Authority and: (a) video streaming, video management and load balancing software and hardware supplier; (b) Bowtie Television expressly recording the commissioning of the required supplies and services, before committing to the same.

7. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Once approval has been given and the contract variation completed, the following project stages will be carried out:

- Technical analysis and confirmation of detailed statement of works and costs: June 2014.
- Procurement of hardware and software: June – July 2014.
- Implementation of the full service: July – September 2014.
- Completion and sign-off: September 2014.

Activity	Timeline
Contract variation	June 2014
Delivery start date	June 2014
Delivery completion	September 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? NO

If YES, for what reason:

Until what date: (a date is required if deferring)

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

M. J. Allen

Date

17.6.14

