

GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD1240

Title: Capital Works – Broadcast upgrade – phase 2

As a result of its age and usage over the last 11 years some essential items of equipment that make up the City Hall broadcasting system are becoming less reliable and prone to operational failure. The Facilities Management team have engaged with specialist broadcast consultants P&C Media Ltd who put forward a proposal for the phased upgrade and enhancement of the broadcast facilities at the Greater London Authority (GLA) and ancillary equipment for studio TX2 in City Hall.

In addition, advances in media and communications technology mean that key clients served by the broadcasting service, namely the Mayor and London Assembly, are looking for improved functionality and compatibility with the new technology that they are using to conduct their official business.

The incumbent broadcast contractor NEP Bowtie were asked to submit costs for the phased upgrade and refurbishment of the broadcast facilities at the Greater London Authority (GLA), Specialist broadcast consultants P&C Media Ltd were engaged by the GLA to further review this costed proposal up to a maximum expenditure of £98,928.00.

Decision:

That the Executive Director of Resources approves the capital purchase, installation and commissioning of a 2nd Vision Mixer alongside a File Based Workflow upgrade for the sum of up to a maximum expenditure of £98,928.

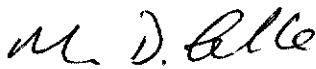
AUTHORISING DIRECTOR

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: 17.7.14

PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE

Decision required – supporting report

1. Introduction and background

- 1.1 As a result of its age and usage over the last 11 years some essential items of equipment that make up the City Hall broadcasting system are becoming less reliable and prone to operational failure. FM engaged with specialist broadcast consultants P&C Media Ltd who put forward a proposal for the phased upgrade and refurbishment of the broadcast facilities at the Greater London Authority (GLA).
- 1.2 In addition, advances in media and communications technology mean that key clients served by the broadcasting service, namely the Mayor and London Assembly, are looking for improved functionality and compatibility with the new technology that they are using to conduct their official business.
- 1.3 The incumbent broadcast contractor NEP Bowtie were asked to submit costs for the phased upgrade and refurbishment of the broadcast facilities at the Greater London Authority (GLA). Specialist broadcast consultants P&C Media Ltd were engaged by the GLA to further review this costed proposal up to a maximum expenditure of £98,928.00.
- 1.4 ADD162 was agreed in 2013-2014 for Phase 1 of the broadcast upgrade programme. This Director's Decision is for phase 2 which will involve the purchase of a 2nd Vision Mixer increased resilience and broadcast capability within City Hall. It will be a necessary requirement to include compatibility with the proposed File Based Workflow upgrade.
- 1.5 The File Based Workflow upgrade is proposed to provide server and solid state recording systems to replace the current Sony SX Videotape recorders (VTRs). The installation will have dual recording systems for resilience. There will be three new solid state (HD) VTRs which will be used for local recording. Presently all meetings are recorded onto a tape based media – albeit a digital tape based media. The machines that record the tapes are at life end and they are no longer supported by the manufacturer (Sony). As a result we have been advised to go with a new system which records directly onto a computer in a more accessible file format. The benefits are:
 1. No longer have to play tapes in real time if a client requires a copy of the tape (we can just copy the file)
 2. More robust recording media that removes the need for tape machines going forward
 3. Ability to send files direct to broadcasters without the middle stage of "digitisation" of the tape
 4. Tape storage will no longer be necessary both here and in the CrownArchive for future recordings
 5. Files instantly available for City Hall or broadcaster – no going to archive to request a tape – this process can take days and means footage that is required for news etc is not really available due to time taken.
 6. File based workflow is first stage in HD upgrade which is necessary for City Hall
File based workflow is a more robust media which does not rely on a magnetic tape – files can be backed up to other hard drives or servers in minutes rather than hours and allows for content to be easily moved from place to place without the logistical problems and real time encode issues
- 1.6 This investment will provide further improved functionality that is compatible with the latest developments in media technology and more importantly the technology that is used by clients such as the Mayor, London Assembly or others. The introduction of Vision Mixers will also make the broadcast system more resilient as it is capable of taking on some of the functionality of a critical piece of equipment called the Matrix which is at the heart of the broadcast system. The Matrix

allows audio-visual signals from multiple sources and locations in the building to be compiled and transmitted to any source, for example to the internal City Hall TV or to public radio or television broadcasters.

- 1.7 The equipment will be procured through the incumbent Broadcast contractor, NEP Bowtie, in accordance with provisions which are included in their contract ref 80007 commencing on the 1st June 2011 for the provision of broadcasting and audio visual equipment and services for a period of 5 years with an option to extend for a further two years. The contract was competitively sourced through the OJEU process, in accordance with applicable EU procurement law and the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code. The contract under clause 14 Additional Services of schedule 3 - Specification allows for the purchase and commissioning of such additional equipment and the cost contained in this Decision is based on prices submitted by NEP Bowtie Television. A check to ensure that the pricing offered value for money was undertaken by the specialist broadcast consultant P&C Media Ltd and the cost of this service was met in Phase 1.

2. Equality comments

There is no impact on equalities with this installation work.

3. Other considerations

Risk

- 3.1 The risk of not incorporating new technology into the broadcast system will mean that it will no longer be fit for purpose as information being used by clients using new technologies will not be capable of being broadcast and the GLA will not be able to fully fulfil its statutory duties. The equipment will effectively become unfit for its intended purpose.
- 3.2 Additionally, should the original Matrix which is at the core of the broadcast system breakdown, as a result of its age, broadcasting would totally cease without a Vision Mixer being available to take over some of the functionality of the Matrix and act as a back-up unit. Without the Vision Mixer there would inevitably be a gap in broadcast capability between the failure or breakdown of the Matrix and its repair or in the extreme case its replacement, which would be in the order of £100,000. This may cause disruption and re-scheduling to statutory meetings held by the GLA. The Purchase of a Vision Mixer, as well as ensuring the system remains fit for purpose, will also ensure business continuity and a degree of resilience to the broadcast service.

Impact Assessment & Consultation

- 3.4 The Mayor's Press Office and the London Assembly Press Office and the Secretariat have all been consulted over this investment to ensure that the broadcast service remains fit for purpose.

Links to Strategies & Priorities:

- 3.5 The Greater London Authority has a duty under section 58 of the GLA Act 1999 to be transparent by having the facility to record, transcript, broadcast and webcast certain public meetings and committees involving the Mayor and London Assembly.

4. Financial comments

- 4.1 Approval is sought for the installation and commissioning of a 2nd Vision Mixer alongside a File Based Workflow upgrade from the GLA's long term contractor NEP Bowtie.

- 4.2 The total estimated costs of these works is a value up to £99,000.00 and will be funded from the existing City Hall Capital Programme budget, held within the Facilities Management Team.

5. Legal comments

5.1. The foregoing sections of this report indicate that:

5.1.1 the decisions requested of the Executive Director fall within his powers, acting on behalf of the Authority, to do anything which is facilitative of or conducive or incidental to the Authority's exercise of its principal purposes; 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. Officers must ensure that the proposed variation is agreed in accordance with the provisions of the current contract and that appropriate variation documentation is put in place and executed by the service provider and the Authority before the commencement of the extended services.

6. Planned delivery approach and next steps

Activity	Timeline
Procurement of contract [for externally delivered projects]	N/A
Announcement [if applicable]	N/A
Delivery Start Date [for project proposals]	18 th August 2014
Final evaluation start and finish (self/external) [delete as applicable]:	
Delivery End Date [for project proposals]	21 st October 2014
Project Closure: [for project proposals]	31 st March 2015

Appendices and supporting papers:

1.1 ADD162

1.2 P&C Media Ltd – Report on Bowtie TV Proposals for the upgrading and refurbishment of Broadcast facilities at the GLA

1.3 Phase 2 cost breakdown

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:

Rennie Kraus has drafted this report in accordance with GLA procedures and confirms that:

✓

Assistant Director/Head of Service:

Simon Grinter 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. D. Elle

Date

17.7.14

