

REPORT FOR RESOLUTION

SUBJECT: NEW CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND WEB PORTAL

REPORT OF: THE LEAD OFFICER

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To present the findings of the independent review of Business Process and IT and to seek approval for the commissioning of the new case management system and web portal to enable efficient preparation of cases for Adjudicators, ease of access for councils and appellants and cost savings in IT infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Joint Committee is asked to:

- [i] Note the findings from the independent review of business process and IT
- [ii] Note the preferred model for IT technology and delivery set out in the report.
- [iii] Approve the commissioning of the new case management and web portal as set out in Table 1.
 - (a) Approve the use in 2011/12 of up to the £200,000 of reserves approved for this purpose to enable the new case management system and portal to be commissioned and implementation commence.
 - (b) Approve the use of any remaining reserve from 2011/12 within this £200,000 limit for use to fund implementation in 2012/13.
 - (c) In setting the budget for 2012/13 in January 2012, the Joint Committee considers the IT spend for 2012/13 to be equivalent to that budgeted for 2011/12 with a view to the differential between the ongoing IT costs and the budget total being allocated to the completion of the implementation project. This decision will also be informed by the projected outturn position for 2011/12 which will be presented to that meeting.
- [iv] Defer the introduction of a case management charge for non-electronic cases for councils until the introduction of the new web portal.

FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THE REVENUE BUDGET

The papers sets out the financial consequences to the revenue budget.

CONTACT: Louise Hutchinson, Head of Service, PATROL, Barlow House, Minshull Street, Manchester M1 3DZ

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Information Technology is central to the running of the Traffic Penalty Tribunal and increasingly so with more appellants and councils interacting with the Tribunal electronically. It is therefore vital to ensure that IT systems are meeting the needs of the Tribunal and its stakeholders and delivering value for money.
- 1.2 The case management system is the core of the Tribunal's IT systems providing the facility for administrative staff to correspond with the parties and prepare evidence packs for Adjudicators who are then able to access case files remotely.
- 1.3 However, case processing has been based on parties sending in paper evidence that has been scanned by the Tribunal staff. It has become apparent over the past three years that it was inefficient for case material stored electronically by individual councils to be printed, posted and then scanned by the Tribunal. Consequently efforts have been made to allow electronic transfer of evidence.
- 1.4 The Tribunal can in many ways already be seen to be at the forefront of virtual provision of judicial process through the use of remote access case management for Adjudicators for postal, telephone and personal hearings. This has been achieved through a series of bolt-on facilities to its existing case management system commissioned in 2004 resulting in the need to manage a range of suppliers with their associated costs and increased risk of system downtime.
- 1.5 Over this seven year period since the commissioning of the existing case management system, the underpinning technology has become dated and some of the software used within the existing system will soon become unsupported.
- 1.6 Web based portals have now become standard means of service delivery for many public sector organisations, providing efficient and effective service delivery and enabling organisational change to deliver value for money.
- 1.7 This paper sets out the results of an independent assessment of the Tribunal's current IT environment and an assessment of the current IT possibilities. It makes a recommendation for commissioning a new case management for the Tribunal with portal access for both councils and appellants.

2. ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT ICT ARRANGEMENTS

- 2.1 An independent review of Business Processes and IT has been undertaken to:
 - a) Provide an independent health check to assess whether the Tribunal's Business Processes and IT systems and structure are meeting business needs, delivering value and operating at an acceptable level of risk.
 - b) Provide an option appraisal document to inform the Tribunal's future Business Process and IT strategy.

- 2.2 The Tribunal's business processes and IT are inextricably linked and it was therefore seen as vital to consider them together in order that future IT systems could be informed by the Tribunal's operational needs.
- 2.3 The current ICT environment is split across two sites in Manchester and Docklands. The Docklands site provides largely for the organisation's external communication including appeal on line, email exchange servers etc. The components of the system are as follows:
- A bespoke case management system.
 - Scanning and document management system
 - Remote working for Adjudicators
 - Webmail facility for council evidence to avoid council's internal email size restrictions (although in practice many councils use standard email)
 - Appeal on line and Traffic Regulations on Line through the Tribunal's Web Site
 - Content management systems for Tribunal and PATROL web sites
 - PCs running Microsoft Windows XP and Office 2002/2003
 - Servers are hosted at Manchester and in Docklands
- 2.4 The average cost of the IT provision over the past three years has been circa £300,000 in respect of Adjudicator remote working solutions, back office systems and case management, hardware and software, email and webmail, infrastructure, website and intranet systems.
- 2.5 Following an independent review, it has been identified that the requirements for improvements in the Tribunal operating model and support ICT are considered to be urgent. This is because:
- The current case management system is unstable, lacks user confidence and critical functionality and has support issues and poor delivery that are driving increased costs.
 - The remote work experience for Adjudicators is sub-optimum thus impacting on their ability to progress case work – episodes of down time and slow speed have been identified by some as a reason for not logging in to determine cases thus contributing to backlogs.
 - The case management system is neither flexible or cost effective enough manage additional works streams.
 - Recent development work to the existing case management system to increase automation has been costly and results sub-optimal with the need to backfill a member of the case management team for six months to undertake user testing.
 - Interfaces between the case management system and the on-line service require significant manual intervention as a result of failures creating significant inefficiencies for both administrative and support staff.
 - Significant amount of IT support time is devoted to monitoring the system and supporting users experiencing difficulties and undertaking workarounds due to the systems' inflexibility.
 - The infrastructure and change documentation is resource intensive which has been a casualty of "fire fighting" stability issues. There are shortcomings in the system and architecture documentation and supplier management documentation.
 - The case management system is utilising software which will soon become unsupported.
 - Case management staff are required to manage case evidence derived from a range of communication streams and the problems arising from this.
 - Tribunal administrative staff forced to undertake work-arounds to overcome shortcomings in the system, directly impacting efficiency when dealing with councils and appellants.
 - The arrangement of systems and suppliers is resource intensive in terms of contract management.

- The Tribunal has also experienced difficulties with its external interfaces with appellants struggling to submit appeals on line and councils electronic interaction being problematic in some cases.
- The system is inflexible and places constraints on how the staff are organised
- The system is inflexible and requires supplier intervention thus increasing support costs and IT staff input.
- The nature of the Tribunal's work is shifting with increased emphasis on moving traffic cases, camera enforcement and telephone hearings.

3. DELIVERING CHANGE

3.1 Analysis of the existing business process and current IT services in place within the Tribunal has shown that there could be significant improvements through a move to a new business model. The change would focus on providing a central location where all case material is stored and made available to appropriate parties. This will enable councils and appellants to upload and view case evidence from either party in preparation for the Adjudicator and also to track the progress of appeals.

This will be achieved by:

- a) Replacing the current case management system and associated systems with a portal providing wider functionality
- b) Servicing the Tribunal's ICT requirements through a mix of internal staff and increased coverage of external support contracts.

4. STRATEGIC BENEFITS

4.1 The strategic benefits associated with this change project include:

- Reducing the ongoing cost of ICT provision and enable efficiencies relating to casework management and the wider ICT estate.
- Improving service to appellants – including on-line tracking of their case and the ability to easily attach their evidence.
- Improving service to councils – including timeliness, immediacy, efficiency and the ability to track the status of all their cases through the Tribunal reporting system.
- Driving operational efficiencies: reduce overheads relating to the maintenance of the case management system.
- Providing flexibility to achieve economies of scale in anticipation of further increase/diversification of business volumes.
- Introducing facilities for information sharing between Adjudicators to facilitate more formal reporting and consistency.
- Improving operational reporting and available information: in addition to reporting benefits to councils, internal reporting will be improved and made reliable and will not be reliant on ad-hoc reporting which is resource intensive. This will enable better and more timely oversight of the business.
- Integrating with external processes; smoother integration with council systems.

5. STRATEGIC RISKS

5.1 The strategic risks for the Tribunal are:

- Continuation of existing ICT arrangements will continue to drain significant resources. The average annual cost of ICT systems over the past three years has been circa £300,000 and this will rise without investment to stabilise and improve the system. The status quo will only enable limited incremental changes to the current case management system without addressing its fundamental inflexibility.
- Failure to change radically will lock in current inefficiencies and lead to suboptimal service in terms of cost and quality.
- A new case management system and portal will require risk management to minimise disruption during implementation.

6. OPTION APPRAISAL

6.1 Consideration has been given to technology and service delivery options

6.2 Technology Options

Option Type	Comments
Do Minimum	The cost of maintaining the service in current state with no improvement, including support costs and administrative time, would mean this is a costly and inefficient option. Current service levels would not improve and may worsen over time. Faults in the current system including data issues and inconsistent reporting would be locked in and confidence in the system will continue to deteriorate. Given known changes that are needed within the next few years the system may have to be replaced or a disproportionate amount of investment made.
Stabilise case management system (AIMS)	Efforts and investment to date to achieve this have already proved unsuccessful. It is possible that under close management and with significant investment AIMS could be improved to the point where performance and consistency is considered acceptable but the required investment would be significant, the risk of failure high, and the gains uncertain.
Stabilise and Implement Key Changes to AIMS	Efforts and investment to date to stabilise have proved unsuccessful, and the points above pertain. Specification of desired system requirements show that deep architectural changes would be required, and likely cost of implementation of key changes would be significant enough at least to warrant testing within a procurement.
Replace AIMS with "Off the Shelf" (COTS) Solution	Work to date has demonstrated that the Tribunal requirements and the availability within the market are such that a COTS system is not available. Existing bespoke systems would also require significant further design work, and therefore this option is not considered to be possible.
Replace AIMS with Portal with Wider Functionality	Portal architecture for the system enables all the benefits identified through requirements definition and technology appears to be available within affordability. AIMS is not considered to be a viable option and COTS systems are not available. A bespoke portal meeting the requirements as defined with the specification will deliver the wider service flexibility and benefits.

6.3 **Service Delivery Options**

Option Type	Comments
Internal Provision / hands-on management of ICT	Current "As Is" position. Focus on contract management currently dysfunctional. Elements of support not acceptable to management, internal staff and Adjudicators, in terms of availability and other aspects. Skills stretched by current footprint of services.
Internal Provision / Contract Management of ICT suppliers	Internal staff provision for immediate technology issues and ownership. Flexible supplier management based approach for AIMS and other services such as email where cost effective solutions with appropriate service levels and integration with Tribunal working can be sourced. Greater formality around supplier management and service level agreements.
Outsource Case Management System and PORTAL	Flexible solution that allows for a more professional and assured approach, enabling Tribunal to focus on core business. To be supported by strong contractual and supplier management approach. Strong ownership of system by third party with unequivocal responsibility and recourse. Lower whole life cost.
Outsource all ICT	Loss of flexibility and strong dependency on outside suppliers not aligned to the objectives, technical requirements or culture of the Tribunal. Given the Tribunal's reliance on technology, this is not seen as a practical option as any part of a completely outsourced solution would require replication of the arrangement and would disproportionately add to cost.

6.4 Following consideration of these options, the recommendations are to

- a) Replace the existing case management system and associated systems with a portal providing wider functionality.
- b) Outsource the Case Management System and Portal.

7. PROCUREMENT

7.1 A full statement of requirements has been developed. Procurement options have been evaluated and the Buying Solutions Framework is seen as the optimal vehicle for system procurement. A 6 month procurement process is anticipated.

8. IMPACT OF ANTICIPATED INVESTMENT IN CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND PORTAL ON ICT EXPENDITURE OVER THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

8.1 The existing ICT budget based on the existing arrangements is predicted to remain at approximately £300,000 per annum. The new system is estimated to cost £250,000 plus procurement and implementation assurance. Appendix 1 sets out impact of this investment between now and 2017. Appendix 2 sets out the cost benefit analysis associated with this investment.

9. ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL BENEFITS ARISING FROM INVESTING IN THE CASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM AND WEB PORTAL

- 9.1 In addition to the reduced budget requirement from 2013/14 onwards arising from the investment in the new case management system and web portal between 2011 and 2013 (see Table 1), this investment is projected to deliver additional savings:
- Removes requirement for IT system management whilst users will still have access to day to day support.
 - Provides the capacity to move administrative staff to customer focused roles including resourcing the increasing preference for telephone hearings which transfers resources from personal hearings to headquarters telephone hearing management, thus reducing the number of personal hearings and associated costs.
 - Reduces postage and stationery costs as electronic communication is facilitated more easily.
 - Reduces staff time and postage/stationery costs for council appeals teams.
 - Self service portal and appeals tracking reduces requirement for telephone calls/email enquiries.
 - Reduces in time for Adjudicators to determine cases within the case management system, and introduces an improvement in oversight of caseload across the Tribunal for individual Adjudicators.
- 9.2 Appendix 1 provides a breakdown of anticipated IT expenditure between 2011/12 and 2016/17. The forecast is for budgeted IT expenditure to reduce to just under £200,000 per annum with effect from 2013/14.
- 9.3 Appendix 2 provides a cost benefit analysis of the new case management system and web portal. The financial impact of these savings has been assessed to be in the region of £500,000 over the five year period. In addition, further savings to councils arising from the introduction of the new portal have been estimated to be in excess of £600,000 over the period.
- 9.4 The Tribunal will also continue to accommodate appellants who choose to submit their appeals by post however it is anticipated that this proportion will reduce over the five year period.
- 9.5 The Tribunal is grateful to councils who provided feedback of their administrative engagement with the Tribunal which has informed these recommendations. Appendix 3 provides a summary of their responses.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

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