

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

DECISION

meeting date: 12 SEPTEMBER 2023
title: FINANCIALS SERVER OPERATING SYSTEM
submitted by: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE
principal author: LAWSON ODDIE

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To request approval for an additional capital programme scheme to enable the replacement of the financial server operating system. The scheme would also see an upgrade to the reporting software at the same time and a system version upgrade.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – none identified.
- Corporate Priorities – to continue to be a well-managed council, providing efficient services based on identified customer need.
- Other considerations – none identified.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Already included within the capital programme are a number ICT related schemes. These largely relate to the main ICT infrastructure across the council and are not system related.

2.2 The Council have a number of servers running Windows Server 2012 R2 which will be de-supported by Microsoft in October, and therefore require an upgrade.

2.3 Other server operating system upgrades have been able to be undertaken in-house through the provision of information from the various system providers and Microsoft. However, it has been identified that the system providers for the Financials system and the Planning system require the upgrades to be undertaken by themselves.

2.4 The Planning NEC system server operating system can be upgraded within an existing capital programme scheme, falling under the Planning and Development Committee. However, no such scheme is available for the Financials server operating system and associated work.

3 PROPOSED SCHEME DETAILS

3.1 The servers that support the Civica Financials system are currently running Windows Server 2012 R2 which will be de-supported by Microsoft in October. There are some options for extended support, but the most cost-effective way forward would be to upgrade now. The upgrade would be to the 2019 version to ensure there are no compatibility issues.

3.2 In addition, the Business Objects query tool that is used together with the financials system requires an upgrade. Furthermore, a new release of the Civica Financials software is also now available, which we are looking to move to within our existing contract.

3.3 This scheme would look to have all three elements of upgrade work undertaken by Civica UK Limited, together with assistance from our in-house ICT team.

3.4 If approved, the majority of the work would be undertaken towards the end of September 2023, with some further work between January and March 2024 to upgrade the live version of the financials system with the latest version of the software, after all necessary testing has been done in a test environment.

4 PROPOSED SCHEME COSTS

- 4.1 A recent contract between the council and Civica UK Limited allows for the move to the latest version with additional functionality within our existing annual fees.
- 4.2 When the contract was signed, the council also secured more favourable consultant fees with Civica UK Limited for any installation work.
- 4.3 The total combined quoted costs for the work identified above is £13,500.
- 4.4 Turning to the funding for the scheme. The Council currently receive Section 31 New Burdens funding for costs around data transparency. The system and the reporting tool are used extensively for producing and publishing the transparency data and so it is proposed to use some of these resources that are currently in earmarked reserves to fund this scheme.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 There are three elements of upgrade work that would be undertaken, in respect of the server, Business Objects query tool and the Civica Financials software.
- 5.2 The upgrade work would be undertaken by Civica UK Limited, together with assistance from our in-house ICT team. The quoted charge from Civica UK Limited is £13,500, and the work would be completed within the financial year.

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The risks associated with this report are set down below:
- Resources – The works are to be procured from our incumbent provider and at costs secured under our existing contract through the Crown Commercial Services Data and Application Solutions Framework Agreement. The £13,500 cost is proposed to be funded from transparency code new burdens monies that are within our earmarked reserves.
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal – Works will be procured through our existing contract with Civica UK Limited.
 - Political – None.
 - Reputation – None
 - Equality and Diversity – One part of the software upgrade will mean that the software meets the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

7 RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 7.1 Approve the inclusion of a new capital programme scheme in 2023/24 financial year for the Financials System Server Upgrade and associated software upgrades at a cost of £13,500.
- 7.2 Subject to approval of 7.1, approve the use of transparency code new burdens monies that are within our earmarked reserves to fund the new capital scheme.

HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES AND
DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

PF60-23/LO/AC
24 AUGUST 2023

For further background information please ask for Lawson Oddie.
BACKGROUND PAPERS – None