

## Record of individual Cabinet member decision

Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012

<b>Decision made by</b>	Councillor Andrea Powell
<b>Key decision?</b>	No
<b>Date of decision</b> (same as date form signed)	26 April 2023
<b>Name and job title of officer requesting the decision</b>	Sally Truman, Customer Service Manager
<b>Officer contact details</b>	Tel: 07717271893 Email: <a href="mailto:sally.truman@southandvale.gov.uk">sally.truman@southandvale.gov.uk</a>
<b>Decision</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To approve the purchase of a replacement telephony system for the councils.</li> <li>2. To delegate authority to award the joint contract for both councils to the Head of Corporate Services in consultation with relevant cabinet members.</li> </ol>
<b>Reasons for decision</b>	<p>The Customer Strategy for the councils has set out a new approach to delivery, modelled on customer centred service design and delivery rather than being product or service driven.</p> <p>This is based upon redesign of services to ensure delivery against the core principles of “once and done” for transactional activity and “right first time” where we have an ongoing relationship. It aims over time, to bring all first point customer contact into a centralised Customer Service Centre with a single contact number, achieving greater consistency of customer experience and easier access to our services. The strategy is also aimed at transforming the end-to-end customer journey to increase automation and promote self-service wherever possible through making more services available to customer when and how they want to access them.</p> <p>The Customer Service Centre is an evolution of our existing in-house team to a structure that facilitates contact centre style ways of working. Key to this is suitable contact centre software to support multiple contact channels and enable customer service advisors to switch easily between channels according to the customer’s choice. Initially this will include email, webforms and telephone, but will evolve further to bring in ‘chat’ and social media channels.</p>

The project to replace our existing Rostrvm call handling software with a more sophisticated, cloud-based software is included in the IT Strategy, a revised version of which was approved by Cabinet in November 2021. This procurement has now become urgent as our existing supplier has given notice that Rostrvm will no longer be supported after 31 October 2023. Without a new telephone handling software, we will be unable to take customer calls to customer services beyond this date.

We are seeking to procure this through the Government's G-Cloud 13 framework, and officers have completed an assessment of a number of proposals from companies originally shortlisted from the framework. The G-Cloud 13 framework allows for a contract length of three years with the option to extend for one year if we wish to. Costs have therefore been included for three years. Any decision to extend the contract beyond three years would be the subject of a further decision.

The solution also offers multi-channel contact centre style of working and will help ensure that our customer services resources are used in the most efficient way whilst maintaining our standards for call answering. Quality management will support team leaders in working with agents to develop their customer facing skills and ensures that we maintain consistency and overall quality of our customer response.

The current budget for 2023/24 is £11,037 South and £5,500 Vale. This budget reflects the current licensing and call costs of the existing outdated Rostrvm system and was developed to support historic call levels, and in particular relating to planning calls. For future years it is expected that call volumes will be at similar levels across the councils – this will be monitored and form part of annual budget setting.

More up to date software packages to support contact centre style working and accommodate more access channels are priced differently. The expected implementation costs and ongoing annual cost of the software are set out below.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
25 agent licences	20,700	20,700	20,700
Workforce management module	1,500	1,500	1,500
Quality management module	2,100	2,100	2,100
SIP trunk capacity (80 channels) – incoming & outgoing	8,544	8,544	8,544
Soft phones x 25	900	900	900
One off implementation cost	29,250	N/A	N/A
<b>Totals</b>	<b>62,994</b>	<b>33,744</b>	<b>33,744</b>
Per council	31,497	16,872	16,872

#### Alternative options rejected

Not to purchase contact centre software – this option is rejected because without a replacement telephony system the councils would have no way of answering customer calls post 31 October. An effective system is also fundamental to achieving the customer transformation as outlined in the previously approved strategy and road map and agreed by Cabinet in November 2021.

Climate and ecological implications	<p>The move to customer centred service provision through digital channels will support the councils’ carbon reduction ambitions by reducing the reliance on paper and avoiding unnecessary journeys for specific service activities. Gains in this area will include a reduction in traditional communication methods as more customers are able to self-serve. It can also be used to engage with residents and businesses digitally to encourage positive climate change activities.</p>																														
Legal implications	<p>The procurement of the contact centre software has been undertaken in accordance with the councils’ Procurement Procedure Rules.</p> <p>The contract award will be made using the G-Cloud13 framework (ref: ocds-pfhhb7i-2000) and a call off contract will be entered into with the successful supplier. G-Cloud-13 is an approved and compliant framework for purchasing cloud services, including licences for Software as a Service applications such as contact centre software, with standard terms and conditions for local authorities.</p> <p>There are always risks when the council enters into a contract and it cannot mitigate against all of them, especially when the council enters into a framework agreement whereby the contract has little scope for amendment. The terms of the call off contract will be reviewed by Legal Services prior to final contract award if necessary.</p>																														
Financial implications	<p>As part of the councils’ budget challenge exercise IT budgets have been centralised in recent years. There is provision within current allocations to support this procurement exercise in terms of revenue for the expected duration of the contract. If required, the implementation costs can be vired from the councils’ contingency budgets. The total expected funding for this project is shown in the table below</p> <table><tr><td></td><td>Year 1</td><td>Year 2</td><td>Year 3</td><td>Total</td></tr><tr><td>Implementation costs</td><td>29,250</td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Annual software costs</td><td>33,744</td><td>33,744</td><td>33,744</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Total costs</td><td>62,994</td><td>33,744</td><td>33,744</td><td>130,482</td></tr><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Per council</td><td>31,497</td><td>16,872</td><td>16,872</td><td>65,241</td></tr></table> <p>The current budget for Rostrvm for South is £11,037 per annum. There is expected to be scope within existing IT software and licence budgets to cover the additional funding required for a replacement solution.</p>		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total	Implementation costs	29,250				Annual software costs	33,744	33,744	33,744		Total costs	62,994	33,744	33,744	130,482						Per council	31,497	16,872	16,872	65,241
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Other implications	None																														
Background papers considered	None																														
Declarations/ conflict of interest? Declaration of																															

<b>other councillor/ officer consulted by the Cabinet member?</b>				
<b>List consultees</b>		<b>Name</b>	<b>Outcome</b>	<b>Date</b>
	Ward councillors			
	Legal <a href="mailto:legal@southandvale.gov.uk">legal@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	Patrick Arran	Approved with some amends to the legal implications	25 April 2023
	Finance <a href="mailto:Finance@southandvale.gov.uk">Finance@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	Simon Hewings	Approved with some amendments to financial implications	21 April 2023
	Human resources <a href="mailto:hadminandpayroll@southandvale.gov.uk">hadminandpayroll@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	David Fairall	No comments	21 April 2023
	Climate and biodiversity <a href="mailto:climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk">climateaction@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	N/A		
	Diversity and equality <a href="mailto:equalities@southandvale.gov.uk">equalities@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	David Fairall	No comments	21 April 2023
	Strategic property <a href="mailto:Property@southandvale.gov.uk">Property@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	N/A		
	Health and safety <a href="mailto:healthandsafety@southandvale.gov.uk">healthandsafety@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	Mark Minion	No comments	21 April 2023
	Risk and insurance <a href="mailto:risk@southandvale.gov.uk">risk@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	N/A		
	Communications <a href="mailto:communications@southandvale.gov.uk">communications@southandvale.gov.uk</a>	N/A		
<b>Confidential decision?</b> If so, under which exempt category?	N/A			
<b>Call-in waived by Scrutiny Committee chairman?</b>	N/A			
<b>Has this been discussed by Cabinet members?</b>	Yes - as part of the approved IT Strategy.			
<b>Cabinet portfolio</b>	Signature <u>          Andrea Powell          </u>			

<b>holder's signature</b> To confirm the decision as set out in this notice.	Date _____ 26 <sup>th</sup> April 2023 _____
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**ONCE SIGNED, THIS FORM MUST BE HANDED TO DEMOCRATIC SERVICES IMMEDIATELY.**

For Democratic Services office use only		
Form received	Date: 26 April 2023	Time: 15:29
Date published to all councillors	Date: 26 April 2023	
Call-in deadline	Not applicable as this is not a key decision.	

## Guidance notes

1. This form must be completed by the lead officer who becomes the contact officer. The lead officer is responsible for ensuring that the necessary internal consultees have signed it off, including the chief executive. The lead officer must then seek the Cabinet portfolio holder's agreement and signature.
2. Once satisfied with the decision, the Cabinet portfolio holder must hand-sign and date the form and return it to the lead officer who should send it to Democratic Services immediately to allow the call-in period to commence.  
Tel. 01235 422520 or extension 2520.  
Email: [democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:democratic.services@southandvale.gov.uk)
3. Democratic Services will then publish the decision to the website (unless it is confidential) and send it to all councillors to commence the call-in period (five clear working days) if it is a 'key' decision (see the definition of a 'key' decision below). A key decision cannot be implemented until the call-in period expires. The call-in procedure can be found in the council's constitution, part 4, under the Scrutiny Committee procedure rules.
4. Before implementing a key decision, the lead officer is responsible for checking with Democratic Services that the decision has not been called in.
5. If a key decision has been called in, Democratic Services will notify the lead officer and decision-maker. This call-in puts the decision on hold.
6. Democratic Services will liaise with the Scrutiny Committee chairman over the date of the call-in debate. The Cabinet portfolio holder will be requested to attend the Scrutiny Committee meeting to answer the committee's questions.
7. The Scrutiny Committee may:
  - refer the decision back to the Cabinet portfolio holder for reconsideration or
  - refer the matter to Council with an alternative set of proposals (where the final decision rests with full Council) or
  - accept the Cabinet portfolio holder's decision, in which case it can be implemented immediately.

## Key decisions: assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key'

The South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Constitutions now have the same definition of a key decision:

**A key decision is a decision of the Cabinet, an individual Cabinet member, or an officer acting under delegated powers, which is likely:**

- (a) to incur expenditure, make savings or to receive income (except government grant) of more than £75,000;**

- (b) to award a revenue or capital grant of over £25,000; or**
- (c) to agree an action that, in the view of the chief executive or relevant head of service, would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising more than one ward in the area of the council.**

Key decisions are subject to the scrutiny call-in procedure; non-key decisions are not and can be implemented immediately.

In assessing whether a decision should be classified as 'key', you should consider:

- (a) Will the expenditure, savings or income total more than £75,000 across all financial years?
- (b) Will the grant award to one person or organisation be more than £25,000 across all financial years?
- (c) Does the decision impact on more than one district council ward? And if so, is the impact significant? If residents or property affected by the decision is in one ward but is close to the border of an adjacent ward, it may have a significant impact on that second ward, e.g. through additional traffic, noise, light pollution, odour. Examples of significant impacts on two or more wards are:
  - Decisions to spend Didcot Garden Town funds (significant impact on more than one ward)
  - Changes to the household waste collection policy (affects all households in the district)
  - Reviewing a housing strategy (could have a significant impact on residents in many wards)
  - Adopting a supplementary planning document for a redevelopment site (could significantly affect more than one ward) or a new design guide (affects all wards)
  - Decisions to build new or improve existing leisure facilities (used by residents of more than one ward)

**The overriding principle is that before 'key' decisions are made, they must be published in the Cabinet Work Programme for 28 calendar days. Classifying a decision as non-key when it should be a key decision could expose the decision to challenge and delay its implementation.**