

FINANCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY COMMITTEE – 15/04/2003

HARDWARE UPGRADE FOR REVENUES DIVISION

REPORT BY THE DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

ABSTRACT

This report advises the requirement to tender for the procurement of hardware relating to the Revenues Service of Finance. The report also recommends the allocation of funds from the Information Technology Repairs and Renewals Fund for the procurement of elements relating to the Revenues Service of Finance.

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The committee is recommended :

- a) to allocate £50,000 from current balances in the IT Repairs and Renewals Fund for the supply of hardware to upgrade systems in the Revenues Division.
- b) to authorise the Director of IT to accept the most economically advantageous tender.

2. BACKGROUND

The Revenues Division of Finance uses a software system provided by Sx3. The company has developed a new version of the software to work in an Intranet / Internet environment to better allow e-Government related services to be delivered.

The new version of the software is a mandatory upgrade and, in order to facilitate its usage, upgrades will be required to the server equipment used to host the software and the PC equipment used to access the software. To this end committee report 533/02 was presented to the Finance and IT committee on 7th May 2002 based on the technical architecture review (TAR) supplied under contract by SX3 and dated 15th November 2001. In line with part of the recommendations of this report, the Committee agreed at that time to the purchase of hardware to upgrade the existing Revenues server, at a cost of £21,000. In order to meet the original project timescales the server upgrades were ordered in October 2002. In December 2002 reports were received from a number of authorities of performance problems with the new software. As a result further investigations were carried out and a request for clarification was sent to SX3 which resulted in version 3 of the TAR on the 27th January 2003. This review gave rise to concerns over the consistency of advice being received by the contractor and ongoing concern in neighbouring authorities over performance. The Director of Information Technology met with representatives from SX3 to substantiate the recommendations in the latest TAR. As a result of this meeting version 4 of the TAR was issued by SX3 along with a letter giving clear guidance on the most appropriate route for the council to follow in implementing i-World.

3. PROPOSED ACTION

It is proposed to undertake formal conversion projects with Sx3 to an agreed timetable. To meet the target completion date of 1st November 2003, the project will start by early June 2003 at latest.

As the required upgrade to server equipment must be completed in advance of this start date, it is proposed to begin the tender process for server procurement as soon as possible.

The Committee should note that the hardware previously procured as a result of Report 533/02 will be re-deployed to augment the performance of other Council systems.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The total cost of the hardware required is £50,000 which can be contained within existing uncommitted balances within the IT Renewals and Repair Fund.

All recurring annual costs will be met from within existing Revenues Division revenue budgets.

5. HUMAN RIGHTS

There are no direct human rights implications arising from this report.

6. CONSULTATION

The Chief Executive and Directors of Finance and Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

A Greenhill
Director of Information Technology

04.04.2003

NOTE: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.