



Cambridge City Council

To: Executive Councillor for Environmental and Waste Services
Report by: Tracy Lawrence, Bereavement Services Manager
Scrutiny committee: Environment 11 June 2013
Wards affected: All

Project Appraisal and Scrutiny Committee Recommendation

Project Name: Upgrade and hosting of the Cemetery and Crematorium Administration System

Recommendations

Financial recommendations –

- The Executive Councillor is asked to recommend this scheme (which is not included in the Council's Capital & Revenue Project Plan) for approval by Council, subject to resources being available to fund the capital and revenue costs.
- The total cost of the project over 4 years is £23,400, funded from Bereavement Services IT Renewal & Replacement Fund
- The ongoing revenue costs of the project are £6,505 (excl inflation), funded from existing revenue accounts

Procurement recommendations:

- The Executive Councillor is asked to approve the carrying out and completion of the procurement of:
- The transfer of the Epilog Burials and Cremation and Administration System to a hosted service with Gower Consultants.
- The upgrade of the current system to the latest stable release as part of that process.

Subject to:

- The permission of the Director of Resources being sought prior to proceeding if the quotation or tender sum exceeds the estimated contract.
- The permission from the Executive Councillor being sought before proceeding if the value exceeds the estimated contract by more than 15%.

Project Name: Upgrade and hosting of the Cemetery and Crematorium Administration System

1 Summary

1.1 The project

Upgrade the existing Cemetery and Crematorium Administration System and transfer that system to a hosted arrangement with Gower Consultants.	
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Target Dates:	
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Start of procurement	Not applicable (exempted)
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Award of Contract	Not applicable (exempted)
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Start of project delivery	November 2013
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Completion of project	March 2014
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Date that project output is expected to become operational (if not same as above)	
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1.2 Anticipated Cost

Total Project Cost	£ 23,400
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Cost Funded from:

Funding:	Amount:	Details:
Reserves	£	
Repairs & Renewals	£23,400	Bereavement Services IT R & R Fund
Climate Change Fund	£	
Other	£	

1.3 Procurement process

Gower Consultants are the leading supplier from only two in this specialist market. A waiver will be sought to exclude the competitive tendering process in these circumstances.

Detailed costing have been obtained for the work required.

2 Project Appraisal & Procurement Report

2.1 Project Background

The Epilog Burials and Cremation Administration System has been in use with the Council since 1997. Other than minor patches the current version is the original installation and is about to become unsupported. It is stored on a server running an unsupported operating system. The latest version supports a number of new features that will benefit the Council and its customers, including online and teletone bookings as well as automatic invoice generation through Oracle.

It is possible to upgrade and retain the system in-house. However, it would be necessary to not only replace the existing server but also purchase additional equipment to run the database and web-facing services, increasing both the capital and revenue costs of the system.

An alternative solution, is for Gower Consultants to host the system on our behalf. This has a number of merits:

- Capital Costs are reduced as the Council does not need to buy new and replacement servers and may actually be in a position to dispose of some obsolete ones. Current hardware replacement costs are estimated at £56,363 (lowest cost virtual server approach).
- Under this arrangement the overall revenue costs payable to Gower increase as there is a hosting “charge”. However the revenue costs attributable to server support internally (based on the required servers) are consequently reduced.
- The system will benefit from 24/7 support directly by those who supply the system, particularly where the online booking option is in use.
- There is more flexibility in use as the system can be accessed from multiple sites without any infrastructure upgrades.
- A hosted solution will make it easier to carry out software upgrades and patching in the future. Patching and minor upgrades are included in the charges.

2.2 Aims & objectives

The project aims to move the entire Epilog Burials and Cremations Administration System to a hosted environment provided by Gower Consultants and in the process upgrade to the latest ‘release’.

The outcomes for Cambridge City Council and the provider will be:

- To contribute to the Council’s requirements for the management of the cremation and burials service at an affordable cost.
- To realise efficiency gains wherever possible.
- To provide a robust and resilient service to the customer.

- To make more efficient/effective use of information technology.
- To provide a more accessible system allowing for a choice of operating locations

This contributes to the Council's Vision Statement:

"A city in the forefront of low carbon living and minimising its impact on the environment from waste and pollution" by ultimately reducing both electricity consumption and emissions using more efficient use of information technology.

2.3 Major issues for stakeholders & other departments

- The service has minimal impact on other services as it is unique and self-contained.

2.4 Summarise key risks associated with the project

Proposals suggest higher costs than current

- The provider has put forward proposals that will supply and manage the system in conjunction with the Council at a lower cost than in-house arrangements. The Council will ensure that the proposal is adhered to through close management and legal agreement.

Inability to provide full range of services required

- Should the provider not be in a position to provide the full range of services requested then the matter will be referred back to the Project Team to discuss and agree the next steps. Market testing has identified this as a low risk.

2.5 Financial implications

- a. Appraisal prepared on the following price base: 2013/14
- b. Specific grant funding conditions are:
 - No special funding conditions are associated with the project.
- c. Other comments - no other comments

2.6 Net revenue implications (costs or savings)

Revenue	£	Comments
Maintenance	27012	4 year estimated total based on 2.5% inflation
R&R Contribution	0	
Developer Contributions	0	
Energy savings	(0)	
Income / Savings	(0)	
Net Revenue effect	27,012	Cost/(Saving)

2.7 VAT implications

There are no significant adverse VAT implications to this project.

2.8 Energy and Fuel Savings

(a) Is this project listed in the Carbon Management Plan?	No
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2.9 Climate Change Impact

Positive Impact			No effect	Negative Impact		
			Nil			

2.10 Other implications

None to report

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been prepared for this project.

2.11 Staff required to deliver the project

Service	Skills	Total Hours
Legal	Contract advice	21

Bereavement Services	Service / System Knowledge and use	74
ICT Client	IT Advice	37

2.12 Dependency on other work or projects

At the time of this proposal there are no know dependencies on other work or projects.

2.13 Background Papers

- Bereavement Services Business Plan (2011-2016)
- Gower Consultants Company Products Specification
- Forward plan document

2.14 Inspection of papers

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