

<b>REPORT TO</b>	<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>
Cabinet	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013

Report template revised June 2008



<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS) - Upgrade	Cllr Hamman	I Parker	13

## SUMMARY AND LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

### Efficient, Effective and Exceptional Council

#### 0 Background

- 0.1 EDRMS is a document imaging system that both allows users to scan documents to a secure data storage system and also allows other IT systems to electronically send records for secure storage within EDRMS.
- 0.2 EDRMS is not a simple scanning machine; it is a complex state of the art document storage facility. It is crucial to the smooth running of a number of services, including Revenues, Housing Benefits & Council Tax Support, Planning and Gateway.
- 0.3 EDRMS is accepted and recognised as being industry standard for producing documentary evidence if required within a legal environment. Once the image is scanned to EDRMS it is date and time stamped and the content is fixed. The image cannot be tampered with or enhanced in any way, ensuring a full audit trail is accurately kept.
- 0.4 Within EDRMS is a product called workflow. This allows scanned images to be sent to various systems electronically allowing multiple users and systems to access the same stored image simultaneously. It also provides a workflow process definition to control the flow of documents through numerous Council services
- 0.5 A critical part of EDRMS is now failing on a regular basis and it is crucial for the continued smooth running of Council services to undertake a technical upgrade to the “Optical Plasmon Drive”.

#### 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet approves the following:

- (1) To incur the requisite expenditure to replace the “Optical Plasmon Drive” to the EDRMS system with an Image Server together with associated upgrades and licenses as detailed in the report, in accordance with financial regulation no.3 .
- (2) To waive paragraphs 10.1 to 10.3 (intermediate value procurement) of the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules to enable this essential upgrade work to be carried out by our current supplier for the reasons set out in this report.
- (3) To vire £50,000 of the capital budget set aside for CAPS replacement to fund the proposed expenditure on EDRMS, in accordance with financial regulation no.3.

## 2 DETAILS AND REASONING

- 2.1 EDRMS has been installed in the Council for over 10 years. It was last upgraded in 2009 to “EDRMS Civica (Comino) Workflow W2”. That procurement included a maintenance contract which is entered annually and called upon as necessary through our supplier, Civica, as they are the sole providers of the EDRMS solution for South Ribble Borough Council.
- 2.2 Recently we have received notification that the Optical Plasmon Drive, used to store documents, is no longer supported in full. This is not unusual within an IT environment as technology progresses at a terrific pace. The Optical Plasmon Drive is currently maintained on a *best endeavours* basis – again normal industry practice. There have been few incidents associated with the Optical Plasmon Drive since its implementation in 2009; however, as with all mechanical devices failure will eventually occur.
- 2.3 Our supplier has honoured the maintenance commitment and has been called on a number of occasions over the last few weeks when the Optical Plasmon Drive has failed. However the failure rate is now at a level where services are being unacceptably affected by downtime. The downtime can run into several hours whilst an engineer is called to attend.
- 2.4 Such is the disruption to services, that the current position can no longer be sustained. Our supplier, whilst they continue to honour the maintenance agreement, has also recommended that the product is upgraded as a matter of urgency because:
  - (a) Next year the Optical Plasmon Drive will no longer be supported at all
  - (b) The failure rate is such that the product may become irreparable – in which instance we would be liable for its replacement costs
- 2.5 This upgrade is urgent and time critical; Civica is the sole supplier of the Council’s EDRMS solution and offers the best value for money option. To move away from Civica would require a full end-to-end replacement of EDRMS which will be both costly and time-consuming.
- 2.6 As technology continues to adapt and change at a fast pace, what was once cutting-edge can very quickly become obsolete. This is the case with the Optical Plasmon Drive solution.
- 2.7 Presently the EDRMS product operates on six physical servers. The proposed solution would normally require an upgrade to all servers, plus an upgrade to supporting software. However, South Ribble Borough Council virtualised its IT environment a few years ago and is therefore able to migrate the proposed solution to the virtual environment, thus avoiding expensive hardware costs in the order of £60,000.
- 2.8 Having researched and also consulted with the supplier, the solution identified is to replace the Optical Plasmon Drive with an Image Server, thus removing our reliance on the failing optical drive which has since become obsolete.
- 2.9 Our supplier has also confirmed that migrating to a virtual environment is a preferred solution, offering greater stability, resilience and less reliance on hardware that can be prone to failure.
- 2.10 In order to procure the Image Server and associated upgrades and licenses from current years’ budget it is intended to utilise £50,000 of the capital budget set aside in this financial year for CAPS replacement.

## WIDER IMPLICATIONS

In the preparation of this report, consideration has been given to the impact of its proposals in all the areas listed below, and the table shows any implications in respect of each of these. The risk assessment which has been carried out forms part of the background papers to the report.

<b>FINANCIAL</b>	<p>The Capital Programme includes a budget of £93,000 in the current year for replacing the CAPS system and £200,000 in 2014/15 for the EDRMS system. These budgets are funded from the ICT Strategy reserve.</p> <p>As it is now anticipated that the CAPS replacement project is likely to be commence in 2015/16, it is proposed to vire £50,000 of the £93,000 budget to fund the expenditure required in relation to EDRMS (as detailed in this report).</p>
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<b>LEGAL</b>	<p>The Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) set out the rules that apply where the Council is proposing to purchase goods, works and services.</p> <p>In this particular instance the proposed contract constitutes intermediate value procurement (£10,000 to £75,000). Ordinarily at least 3 quotations should be obtained for such procurement including a quotation from a local supplier. The detailed requirements are set out in paragraph 10 of the CPR.</p> <p>However para 44 of the CPR allows for a waiver of CPR requirements where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated. It is considered that in this instance the following exceptional circumstance applies:</p> <p>"The nature of the works to be carried out or the goods or services to be provided has been investigated and it is demonstrated to be such that a departure from the requirements of the Rules is justified.</p> <p>In particular the works contemplated are essential maintenance works that need to be carried out by the current supplier Civica.</p>
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<b>RISK</b>	<p>The main risk is to do nothing. The EDRMS product is critical to the smooth operation of a number of services within South Ribble Borough Council. Failure to replace the Optical Plasmon Drive could lead to it failing irreparably resulting in systems (and therefore services) ceasing to function.</p>
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<b>THE IMPACT ON EQUALITY</b>	None
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<b>OTHER (see below)</b>
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<i>Asset Management</i>	<i>Corporate Plans and Policies</i>	<i>Crime and Disorder</i>	<i>Efficiency Savings/Value for Money</i>
<i>Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion</i>	<i>Freedom of Information/ Data Protection</i>	<i>Health and Safety</i>	<i>Health Inequalities</i>
<i>Human Rights Act 1998</i>	<i>Implementing Electronic Government</i>	<i>Staffing, Training and Development</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>

## BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None