

<b>REPORT TO</b>	<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>
Cabinet	6 <sup>th</sup> November 2013



Report template revised June 2008

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>PORTFOLIO</b>	<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
Siemens Hi-Path Telephony System Upgrade	Cllr Hamman	I Parker	6(a)

## SUMMARY AND LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

### Efficient, Effective and Exceptional Council

#### 0 Background

- 0.1 South Ribble Borough Council's over-arching telephony solution is provided by Siemens, who are world leaders in providing telecoms solutions. The existing telecom architecture covers switchboard and desk-phones throughout the Council, apart from Gateway which also uses an enhanced facility provided by Telephonetics that integrates with Siemens Hi-Path.
- 0.2 The existing telephony solution provides the voice-hub for all telephony communications throughout the Council. Every single call to/from the Civic Centre goes via Siemens Hi-Path. Facilities contained within Siemens Hi-Path include:
- Free internal calls
  - On-Hold Function
  - Call Forwarding
  - Call Group Pick-up
  - Call Diverting
  - Free Call Conferencing Facility (external calls attract a telephone call charge)
  - Routing Calls (particularly Gateway calls)

#### 1 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet approves the following:

- (1) To incur the requisite expenditure to upgrade Siemens Hi-Path Telephony Architecture to the latest version, including Microsoft 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 £43,000 of the capital budget set aside for CAPS replacement to fund the proposed expenditure on Siemens Hi-Path, in accordance with financial regulation no.3.

## 2 DETAILS AND REASONING

- 2.1 South Ribble Borough Council installed Siemens Hi-Path Telephony System in 2007/8. This procurement included a maintenance contract which is entered into on an annual basis but has rarely been called upon. Indeed, the calls that have been raised are typically to help with configurations, rather than the need to fix faults.
- 2.2 Siemens are world leaders in telecom systems for Call Centres and complex telephony environments. The Siemens Hi-Path telecoms architecture had been operating faultlessly for over 5 years and continues to do so. Such has been its overall stability that its replacement/upgrade was deferred and the budget programmed into 2016/17.
- 2.3 However, problems have manifested themselves in Gateway when using soft-phones\* with some calls being cut off prematurely, some being lost and a delay in voice transmission being experienced.
- \* soft-phones are telephones that are routed via PCs using headsets.
- 2.4 Siemens engineers have been on-site and agree that the problems are restricted to software issues and also agree that a full scale upgrade is not necessary at this stage. Their recommendation is that a software upgrade of the Hi-Path system from version 4000 / 4 to version 4000 / 6 is completed to rectify these faults.
- 2.5 Whilst problems were initially identified in Gateway and were at first restricted to soft-phones, other areas of the Council are also reporting telecom failures. Gateway is the most telephone demanding area of the Council but any catastrophic failure of software could lose telephone connectivity to the entire Council.
- 2.6 The stability of the product initially allowed us to defer any upgrade to 2016/17. However, this particular software failure requires immediate attention. The remaining hardware and architecture remains stable and will continue to be deferred to 2016/17.
- 2.7 In accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR) the proposed procurement is one of intermediate value (£10,000 to £75,000). Ordinarily at least 3 requests for quotations should be obtained. Further normally at least one local supplier should be included in the suppliers to be invited to quote. However, in this instance a procurement exercise is not a practical solution. The basic reality of the situation is that this maintenance work needs to be carried out by our current supplier Siemens. Also this work requires immediate attention. Paragraph 44 of the CPR does allow for the waiver of specific rules in exceptional circumstances. It is considered that this is the case in this instance.

## 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. This budget is 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 £43,000 of the £93,000 budget to fund the expenditure required in relation to Siemens Hi-Path (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). The detailed requirements of such procurement 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 paragraph applies:</p> <p>"There are other circumstances which are genuinely exceptional and not of the Council's own making".</p>
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<b>RISK</b>	<p>The main risk is to do nothing. The Telephony System is critical to the smooth operation of a number of services within South Ribble Borough Council. Failure to upgrade from version 4 to 6 could lead to catastrophic failure leaving the Council without any telephony solution.</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