

Additional information for Overview & Scrutiny Economic – 5 November 2015.

Recommendations

Overview and Scrutiny Economic are asked to recommend to Cabinet the inclusion of a supplementary capital bid to the 2015/16 capital programme for an upgrade to the Capita payments system.

Summary

The Capita software enables the processing payments received by the Council (including Council Tax, NDR and all Council fees) through use of credit and debit cards using on-line payments (on the HDC website), automated phone payments, and payments at the call centre. The system also enables the use of Allpay cards through post offices and pay points for those people without access to bank accounts or credit cards. The minimal cheques received by the Council are also processed via this software. The back end of the software is fundamental to reconciling and balancing of income on a daily basis and ensuring the integrity of the General Ledger in the Financial Management System.

The Capita system is due for an upgrade due to software improvements. At the same time we are proposing that software is upgraded to the cloud based system with an additional interface to the Leisure Centre system. The upgrade is required to continue support from the Supplier.

The benefits of the cloud based system are:

- Improved service resilience as the software can be accessed at any approved HDC computer; at present the software is limited to one machine in the Finance office.
- More than one person can operate the system at one time, as the software is on one machine, only that person can process income receipts.
- All future upgrades are included and will automatically be implemented with no disturbance to the daily function of the system. Savings will be the ICT and Finance officer time not spent in the upgrade and testing process.
- Hosted externally, Council servers will not be needed or replaced.

Income received at the Leisure centres is manually processed once a week into the Finance system delaying the financial reporting timetable. It is proposed to establish an interface between the Leisure centre and financial systems to automate this process. Introducing this link now, before the implementation of the new financial system, will reduce the time taken to produce financial reporting information rather than in 18 months' time.

The capital costs are estimated to be £17,000 for the upgrade, cloud based system and interface. There is an additional £3,000 revenue cost per year from 2016/17. Officer time will be saved and this will be used to ease capacity issues within the team.

It is proposed to use the 2015/16 underspend capital programme to fund this project.

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3 November 2015