



REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATE: 25 JUNE 2009

HEAD OF SERVICE: HEAD OF ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
LOUISE SANDALL

REPORTING OFFICER: ICT MANAGER
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SUBJECT: AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the provision of audio/visual equipment for Council meetings in response to a request from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 5 May 2009.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Council is recommended to approve the addition to the capital programme for the procurement of an audio/visual system for the Council Chamber at an estimate of £40,000 to be met from the capital contingency fund.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The existing audio system employed in the Council Chamber is:

- hard-wired;
- has no facilities for recording;
- suffers badly from local interference;
- has low quality sound output; and
- has no voting, talk queue functions or similar modern features.

- 3.2 As part of the plans to refresh the Council meeting rooms, Overview & Scrutiny on 5 May 2009 resolved that:

“A recommendation be made to the Policy and Resources committee to introduce audio visual equipment into the Council Chamber to provide accurate transcripts of meetings”

- 3.3 Council resolved on 15 January 2009 to “defer the improvements of the sound system for further investigation.” At that time there was the possibility of external funding towards the cost of the system, this was not successful.

4.0 REPORT

- 4.1 As part of the investigations into options a presentation was made to CMT and some Members by a company who have prepared budgetary costings as follows. This covers the general area requested in the O & S recommendation:

Item	Description	Total
1	Conference Radio Audio System	24,648
2	Sound Reinforcement – to provide highly intelligible speech dispersed through the Council Chamber	2,211
3	Radio Microphones (one)	1,179
4	Infrared Hard of Hearing System – for DDA compliance	3,122
5	Digital recorder this will hold 17 days of audio, permitting a typescript to be made by an audio-typist following meetings.	670
6	Video cameras – to enable internal broadcast of speakers or employed if webcasting meetings required at a future date.	7,312
7	Projector and screen – to project the video (above)	8,800
8	Hand held voting system (for 55 delegate units) – can be displayed upon on screen in real time.	4,462
9	Speech timer (large illuminated timer)	1,520
10	Equipment rack to house all of the hardware	892
	Owners manuals and documentation included	0
	Project Management, Staff training, help desk and first years maintenance	850
	TOTAL	£55,666

- 4.2 Not all items in the budgetary costings may be required and the list is made available in its entirety to provide possible features.
- 4.3 Whilst the improvement to sound levels and recording will facilitate transcripts, this will be an additional revenue cost. A quotation has been given at between £195 and £116 per audio hour dependent upon turnaround time.

5.0 OPTIONS

- 5.1 To consider a procurement involving the full list of ten items from part 4 (circa £55,000, as above).
- 5.2 To carry out a procurement excluding the video items (numbers 6 and 7) from part 4, leading to an improvement to the audio with the addition of voting and speech timer (circa £40,000).

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 It is proposed that the funding is provided from the capital contingency fund. One of the uses of which is for small scale (up to £50k) capital schemes outside the usual bidding process.
- 6.2 The remaining balance on the fund would still fall within the approved criteria after providing the funding for this project.
- 6.3 The revenue implications can be expected to be maintenance at around 15% of capital costs (£8250 for full solution), transcription costs (which should only be called upon on an ad-hoc basis, otherwise the recordings are used as a

clarification mechanism when minute writing, and recording storage media. These will be treated as growth as part of the 2010/11 budget strategy exercise.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 There are no legal implications.

8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1 No significant risks have been identified.

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 The existing audio and associated equipment is over ten years old and obsolete. Since a refurbishment of the Council Chamber is planned this is an appropriate time to carry out the work. If the Council is to upgrade the existing equipment, a logical development is to facilitate the democratic process by providing more up-to-date, additional features such as voting, recording and a speech timer.

9.2 The quotation provided is only an indicative one. The system will be procured in line with the Council's constitution.

OFFICER CONTACT: Please contact Mick Phythian, ICT Manager, if you require any further information on the contents of this report. The officer can be contacted at Ryedale House on (01653) 600666 or via mick.phythian@ryedale.gov.uk.