

URGENCY ITEMS - MINUTE OF DECISION

Delegation arrangements for dealing with matters of urgency

Paragraph 7.2.1 of the Council's Constitution provides that Chief Officers may take urgent decisions if they are of the opinion that circumstances exist which make it necessary for action to be taken by the Council prior to the time when such action could be approved through normal Council Procedures. They shall, where practicable, first consult with the Leader and Chairman (or in their absence the Vice-Chairman) and the Opposition Spokesperson of the appropriate committee.

Subject: Information Technology Investment

In early 2015, as part of the regular renewal programme, ICT replaced the then current Cisco firewalls with Checkpoint firewalls. These devices control the access to the external environment and are the first level of protection in maintaining the integrity and security of the NSDC network from cyber-attacks.

At this time (2015), the devices were specified to last for a five year term, with an amount of growth capacity built in, and with a renewal amount built into the capital programme for replacement in 2020/21.

However, at the time of specification in December 2014, the implications of agile working, the move to Castle House with the cohabitation of eight partners and the impact of an increasing number of systems being hosted externally were not known. As a result of all of these, we have seen an increase in workload on the firewalls of between 40 -50% and so there is a now much greater demand on the firewalls to handle the flow of traffic effectively to NSDC and partners. The current Checkpoint firewalls are unable to cope with such a significant increase in demand and so there is a necessity to replace the firewalls at the earliest opportunity to provide appropriate performance levels. The partner organisations bring in in excess of £250k per annum of income to NSDC and as such it is imperative that the appropriate service level is provided to enable effective service delivery to their customers.

Quotes have been obtained to replace the current Checkpoint Firewalls with a replacement infrastructure specified to accommodate future growth, being 2.5 times faster than the current environment to mitigate against the need for further upgrades for a 5 year period. In addition there is the possibility of being able to reutilise the current firewalls at the Newark Beacon site, so ensuring continued value for money from the original purchase. This will negate the requirement for further expenditure on this newly managed site which will also bring in income in to NSDC.

There is the ability to bring forward the £20,000 already in the capital programme in 2020/21 when the renewal was originally scheduled for to 2018/19. A further £18,000 is required to facilitate this procurement. This will be offset by a contribution of £10,000 from an underspend in the ICT Revenue budget 2018/19.

Comments from Financial Services (FIN18-19/5590)

The £20,000 is budgeted for as per the current Capital Programme for replacement in 2020/21. If this is brought forward and a contribution is made from Revenue, this will reduce the need to borrow.

Appropriate Committee:

Policy & Finance Committee

Details of Item (including reason(s) for use of urgency procedure):

To increase the current Capital budget from £20,000 to £38,000

The reason for the proposed urgency is that the firewall performance is causing an unsustainable degradation to performance to NSDC staff and partners service in front line service delivery.

Decision Taken:

To increase the Capital Programme by £18,000 in respect of the Information Technology Investment programme.

Members Consulted:

Councillor David Lloyd - Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee
Councillor Keith Girling – Vice Chairman of Policy & Finance Committee
Councillor Paul Peacock - Leader of the Opposition

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'D. Lloyd', followed by a period.

Signed

Date: 10.10.18