

Monmouthshire County Council

Business Case template for ICT projects

Project Title	Replacement DIP System for the Revenues Team
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A. Project proposal

It is proposed that Monmouthshire County Council enter into a contract with Northgate, in partnership with Torfaen County Borough Council's Shared Benefits Service, to supply the Revenues Team's document management system.

To achieve this we require a capital investment of £54,000 and will incur revenue costs totalling £8,700 over a 3 year contract term, giving a total cost for the system of £62,700.

It is proposed that the capital costs of £54,000 are financed through the ICT Reserve, with the ongoing revenue costs being paid from the revenue budget for Council Tax.

B. Reason for the proposal (include from a customer's prospective):

The document management system is one of the Revenues Team's key systems. The system is used to record all incoming and outgoing mail and is used to allocate and manage the day to day work of the Revenues team. The system is the main reference point for the Revenues Team and is used on a daily basis to assist with customer queries and account adjustments.

The Authority is currently using the Civica Comino system. The contract for this service has been in place since 1999 and the annual subscription falls due on 1st September each year. Whilst the system has generally worked well for the Revenues team, there has been very little investment in the system. We are currently operating version 12 of the software, with the latest release being version 22.

We have recently been advised by our software supplier that they plan to migrate all customers from Oracle to SQL by January 2018, after which time any old systems will be de supported. Therefore in order to continue to be supported, customers will need to upgrade to the latest version of the system.

A further issue has also been identified with our use of Comino, as the current software is run off a 2003 server. Use of this outdated technology has resulted in the Authority's PSN accreditation being refused, putting the Authority's IT infrastructure at risk.

Consequently there is an immediate requirement to move away from this outdated technology.

Given the short timescale involved there are three potentially viable options open to us:

- 1) To upgrade Comino to version 22 and upgrade oracle to SQL
- 2) To purchase the Information @ Work module from Northgate (our current council tax/business rate system provider)
- 3) To join up with the Shared Benefits Service who are currently using Northgate's Information @ Work system.

Both Account Managers for Comino and Northgate have been contacted and they have each provided details of the services and systems they provide. Discussions have also taken place with the Head of the Shared Benefits Service.

The information received has been evaluated on the basis of cost, system functionality, the ability to retrieve documents, implementation timescales, future system plans/roadmap and customer focus.

Appendix One provides a summary of the costs associated with each of these options.

Following this review the decision has been made to award the contract to Northgate in partnership with Torfaen County Borough Council's Shared Benefits Service.

The benefits to the Authority of the new system are:

- Confidence that we have the most up to date document management system.
- A system that is compliant and meets PSN requirements.
- A cleansed system holding documents for six years plus the current financial year which complies with GDPR requirements. The system also has an in built retention and disposal module which will ensure continued compliance in the future.
- As Torfaen's Benefits Service are already using the system much of the system setup is in place. We can prepare the document types and documents for Monmouthshire that are already in place on the system. Monmouthshire's Account details will also have to be brought across. It is estimated that this system setup will take a matter of weeks rather than months associated with any upgrade of Comino.
- Improved automation saving time and improving the Revenues Team's efficiency. Current problems with the import of emails into Comino mean that the Revenue Processors are having to print and scan emails into the system. The new system will provide an automatic link.
- The letter templates used within Information @ work are created through Microsoft Word. This technology isn't currently available to us. This move will improve and speed up the creation of letters etc.
- Potential cash savings and efficiencies (see section C below).
- Option to rollout and scale up the solution to other departments in the future.

The benefits to the customer are:

- A high quality timely service
- A continued seamless service
- The knowledge that their personal data and information is safe and secure and managed under Data Protection legislation.

- The potential to self-serve in the future. The Northgate future roadmap includes a self-scanning development which could be rolled out to our Hubs. This would improve our offering to customers and reduce waiting time at our Hubs.

C. Savings or income generation (include evidence):

An initial capital investment estimated to be £54,000 is required to upgrade the Revenues Team's document management system. This sum includes the setup of the new system, the transfer of around 650,000 images and the decommissioning of the old Comino system.

Thereafter the annual contract costs are £2,900, totalling £8,700 over the life of a 3 year contract period.

The new system has the potential to generate the following savings:

Cashable savings:

The annual costs are significantly lower than the amount paid to Comino. It is estimated that this will save Monmouthshire around £14,000 each year. A £10,000 saving has already been put forward as part of the 2018/19 MTFP. The remaining £4,000 will initially be used to pay for any unexpected development costs associated with this project. Thereafter any residual savings will be released to the MTFP.

Efficiency savings:

As detailed above, the new system will allow the Revenues Team to work more efficiently and reduce the number of touch points for the emails they handle.

D. Value to our customers and organisation?

Please refer to Section B - Reason for the proposal for the benefits to both the citizen and Monmouthshire. In addition :-

The Authority's Customer Services Strategy concentrates on putting the customer at the heart of our work and highlights that digitalisation is now part of daily life. Investing in delivering digitalised services will improve experiences for our customers and has the potential to generate efficiency savings (as noted above).

The development of the document system has direct links with the Customer Services Strategy. This recognises that there is more we can do to improve our customer contact with customers expecting quick responses to their queries.

In order to achieve this vision we require a reliable, robust, modern and user friendly document management system that sits alongside and complements the Authority's revenues system.

With continued requirements for Authorities to ensure that their IT infrastructure is safe and secure the new system will ensure that we fully comply with this requirement.

E. Future marketing/commercial/enterprise opportunities from your proposal?

The new document management system, Information @ Work needs to be more flexible and responsive to service requirements

The potential future development of customer self-service will enable us to offer an improved offering to our customers.

There is also the option to roll this out to other departments across the Council in the future.

F. Additional information: Are you aware of any similar ICT system within our organisation or any other organisation?

This is one of the Revenues Team's key systems and is standard across most Local Authorities.

Each Local Authority run their own document management system and there is a mix of systems used across Wales (with Northgate's Information @ work and Civica's Comino being the key systems). As more partners join the SRS, there is an expectation that Authorities collaborate on their core financial systems. The proposed collaboration with Torfaen sets a precedent for other Local Authorities to join in the future.

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