

Agenda Item 36.

TITLE	Library Service Management System
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on 30 July 2015
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Heather Thwaites, Director of Environment Graham Ebers, Director of Resources
LEAD MEMBER	Pauline Jorgensen, Executive Member for Resident Services

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Library Service supports the achievement of vibrant and self-sustaining communities through the provision of materials and services for enjoyment, education, creative and engagement activities.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive agree to extend the current provision of the library service management system for up to two years.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The Civica I.T. management system used by the Library Service over the past eight years has proven to be successful both functionally and financially and is expected to continue to meet the needs of the service in this way. It is therefore recommended to extend the use of this service for up to two years

Background

Libraries are a statutory service for councils and Wokingham Borough Council has a long history of implementing this statutory duty robustly, economically and flexibly. For many years, we have developed creative ways to not only encourage users into the Libraries themselves, but also to take the Library to those who cannot always make a physical visit.

Wokingham Borough Council operates 10 libraries and a Home Library Service. Last year the libraries had over 470,000 physical visits and a further 90,000 online contacts.

The Library Service holds around 187,000 hard copy items in stock, and has approximately 850,000 hard copy issues per annum. There are currently around 4000 eBook, 6500 eMagazine, and 1480 eAudiobook downloads per annum.

Larger libraries are open up to 45 hours per week; smaller libraries are open between 8 and 30 hours per week. Library services are available to all library members; library membership is open to all who live work or study within the Borough. Membership of the library service is free.

Just over 23,000 residents are currently active users of the service.

The Council is determined to look at how it continues to offer a high quality, valued service into the future so that Libraries evolve in line with society and local priorities. As such it is the Council's intention to embark on a robust period of consultation and engagement in the Autumn to understand how Library services (sitting alongside other Council services) contribute to the well-being of the area and its residents. This exercise will inform the future model of how library services can be delivered in Wokingham Borough. Whilst we do this piece of work, it is important that we continue to offer the high standards of services our residents have come to expect and not make any assumptions about the types of IT support and systems that will underpin such a model. It is with this in mind that the pragmatic recommendation, to extend the existing contract for no longer than 2 years, sits.

Library Service Management System

The Library service uses a computerised Library Management System (LMS) to administer much of the day to day operation of the library service. The current system used is the Spydus system from Civica, which was implemented in 2007.

The system holds details of all library members and also all library resources, and is used to record access and usage by library members.

It currently administers access to and records usage of:

- Customer book stock borrowing (inc. applying policy relating to age restricted material to such as certificated DVDs)
- Calculates hire charges and overdue charges.
- Controls access to public PCs and WiFi within the libraries.
- Controls access to online loans of ebooks, emagazines, eaudio and only subscriptions.
- It provides a public online interface for book searches, book renewals and book reservations.

Analysis of Issues

The current contract with Civica is due to come to an end in November 2015. The Contract has been extended twice in line with the contract agreement and value for money assessments. Normally the Council would, at this stage, embark on a full tender process. The Contract is less than x in value. However, as the Council is embarking on a robust engagement exercise that will inform the future delivery of this service, it is unwise to fully tender for a model that may well change following the engagement process. This would not be considered good value for money. To ensure continued value for money with this short term extension, the Council has undertaken some due diligence around the commercial terms.

Civica's Spydus product was new to UK market when the Council procured it in 2007 as its Library Management System (LMS). Since then their market share has expanded within the UK public library market and they are now one of the market leaders. The product continues to be suitable for the libraries work and future enhancements (which are very low cost or free) offer further useful functionality.

A cost comparison against similar Councils compared a variety of products including Spydus. Spydus was approximately 25% cheaper than alternatives once normalised for population size. It is likely therefore that a competitive tender would not yield significant, if any, advantage over an extension negotiation.

In order to gain sufficient benefit from the current Civica proposal, it is recommended that the contract is further extended for up to two years after which we will carry out a major review in line with the future plans and ambitions for the Library Service.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£48k (10% discount)	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£48k (10% discount)	Yes	Revenue
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£48k (10% discount)	Yes	Revenue

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Upgrade to Spydus 9 (latest version) without associated additional revenue cost.

Cross-Council Implications

The Library Service supports the activities and priorities of all services of the Council.

List of Background Papers

None

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