



Belfast City Council (Shadow)

Report to:	Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Support and Maintenance for existing Server and Storage infrastructure
Date:	30 January 2015
Reporting Officer:	Ronan Cregan, Director of Finance & Resources
Contact Officer:	Paul Gribben, Head of Digital Services

1.	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Every area of the council relies on technology, applications and access to information to deliver their services. These services are delivered within a very complex technical environment made up of virtualised servers and centralised disk based storage with critical services being replicated to a disaster recovery site in Duncrue on a daily basis.
1.2	The majority of our current server and centralised storage assets were implemented in 2010, with additional capacity provided progressively to meet business demands. These core infrastructure assets were procured together with 5 years maintenance and support services which are vital to ensure business continuity.
1.3	Gartner, the leading information technology research and advisory firm, reports that clients continue to report 80% increases in annual data needs, so continuing to make sure we have a well-planned and managed ICT Infrastructure will be essential in delivering reliable service performance. This will also enable the council to have the essential flexibility to meet unexpected requirements like those that have emerged throughout the preparations for local government reform and leisure transformation.
1.4	By the end of 2015 the majority of our hardware will require their maintenance and support services to be renewed.
1.5	This report requests the authority to purchase maintenance and support from the original supplier (DELL) ensuring coverage up to April 2017.

2.	Key Issues
2.1	Our server and storage infrastructure is central to reliable service performance. A major strategic decision was taken to consolidate our ICT Infrastructure in a virtualised server and storage environment in 2010.
2.2	The majority of the hardware in this centralised server and storage infrastructure is approaching its five year anniversary and is reaching the end of contracted maintenance and support services.
2.3	In 2 years time the current hardware will be approaching end-of-life but until then it will remain central to the council's information infrastructure. However, as hardware ages it becomes more susceptible to failure and it becomes more expensive to support. These hardware failures can have a significant effect on service availability and may impact on key services like our email and finance systems.
2.4	<p>It is our intention to procure another 2 years DELL enterprise maintenance and support services which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct telephone access 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, including holidays, to Dell's global Enterprise Expert Centre, • On-site dispatch of service technicians and/or warranty parts for repairs and resolution, • Critical situation process and emergency dispatch in parallel with troubleshooting for critical situations, • Technical Account Manager, incident management and escalation, • Case Management to help track resolution and escalation of issues.
2.5	To move information access to the next level we need to address both current and future business requirements while protecting the information that we hold on behalf of the public. We need to explore a broader picture of information access and consumption, and we must make our assessment of needs based both on the information held in corporate legacy repositories but also on how cloud storage services will be required in a modern workplace.
2.6	We have already started to explore various options around our server and storage infrastructure, comparing cloud and on premise solutions and their costs, and it is our intention to align this work with our hardware refresh lifecycle and with the accommodation strategy which will require our data centre to be relocated from Gloucester Street to a new site.

3.	Resource Implications
3.1	The council invested over £600,000 in the current server and storage infrastructure in 2010.
3.2	To protect that investment and to safeguard service continuity extending maintenance and support services will cost £130,215 for a two year contract. This will be met from the current Digital Services revenue budget.

4.	Equality and Good Relations Implications
	N/A

5	Call In
4.1	This decision is subject to Call In.

6.	Recommendations
6.1	It is recommended that Belfast City Council renews support for the current server and storage environment for two years at a cost of £130,000.
6.2	That the renewal is completed with the current supplier (DELL) due to the complex nature of the environment.
6.3	And that Digital Services begins the process of preparing a business case for replacing the current environment to take account of improvements in hardware, the flexibility of cloud computing and to fit in with the council's accommodation strategy.

7.	Decision Tracking
	Officer responsible: Paul Gribben

8.	Key to abbreviations

9.	Documents Attached
	N/A