

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Award of Web Casting Contract</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>20 September 2011</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Strategic Director, Resources</b>		
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Name:</b>	<b>Mark Wall</b>	<b>Tel:</b> 29-1006
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<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 The Meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Planning Committee and Overview & Scrutiny Commission have been web cast since September 2008. Following discussions with the Leaders of the various Groups, it was proposed that a tendering exercise be undertaken to provide for a new 3-year contract for the web casting of meetings.
- 1.2 The report outlines the tendering exercise and seeks approval for the award of the contract to the successful bidder to be delegated to the Strategic Director, Resources.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 That the award of a 3-year contract for the web casting of meetings and associated events be delegated to the Strategic Director, Resources.

**3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:****Review of the Project**

- 3.1 The contract with the current supplier, Public-i was due to end on the 31<sup>st</sup> March, however following discussions with the Leaders Group a 6-month extension was agreed to enable a tendering exercise for a new 3-year contract to be undertaken. The cost of renewing the public-i contract for further 6-months was £10,785.
- 3.2 The provision of web casting is fully supported by all the Group Leaders and in having regard to securing best value for the council it was felt that a tendering exercise should be undertaken.

**The Tender Process**

- 3.3 A tendering exercise in line with procurement requirements has been undertaken with the intention that a new contract would be effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2011. The deadline for tender submissions was the 12<sup>th</sup> September and a total of 5 expressions of interest had been received pending final submission of the

tender documents. These will be reviewed by officers and an update given at the committee meeting. However, in order that a decision can be made on the award of the contract to enable it to be effective from the 1<sup>st</sup> October, approval is sought to delegate authority to the Strategic Director, Resources.

### **Accessibility**

- 3.4 The web casting of meetings provides an additional means of communicating the decision-making process and informing the electorate of the actions of the council. It provides access to those who are unable to attend council meetings in person due to work, family or other commitments and thereby considerably extends the transparency of the council's decision making. It also enables interested parties to share information from the web casts with others across the social media network.
- 3.5 The meetings that have been web cast are also archived on the council's web site which enables anyone to access a meeting that they may have been unable to attend or wish to review.

### **Review of the Web-Casting Protocol**

- 3.6 The success of the web casting of meetings has led to questions being raised over the use of images from web casts on other e-media forums such as YouTube and Facebook. Public-i has improved the accessibility of the system to enable viewers to share content of web casts and therefore the protocol has been updated to account for this change.
- 3.7 A revised protocol was been drawn up and approved at the last committee meeting.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The Leaders Group have previously considered the proposal and supported the extension of the current contract with a view to awarding a new 3-year contract following a tendering exercise; for which sufficient resources would be allocated from the council's budget.

## **5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:**

### Financial Implications:

- 5.1 The agreed 6-month extension with Public-i pending the award of a 3-year contract was been priced at £10,785.
- 5.2 The cost of the 3-year contract was been estimated at £65,000 based on the previous contract and a recurring budget of £20,000 has been set aside within the Democratic Services budget to meet the extension of the contract and the on-going commitment. The costs of contract awarded are within the budget.

*Finance officer consulted: Anne Silley*

*Date: 05/09/2011*

Legal Implications:

- 5.3 There are no legal implications associated with the report and appropriate guidance to Members and officers in respect of those meetings being web cast has been issued.

*Lawyer consulted: Abraham Ghebre-Ghiorghis Date: 01/09/2011*

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 There are no equalities implications arising from the report; however the provision of web casting does enable greater access to meetings and the decision-making process for those people who have internet facilities or access to such facilities and are unable to attend the meetings.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 The provision of web casting enables direct access to both live and archived meetings without the need for attendance and thereby reduces the carbon footprint for travel to and from the meetings.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 There are no crime & disorder implications arising from this report.

Public Health Implications

- 5.7 There are no public health implications arising from this report.

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.8 The provision of web casting does enable an additional means of informing the electorate of the decisions being taken by the council; however the investment in necessary technology to maintain the service will need to be regularly evaluated against the actual use of the facility by the public.
- 5.9 With the web casting of meetings, and in particular the Planning Committee, there is the possibility that recorded evidence will be used in appeal hearings and there is a degree of uncertainty about the level to which such evidence would be taken into account by the appeal hearing. This does place an importance on the knowledge and behaviour of Members at such meetings, to ensure that the decision-making process is not compromised and therefore open to challenge in this way.
- 5.10 The importance of training of Members is therefore something that has been taken into account with a robust and mandatory training programme put in place.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.11 The provision of web casting enables greater contact with the residents of the city and thereby provides for improved interaction between the council and

residents. It also enables records of meetings to be kept and reviewed in archive format on-line when people wish to see them.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

### **Appendices:**

None

### **Documents in Members' Rooms**

None

### **Background Documents**

1. Web Cast Invitation to Tender Document.