

**POLICY, FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

**25<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF CENTRAL SERVICES**

**URGENT BUSINESS – SUN SERVER UPGRADE**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider the urgent requirement to upgrade the Council's Oracle Sun servers to allow annual Council Tax billing to be undertaken in February 2013.
- 1.2 As a result of the latest version of the Northgate applications requiring additional hardware resources it will be necessary to upgrade the memory on the Council's Oracle Sun servers.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That option 2 to purchase a new Oracle Sun server is implemented.**
- 2.2 The upgrade is purchased from the existing supplier.**
- 2.3 A withdrawal from the ICT Repairs and Renewals fund is approved to part fund the purchase of a new Oracle Sun server at a cost of £12,000.**
- 2.4 The balance of the cost is approved from the working balance at a cost of £17,000.**

**3.0 KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 The Council's current Oracle Sun server infrastructure used to support Revs & Bens and Housing applications was purchased in Dec 2009. The servers will be over 3 years old in Feb 2013.
- 3.2 It is normally the intention to utilise the Council's Oracle Sun infrastructure for a period of 4-5 years. However, experience has shown that it is sometimes necessary to upgrade the servers before the end of this period. This can occur if the Council buys additional software such as the BIDS application or the software vendor issues more resource intensive software i.e. the latest versions of the Revs & Bens and Housing application software.
- 3.3 The latest version of the Council's Revs & Bens and Housing applications utilises the Oracle 11g Application Server. The supplier of the software Northgate has found that the application server has greater than expected memory requirements. This has resulted in numerous Councils having to upgrade their servers to enable them to run the latest version of the applications.
- 3.4 Testing at Melton Borough Council has shown that the Council's current Oracle Sun server is not capable of running the latest release of Northgate Revs & Bens and Housing software without being upgraded.
- 3.5 In order to undertake annual Council Tax billing it is necessary for the Council to be running the latest version of the Northgate applications. The Council's Oracle Sun server used to run these applications therefore needs to be upgraded. An order needs to be placed imminently to ensure that the upgrade is completed on time.
- 3.6 There are two options available. These are to buy additional memory for the existing server or to purchase a new more powerful server.
- 3.7 Option 1 – Additional 16GB of memory - £16,602

An additional 16GB of memory could be purchased for the existing Oracle Sun Server. The memory chips cost £13,620. This would extend the life of the server for 12 to 18

months. The server would then have to be replaced in 12 to 18 months time at a similar cost to Option 2.

### 3.8 Option 2 – Purchase new server with 64GB of memory - £28,602

Purchase and implement a new Oracle Sun server at a total cost of £28,602. The cost of the new server hardware with 64GB memory is £15,438. This option provides a new server which would be considerably more powerful and which would have an expected life of 4 years.

In terms of value for money Option 2 is clearly the better option.

## 4.0 **POLICY AND CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 If the Oracle Sun server is not upgraded the Council is at the risk of not being able to undertake Council Tax billing in 2013.

## 5.0 **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The costs of the two options are detailed below.

### 5.2 Option 1 – Additional 16GB of memory - £16,602

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
16Gb Memory	£13,620
Support 12 months	£1,632
Installation out of hours	£1,350
<b>Total</b>	<b>£16,602</b>

### 5.3 Option 2 – Purchase new server with 64GB of memory - £29,000

<b>Item</b>	<b>Cost</b>
New Server with 64GB memory	£15,438
Support 36 months	£5,514
Installation	£7,650
<b>Total</b>	<b>£28,602</b>

5.4 There is already a sum set aside in the renewal and repair reserve to replace this server of £12,000 which can be used to part fund the purchase.

## 6.0 **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS/POWERS**

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to collect the Council Tax.

## 7.0 **COMMUNITY SAFETY**

7.1 Not directly affected.

## 8.0 **EQUALITIES**

8.1 Not directly affected.

## 9.0 **RISKS**

9.1 If the upgrade is not undertaken, the Council is very unlikely to be able to collect the 2013/14 Council Tax.

9.2 An order for the upgrade needs to be placed imminently to ensure that the new equipment is delivered on time to enable annual billing to be undertaken.

## 10.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE**

10.1 If a new Oracle Sun server is purchased this will be more energy efficient than the old server. This should have a positive impact on climate change.

## 11.0 **CONSULTATION**

11.1 The suppliers of the hardware and software have been consulted to determine the most appropriate solution. These being; Oracle the producers of the hardware and database technology, Northgate the producer of the software applications and Esteem the Council's existing supplier of Oracle Sun equipment. Management Team have also been consulted.

## 12.0 **WARDS AFFECTED**

12.1 Not directly affected.

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Date: 25 September 2012

Appendices:

Background Papers:

Reference: