

# GREATER LONDON AUTHORITY

## REQUEST FOR DIRECTOR DECISION – DD281

**Title:** Procurement and implementation of a Committee Management software system

### Executive Summary:

GLA Committee Services team requires an upgrade to, and coordination of, its IT systems in relation to the production and publication of meeting-related papers in order to continue to improve its service delivery and the performance management of that service provision. Modern.gov is a commercial system in use by a large number of Local Authorities and provides all the functions required by GLA Committee Services in an integrated way.

### Decision:

Approval is sought to waive the Procurement Code and contract directly with Modern.gov for the supply of their Committee Management software system.

The cost of the system is £48,000, which will include installation, configuration and three years maintenance. The cost of this will be met by the Directorate of Secretariat. The annual maintenance cost of £6,000 will also be met by the Directorate of Secretariat.

### AUTHORISING DIRECTOR/HEAD OF UNIT

I have reviewed the request and am satisfied it is correct and consistent with the Mayor's plans and priorities.

It has my approval.

**Name** ED WILLIAMS on behalf of:  
Mark Roberts (on leave)

**Position** Executive Director of Secretariat

**Signature** E. Williams

**Date** 30.03.10

## **PART I - NON-CONFIDENTIAL FACTS AND ADVICE**

### **Decision required – supporting report**

#### **1. Introduction and background**

GLA Committee Services has a number of administrative functions that focus on the preparation for and the aftermath of Committee Meetings. These functions include not only the timely and accurate production, distribution and management of documentation for meetings involving Assembly Members and the Mayor but the publication of all relevant material on london.gov.uk website. Currently, many of these tasks are carried out by hand and requires considerable effort.

Over the past 2 years, a number of attempts were made to identify a suitable product, commercial or bespoke, that could carry out the essential functions listed below:

- To manage and publish details of committees, committee memberships and substitute memberships;
- To manage and publish Assembly Member details, including contact details, relevant posts and register of interests entry;
- To manage the preparation and publication of agendas, reports and minutes in the required formats;
- To produce labelled and page numbered electronic agenda and minute document packs;
- To produce a calendar of meetings;
- To produce timetables for relevant committees and allow e-mail notification of relevant deadlines;
- To track actions arising from meetings;
- To produce statistics and management reports on all functions within the system
- To migrate all existing data for use within the modern.gov system

All of these attempts were unsuccessful for a variety of reasons, but mostly related to integrating the different functions to a form a seamless service.

Modern.gov has been in existence for a number of years. It had previously been considered as a likely product but was ruled out at that time since it did not have all the features required and there were incompatibilities with the GLA's website and technical infrastructure. Over the last year however, the product has developed to such a state that it now provides an excellent fit for the GLA requirements.

Reasons for requesting a Waiver of Procurement code

Limited Marketplace

- Whilst the individual functions required by Committee Services are not complex in themselves, providing them as an integrated application which can connect to other services eg. GLA website is a complex operation.
- Previous attempts at a bespoke application to create such an application have been abandoned for reasons of cost and complexity.
- The marketplace for "off-the shelf" Committee Management Systems is very limited and specialised. Furthermore, the GLA Committee functions differ somewhat from those in typical local authorities. Modern.gov is the only known (with the widest user base amongst local authorities) integrated, off-the-shelf application that meets all GLA requirements without the need for extensive customisation (and thus cost).
- The GLA has carried out extensive market research and testing into this area before requesting this approval. The market is split roughly into three segments, the high end document management systems, specialist vendors of systems and developers who can create a bespoke system. The high end

products (eg. Hummingbird, Livelink etc) were eliminated on cost grounds alone. As stated previously, a number of feasibility studies were conducted on the bespoke creation of a Committee Management System, including by the previous Content Management System supplier but abandoned. Two specialist products were investigated, based on existing use by London Local Authorities in particular and Modern.gov chosen as the one that provides the system that best represents value for money.

#### Integration

- Committee Services officers and the Technology Group feel that the product will be able to be very tightly integrated with existing processes and technical infrastructure.

#### Financial

- The cost of modern.gov compares very favourably to market testing previously carried out, particularly for the creation of a bespoke system (cost estimates have been around £45,000).

## **2. Issues for consideration**

- a) **Links to strategies and Strategic Plan**  
The GLA Committee Services carries out key functions relating to the discharge of statutory duties by the London Assembly and the Mayor. This product will automate most of these functions and thus contribute directly to those elements of the GLA Strategic Plan that relates to Committee Services.

The Strategic Plan Delivery Form reference number that relates to this proposal is: To be provided.

- b) **Impact assessments and Consultation**  
The requirement for a Committee Management System has been the subject of discussion and consultation within the whole Directorate and other stakeholders over the past year. These discussions have been led by Ed Williams, Head of Committee and Member Services.

There have also been consultation within the Web Team and Technology Group. All consultations have confirmed that the project is a feasible proposition.

- c) **Risk**  
The only major risk that was identified in the initial discussions was to ensure that the many functions provided by the software can be integrated into a seamless system which requires minimum interaction. It is planned to mitigate this by ensuring that a test system is set up which will be fully signed off by the Project Team ahead of any live implementation.

Throughout the duration of the project, risks will be managed fully using the GLA's Risk Management Framework.

### 3. Financial Comments

The capital cost of this system is £30,000, to be allocated from Secretariat 2009/10 budgets. The annual revenue cost for each of the three year's of maintenance is £6,000, to be provided by Secretariat budget giving a total cost of £48,000.

The costs will be allocated over 3 years as follows:

2009/10	
Capital cost	£30,000
Maintenance	£6,000
2010/11	
Maintenance	£6,000
2011/12	
Maintenance	£6,000
Total	£48,000

The Assembly & Secretariat team will monitor the spend/budget.

### 4. Legal Comments

#### Power to Make the Requested Decision

Under section 30 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 ("the GLA Act") (as amended), the Mayor is entitled to do anything that he considers will further one or more of the principal purposes of the GLA. These are set out in section 30(1) of the GLA Act and comprise the promotion in Greater London of economic development and wealth creation, social development and the improvement of the environment.

Section 34 of the GLA Act allows the GLA, acting by the Mayor, to do anything that is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the exercise of any functions of the GLA exercisable by the Mayor. As set out in paragraph one above, the software is to be used to administer the GLA's and the Assembly's committees. To this end the procurement of the software is facilitative of the exercise of the Authority's functions, as it will assist the Authority to administer one of its decision making processes.

#### Exemption from the requirements of the GLA's Contracts Code of Practice

The contract for provision and maintenance of the software is valued at £48,000. Paragraph 3.8 of the GLA's Contracts and Funding Code (the "Code") requires the GLA to seek three or more written quotes for a contract with a value between £5,000 and £125,000. Accordingly, the requirement to seek three or more written quotes applies to the procurement of the software, unless grounds exist to support an exemption from the requirements of the Code.

Paragraph 5.6 of the Code lists the grounds, upon which the Director may authorise an exemption from the requirements of the Code. Paragraph 5.6 includes the basis that a limited number of suitable suppliers exists to provide the software. As set out in paragraph 1 above – under the heading "Limited Marketplace" – the officers have made an extensive review of the available "off-the-shelf" software and have concluded that the software provided by Modern.gov is the only product on the market that will meet all the requirements of the GLA's Committee Services. Accordingly, the Director may authorise an exemption from the Code, if he is satisfied that the grounds to justify an exemption have been satisfied.

There is a risk that to proceed without a competitive tender may be deemed to conflict with the EC treaty principles of transparency, fairness and non-discrimination against non-UK member state providers. However, the procurement is below the OJEU threshold for the procurement of supplies and services (currently £156,442). Therefore, the risk of challenge is minimal.

The officers should ensure that a written agreement for the provision of the software is put in place between the GLA and Modern.gov. As it is an off-the-shelf product, it is likely that the software will be provided upon Modern.gov's standard licence terms. In accordance with the delegation of the GLA's legal functions to Transport for London ("TfL") under s.401A of the GLA Act, the officers should liaise with TfL's Legal Department in relation to the said licence.

**5. Background/supporting papers**

None.

**Public access to information**

Information in this form is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOI Act) and other legislation. Information on this decision will be included in the Mayor's report and decision list. The form will be available publically from then. Any facts and advice that should not be made automatically available on request should not be included in Part 1 but instead on the separate Part 2 form. Deferment is only applicable where release before that date would compromise the implementation of the decision being approved.

Is the publication of this approval to be deferred? NO

If yes, for what reason:

Until what date:

Is there a part 2 form – NO

**ORIGINATING OFFICER DECLARATION:**

*Tick to indicate approval (✓)*

**Legal Advice:**

The Commercial Law and Projects team have commented on this proposal.

✓

**Financial Advice:**

The Assembly and Secretariat finance team have commented on this proposal on behalf of the Assistant Director of GLA Finance.

✓

**Executive Director, Resources**

I have been consulted about the proposal and confirm that financial and legal advice have been taken into account in the preparation of this report.

**Signature**

*M. J. Bell*

**Date**

*26.3.10*