

## **Agenda Item: 13 – “Marked to Follow”**

**To:** Cambridgeshire Police Authority

**From:** Chief Constable

**Date:** 29<sup>th</sup> June 2010

### **TELEPHONY SYSTEM REPLACEMENT AND RELOCATION OF THE FORCE SWITCHBOARD**

#### **1. Purpose**

- 1.1 This report seeks the release of capital funds to support the ongoing upgrade to the Constabulary telephony system, whilst at the same time supporting and facilitating a move of the Force switchboard as part of changes to the contact management arrangements.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The current telephony equipment which was installed in the late 1990's is reaching end of life and is being replaced on a rolling basis to ensure continuity of future service and to facilitate the development of other functions or systems as they come on line. The aged telephony equipment cannot be extended, and from a technological perspective there can be no meaningful development of the current system. The replacement “Internet Protocol Telephony” upgrade will also bring with it convergence of voice and data networks with the concomitant business benefits of integrating audio, video and data applications. Beyond this the new technology is consistent with joining up applications across partners, and therefore will also help to facilitate potential future collaborative efforts with Forces or other agencies.
- 2.2 The next steps for the upgrade entitled “Voice Over Internet Protocol” (VOIP) were outlined in the Capital Programme approved by the Police Authority on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2010, but subject to further report to the Finance and Resources Committee. The £1.3m programme was phased over three years (£500k in each of the first two years and £300k in the third year). In due course there will be some annual savings on maintenance of equipment and lines, which will come by natural contract cessations and consolidation of equipment. Data cabling has already been installed in most of Copse Court, Cambourne, Chord Park and some parts of headquarters.
- 2.3 Over the last two years the Constabulary has employed a small “Quest” team to take a citizen focussed approach to examining various business processes. In particular, the team has examined our call handling arrangements which currently incorporate a Switchboard, Police Service Centre (PSC) and Force Control Room (FCR) to manage all calls into the organisation. The Citizen Focus Panel has received presentations on the detail of the business process re-engineering involved in the work of the Quest team.

Its approach has been entirely focussed on the experience of callers to the Constabulary, and the redesigned model means that there are fewer times when a caller has to explain his or her query. The number of processes involved leading to an Officer being despatched where necessary is also reduced.

- 2.3 There are potentially some savings to be made in this business realignment. Three posts are saved immediately in relation to reductions in the switchboard staffing levels, although the Quest team modelling has suggested savings in the long term in the region of £2m. Actual savings will clearly need to reflect the cost of the necessary changes and full implementation in due course.

### **3. Project Dependencies**

- 3.1 The two separate projects to upgrade the Force telephony system and to implement revised call handling arrangements have become connected. The technological requirement for moving the switchboard involves making changes to the existing telephony arrangements. As previously set out such changes to old technology are no longer appropriate. Beyond this the completion of the VOIP work to incorporate the PSC will also be necessary to include the switchboard requirements. As a consequence this report is brought forward for the attention of the full Authority in order to facilitate a timely consideration of approval to support the ongoing telephony upgrade, and two options are presented for consideration by the Authority to release the appropriate funds.
- 3.2 The first option would be to now release the £1.3m capital scheme as reported above. However, a second option which takes account of the current uncertainties in finances going forward given the Government's current funding review, would be to authorise the release of £500k (Year 1) from this capital scheme. This would facilitate the works required at Thorpe Wood and Copse Court and facilitate the switchboard move at the same time.
- 3.3 If the Authority were to approve either of the above options the ICT department would have available to them the detailed technical specifications to ensure that this work can progress as soon as possible. The Constabulary Change Management Board reviewed both projects on the 27<sup>th</sup> May 2010, where it was agreed that the upgrade and switchboard replacement should be progressed simultaneously.

### **4. Recommendation**

- 4.1 The Authority is recommended to:-
- (a) Release £500k (Year 1) from the approved 2010/11 Capital Programme (Scheme CP10/09), without further reference to the Finance and Resources Committee;
  - (b) Delete Year 2 and Year 3 allocations.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Source Document (s)	Contact Officer	Location
Capital Programme 2010/11 Police Authority agenda 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2010.	Deputy Chief Constable John Feavyour (01480) 422532	Cambridgeshire Constabulary Hinchingsbrooke Park, Huntingdon, Cambs, PE29 6NP.
<p>Originating Officer: DCC</p> <p>Is it considered that this report contains 'exempt information' and should be considered in private?    NO</p> <p>If the answer is "YES", please state the nature of the exempt information <u>and the relevant clause(s)</u> in Part 1 of Revised Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972</p> <p>.....</p> <p>The attached report has been cleared with the undermentioned officers: (delete as appropriate)</p> <p>Chief Constable/Treasurer</p> <p>Others:</p> <p>Submitted on: 25<sup>th</sup> June 2010</p> <p>A report will not be sent to the Authority unless this box has been satisfactorily completed and all necessary consultation carried out - the responsibility for which rests with the originator (except for consultation with the Chairman and this will be undertaken by the Chief Executive).</p>		