

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Approve the expenditure of up to £185,462.50 for installation of Audio Visual Conferencing System Equipment in Committee Room, Plough Lane
Date of decision:	25 October 2023
Decision maker:	Director of Resources and Assurance
Authority for delegated decision:	<p>Reallocation of approved budget: To approve reallocation of existing capital funding to deliver Plough Lane building infrastructure changes options for providing space to accommodate meetings with customers and public committee meetings, including the associated infrastructure requirements to deliver the work.</p> <p>Decision: That:</p> <p>a) £250k of the approved £500k, but un-committed, reconfiguration and improvement budget for the Ryefield Centre estate capital programme 2020/21 is reallocated to complete Plough Lane Council offices building infrastructure changes;</p> <p>b) the Director of Resources and Assurance be authorised to take all operational decisions necessary to implement the above recommendations within the approved budget.</p>
Ward:	All Wards
Consultation:	No external consultation.
Decision made:	To direct award a contract via the Under Essex Procurement Hub framework EPHF001_Webcasting to VP-AV Limited to complete installation of audio visual conferencing equipment within Committee Room 1, Plough Lane Offices, Hereford, and to provide annual maintenance and support for a four year term, at a cost of up to £185,462.50, inclusive of annual costs.
Reasons for decision:	<p>Herefordshire Council has a dedicated committee meeting room (Committee Room 1) for use by officers to run both public and internal meetings. This assigned room currently has four TV screens and a camera which staff can connect to their laptops to run the meetings.</p> <p>Herefordshire Council requires a solution which will provide in room audio enhancement through delegate microphones, enable hybrid meetings to be run, with some presenters in the room and some attending remotely, and allow meetings to be recorded and live streamed to the public without the need for external third parties.</p>
Equality Considerations	<p>Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows: A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to –</p> <p>a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other</p>

	<p>conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;</p> <p>b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;</p> <p>c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.</p> <p>15. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services.</p> <p>Compliance – VP-AV Limited will ensure the technical solution is effective and useable in alignment with the DDA act 1999 (later revision 2015) and BS8300.</p>
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	<p>Not having a capital budget for the work will prevent the creation of additional meeting space been set up to deliver committee and public meetings at site.</p> <p>Mitigation: The workplace programme reduces its scope of work to only deliver within existing funding.</p> <p>Room layout will not be supported by the audio visual solution proposed.</p> <p>Mitigation: Democratic Services will work closely with the supplier to ensure a solution to accommodate a number of meeting layouts.</p>
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	<p>Briefly summarise any alternative options and say why they were rejected.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To not utilise committee conferencing equipment. This was not recommended on the basis that Herefordshire Council holds both physical and hybrid meetings. To hold hybrid meetings requires committee conferencing apparatus. Further, committee conferencing equipment enables the council lead in example by creating highly accessible public committees. For example, via online streaming, recordings and through established internet media this gives the council a global reach 2. To stay with the current system. This is not recommended. Democratic services routinely receive feedback from members and members of the public that the broadcast quality using the existing camera and microphone system is poor. Often, to the point where the spoken voice is inaudible and the quality of the video is of poor quality.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	N/A

Signed

Andrew Lovegrove
Director of Resources & Assurance

Date: 25 October 2023