



PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

INDIVIDUAL DECISION BY THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY IN CONSULTATION WITH THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

TOPIC - GOVERNMENT CONNECT IMPLEMENTATION

PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

The Access to Information Procedure Rules – Part 4, Section 22 of the Council's Constitution provides for a decision to be made by an individual member of Cabinet.

In accordance with the Procedure Rules, the Corporate Director (Governance), the Chief Executive and the Head of Finance are consulted together with Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Principal Scrutiny Committee and all Members of the relevant Scrutiny Panel (individual Ward Members are consulted separately where appropriate). In addition, all Members are notified.

The Portfolio Holder for Performance and Organisational Development has been consulted and concurs with the proposed decision.

Five or more of these consulted Members can require that the matter be referred to Cabinet for determination.

Contact Officers:

Case Officer:

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Committee Administrator

Eleanor Hogston, Tel: 01962 848 155, Email: ehogston@winchester.gov.uk

SUMMARY

Approval is sought to implement Government Connect. Transformation requires recognised standards of information security and trusted communication links across government. Once secure and trusted links are established across government there are limitless Service Transformation opportunities that can be exploited to establish real shared services and achieve significant service improvements and efficiency savings. As a member of the GSi family GCSx provides LAs with a recognised and trusted communication link to central and local government.

Regulatory Compliance

We handle 'sensitive personal data' and data protectively marked as 'RESTRICTED' by central government. This data is typically provided by citizens to government because they are obliged to provide it. The Data Protection Act requires that such 'sensitive personal data' is protected. Authorities handling and transferring sensitive personal data, but which do not comply with recognised standards of Information Security management, and do not use the most secure methods of transfer available, are at risk of non compliance. The Information Commissioner now holds powers to carry out spot checks and to impose fines.

Government Policy and LGA Guidelines

Central Government must comply with the data handling guidelines defined by the Cabinet Office. These guidelines clarify and reinforce the Data Protection Act for government controlled data. Equivalent guidelines for local government will soon be released by the Local Government Association.

Department of Working Pensions (DWP) has already concluded it will only provide RESTRICTED data to authorities via a government approved connection from 31 March 2009. Other Departments are likely to follow suit.

Service Transformation

The service transformation agenda is dominated by initiatives relying on data transfer. Correspondingly, such initiatives need trusted communications channels in order to achieve their potential. There is a rapidly growing list of real opportunities that are wholly dependent on Government Connect e.g. Electoral Registration have also been advised that they will need to use Government Connect.

Strategic Alignment

Government strategy is to procure a 'Public Sector Network', the first stage of this is a project called 'Ocean', which will replace the GSi in 2011. Ocean and PSN will enable more seamless connectivity throughout government and the wider public sector. Being part of Government Connect will not only provide the benefits listed above, but will ensure they are consolidated and supported through the next generation government network.

The project team for PSN is in discussions with the HPSN2 team and it is planned that the two should be able to link seamlessly.

It is unlikely that Members will need to use Government Connect in their day to day Council business, as they will continue to use the existing email network. In order to meet Government Connect standards, we have had to enhance general security over the network (which would have been necessary to comply with good practice guidelines). Consequently, Members have been issued with key fobs to enable them to access our systems securely.

The cost for Government Connect is being met by DWP until March 2011; costs after that date are unknown at the present time, but are likely to not exceed £11,000 per annum.

DECISION

1. That the Head of IM&T in consultation with the Head of Legal Services be authorised to implement Government Connect.

REASON FOR THE DECISION AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Government Connect will help provide improved service delivery in a more secure environment. If this is not implemented there will be major issues for Benefits service delivery and Electoral Registration and possibly other divisions in the future.

FURTHER ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED FOLLOWING PUBLICATION OF THE DRAFT PORTFOLIO HOLDER DECISION NOTICE

N/A

DECLARATION OF INTERESTS BY THE DECISION MAKER OR A MEMBER OR OFFICER CONSULTED

N/A

DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE STANDARDS COMMITTEE

N/A

Approved by: (signature)

Date of Decision

16.04.09

Councillor Frederick Allgood – Portfolio Holder for Finance and Efficiency

22.04.09

Councillor Stephen Godfrey – Portfolio Holder for Organisational Development