**REPORT OF OPERATIONS MANAGER**

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**SUBJECT: VARIATION TO STANDING ORDERS FOR THE PROCUREMENT OF ESRI ARC ONLINE JOB MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE**

Purpose of Report
To seek approval to proceed with a variation to PCNPA Standing Orders with regards the procurement of a commercial off the shelf (COTS) job management software platform for the Countryside Management Team (CMT). One software package, ESRI Arc Online, meets all the necessary criteria for use by the team and is the market leader. It is not possible to obtain two further quotes for alternative platforms as there are currently no other commercially available platforms that provide the core functionality needed.

Background
CMT (formerly Park Delivery) require a web based digital platform for planning workloads, capacity planning, managing workflow, work recording, performance monitoring and to underpin financial planning. The system would also be used to manage compliance with aspects of Risk Assessment and Visitor Safety through improved co-ordination of inspection work related to Tree, Bridge and Footpath surveys.

Current paper based systems are not fit for purpose and a move to a centralised digital platform is desirable to ensure the team can operate more efficiently and effectively in the future, whatever the challenges and opportunities.

A web based system will facilitate job planning with volunteers, providing the framework to increase the volunteer base without the burden of extra management and the costs associated with that.

A web based system will facilitate improved engagement with visitors and residents in relation to the practical work carried out within the National Park, particularly with regards feedback.

Comparisons

There are a number of work management platforms on the market. The ESRI Arc Online platform best suits the use cases required by the Countryside Management Team, particularly with regards the following key points –

- Simple to use by non-technical staff without extensive training. The Operations Manager is trained and experienced in its use and has experience developing the platform for similar functions within his previous role.
- Utilises Web Map and Web App functionality that can be developed within the team.

- Remote web based functionality that can be deployed to teams working remotely across the authority with current hardware.
- Cloud based storage.
- Off the shelf with automated updates requiring little IT support.
- No expensive developer costs or 'ad-ons'.
- Compatible with current data storage systems.
- Useable without licence for functions by volunteers, visitors and residents.

There are currently no other COTS platforms that meet the full criteria.

ESRI Arc Online is used by similar organisations such as The Broads National Park, National Trust, The Rivers Trust and by Natural Resources Wales, undertaking similar functions to the Countryside Management Team.

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Options

- ESRI offer a National Parks Package for their Arc Online product, this combines elements of the platform into one licence, specifically for use by smaller organisations and would provide enough licences for our requirements. This software would be ready to go and could be deployed quickly within the team.
- Procurement of individual licences for the ESRI product to the sum of £9,999 rather than the bundle is possible but would limit the functionality of the system.
- Continuing without a digital platform to manage the CMT operation is undesirable.

Financial considerations

With a budget of £1m per year and staff numbering up to 32 it is deemed imperative that job management systems are digitised as soon as possible. Budget has now been earmarked for this investment for the first time at £15,000 per annum (1.5% of the overall team budget).

Additional investment may be required in the form of hardware (c£3000) for further mobile phones and/or pen tablets, this will be made within current budgets. There will be no further licencing costs, or hidden costs - the sum covers all requirements.

There will be no additional staffing costs for the support or development of the platform.

There will be no external developer costs.

The software cost is fixed for three years and will then increase in line with inflation. Adoption of this system does not limit the options for using other systems in the future, should they become available. A review of the system will take place during year three with a view to continuation or migrating to other platforms at that point.

Risk considerations

There is a risk with current paper based systems that we will fail to comply with our obligations to maintain our sites and path networks to the required standard in terms of visitor safety. There is a risk that litigation against the authority in the form of personal injury claims will be successful in the future as a consequence.

There is a risk to the operation, with increased demands for work and a static or declining budget – without the effective prioritisation of workloads and working smarter to gain efficiencies there is a risk to service levels.

Working with paper and excel based system could lead to poor public perception, we currently struggle to fulfil FOI requests due to the way records and information are collected and are stored for example.

Compliance

The system aims to facilitate the fulfilment of Park purpose more effectively and efficiently.

The system will be used to meet sustainability targets – with work batching reducing journeys and mileage in the medium term, enabling us to achieve our carbon reduction targets for example.

The system is flexible and could be used to engage the public, facilitating citizen science and data collection.

We plan to use the system to enhance our work on maximising biodiversity at our sites and on the public footpath network.

The system will be used to maximise the flow of work to volunteers and would facilitate the growth of the volunteer workforce in a sustainable and manageable way. The system will facilitate the use of technology by volunteers. This may help improve diversity within the volunteer community by providing new types of volunteer opportunities.

Welsh Language considerations
The system will comply with the requirements of the Compliance Notice served upon the Authority under Section 44 of the Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Members resolve to approve the variation to standing orders for the procurement of a web based job management system as set out in the above report.**

*Author: Steven Jones, Operations Manager.*
I have consulted with Tegryn Jones, Paul Funnel, James Parkin, Phil Barlow, Richard Griffiths, Sarah Griffiths.