

## **Delegated Officer Report**

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	<b>Shelley Kipling, Assistant Chief Executive</b>
<b>Date of Decision:</b>	<b>Monday 22 April 2024</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Access Oldham – Visitor Queue Management and Ticketing System</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Fran Lautman, Head of Customer and Digital Experience</b>
<b>Ward (s):</b>	Not applicable

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<b>Reason for the decision:</b>	<p>With a return to increasing walk-in visitor footfall in Access Oldham, together with the services imminent relocation to Spindles (currently scheduled for mid-May 2024) and a requirement to provide Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on visitor numbers and service levels, the service would now like to re-enable the Qmatic visitor management and ticketing system which was decommissioned during the Covid pandemic.</p> <p>Following a procurement process, re-enabling the existing Qmatic system has been identified as the preferred approach, allowing for the re-use of retained hardware. The software and user interface is as previously used, however, the system will be located off premise in line with Council ICT strategy. The proposed award is for a three-year contract to provide the software and hardware for the scheme.</p> <p>The capital cost of the system covering 3 years is £35,889 with an initial IT resource implementation cost of £5,220, totalling £41,109.</p> <p>The ongoing revenue costs from Year 4 will be £8,318.</p>
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The decision maker is required to authorise the contract award.

**Summary:**

Access Oldham is presently located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of Civic Centre with a street level entrance adjacent to the bus station. The service will be re-locating to the new Spindles development in the early part of 2024.

Prior to its temporary closure during the Covid pandemic, Access Oldham had a comprehensive queue management and ticket solution based on the Qmatic Orchestra system. This system provided queue management, ticketing, and reporting for multiple “walk-in” visitor services.

As the consequence of a review of services during and immediately post pandemic the Qmatic system was decommissioned, and the software support subscription terminated.

With a return to increasing footfall in Access Oldham and a requirement to provide Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on visitor numbers and service levels, the service would now like the Qmatic (or other similar) system re-installing.

Given the imminent date for relocation to Spindles (currently scheduled for mid-May 2024) it is proposed that Qmatic is installed in Spindles.

***What are the alternative option(s) to be considered? Please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s):***

**Options 1: Do nothing:** Without a Queue Management and Ticketing system to manage walk-in visitors to Access Oldham, we will not be able to gather service level information about resident access and demand for services, and we will not be able to report on wait times for residents in seeing a member of staff. A manual method of recording reasons for visit at a high level would need to continue. **Not recommended**

**Option 2: Add Queue Management to the Room Booking System:** An option to add additional functionality to the proposed Room Booking system for Spindles was considered. This option would complicate the implementation of both requirements and impact on the delivery timescale for the Room Booking system.

Subscription costs for the additional queue management module were predicted at 30% over the Qmatic subscription. **Not recommended.**

**Option 3: Implement Qmatic solution** Carry out a direct award procurement for the re-commissioning of the existing Qmatic system, albeit, migrating the software to be “Cloud” hosted rather than being located in the Council’s data centre. **Recommended**

**Consultation: including any conflict of interest declared by relevant Cabinet Member consulted.**

Not relevant for the operation of corporate accommodation.

**Recommendation(s):**

Option 3: It is the recommendation of this report to progress with the direct award to Renovotec for the re-commissioning of the Qmatic solution.

**Implications:**

*What are the **financial** implications?*

**Capital Cost**

The project will be charged to and will be financed from resources within the existing Corporate - ICT Capital Programme

Provision exists within the programme to fund these works in 2023/24.

(Jit Kara, Senior Accountant)

**Revenue Cost**

The annual revenue cost for the Qmatic system is £8,348, which is payable from year 4 onwards. This will be funded from within the existing Customer service revenue budget.

(Jamie Kelly, Senior Accountant)

*What are the **legal** implications?*

“Rule 4 of the Contract Procedure Rules (“CPRs”) provides that where a contract has a value of £25,000 to £99,999, an open request for quotations process must be operated by the Council’s Commercial Procurement Unit. In exceptional circumstances it may be possible to exempt the procedure laid out in Rule 4 to enable a direct contract award, but the process in Rule 21.4 must be followed. Examples of exceptional

circumstances are laid down in Rule 21.3 of the CPRs, but the list is not exhaustive.

In this matter, an exemption under Rule 21 is proposed and permission is sought to make a direct contract award to Renovotec based on 21.3 h exemption, extreme urgency. The circumstances are in line with Rule 21.3(a-j) and can be objectively evidenced. The commissioning team has sought guidance from the Commercial Procurement Unit prior to seeking approval of an exemption, as required by Rule 21.1 of the CPRs.”

(Alex Bougatef, Interim Assistant Director of Legal Services)

What are the **procurement** implications?

Commercial Procurement Unit supports the recommendation Option 3 Implement Qmatic System. Approval is requested to exempt Contract Procedure Rules based on 21.3 exemption, due to extreme urgency.

(Senga Henstock, ICT Senior Buyer)

What are the **Human Resources** implications?

N/A

**Equality Impact** attached or not required because (please give reason)

There are no equality impacts as the proposal does not have an impact protected characteristics or groups.

What are the **property** implications

N/A

**Risk assessments:**

The legal, financial and procurement comments represent the risks from these areas separately. The Qmatic system provides an opportunity for the Council to reduce waiting times, improve staff efficiency and improve council services. The service should ensure that there are appropriate signage and user friendly instructions to assist residents with the technology. Council customer service officers should be on hand to ensure that the service is utilised efficiently and that security personnel are not distracted from their core duties to assist with the system.

(Vicki Gallacher, Head of Insurance and Information Governance)

**Co-operative implications**

No comments.

(Jonathan Downs, Corporate Policy Lead)

**IT implications**

IT support the recommended option and it has been agreed that the funding will be taken from the IT Capital Budget. Implementation will be timed for the move of Access Oldham into Spindles.

(Lindsey Al-Basri, IT Head of Projects)

**Environmental and Health and Safety implications**

N/A

**Community cohesions, including crime and disorder implications**

N/A

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Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution?

Yes

Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget?

Yes

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council?

No

**There are no background papers for this report**

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<b>Report Author Sign-off:</b>	
Fran Lautman	
<b>Date: Monday 22 April 2024</b>	

In consultation with Assistant Chief Executive, Shelley Kipling

Signed : 

Date: 03.04.2024

In consultation with Cllr Abdul Jabbar

Signed: 

Date: 22.04.2024

