Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	10.
Date:	2nd November 2009	Status	Open
Category	Decision within the functions of Executive		
Subject:	Changes to the Idox Uniform system		
Report by:	Director of Resources		
Other Officers Involved	Senior IT Projects Officer		
Director			
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Portfolio holder for Efficiency		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – Continually improving our organisation. Ensuring that all IT support and maintenance contracts deliver value for money and that any risk is minimised.

TARGETS

This does not contribute to any targets specified in any approved plans.

VALUE FOR MONEY

By ensuring that the most cost effective contracts are in place.

THE REPORT

Payment of Idox Support and Maintenance

In 1996 the Council signed an Orbit framework agreement with Norsk Data, the provider of our Uniform solution. Rather than purchase the software, the Council entered into a leasing arrangement and this has continued until now. Norsk Data was taken over by CAPS and CAPS has subsequently been taken over by Idox. The Uniform solution is used by Planning, Environmental Health, IT, Land Charges and Building Control. The current annual payment for 2009/10 will be £33,425.

Normally the Council purchases software and then pays an annual maintenance charge for ongoing support.

Idox have proposed that we pay a one off cost to purchase the software and then pay an annual maintenance charge; this will eventually reduce the annual payments. Their proposal is that the Council pays a one off cost to purchase the software of £39,000. The annual licensing will then be £11,773 a year less than the current annual payment, resulting in a payback in just over three years. It is proposed to fund this from the ICT and Office Equipment reserve. The annual saving on support and maintenance of £11,773 will be returned annually to the reserve.

<u>The Land Charges system</u>

The current version of Land Charges software is not supported from the end of September 2009. Idox have had their latest version, TLC, on the market for some time and approximately 150 of their clients have either implemented or are in the process of implementing the upgrade. We are the only Council who has not committed to the upgrade.

As stated before the Uniform system from Idox is also used by Planning, Environmental Health and Building Control. Upgrades to the system are tested against all the different modules to ensure that an upgrade, for example, for Planning does not create problems for Environmental Health. Idox have told us that from September these upgrades will not be tested against the version of Land Charges we have.

Discussions have been held with Idox as to the amount of resource required to implement this. Although there will need to be input from Land Charges and IT staff, the majority of the work is done by Idox. The company says that as much of the work as possible will be carried out by their consultants who are appointed as a part of the contract implementation. Plans are in hand to recruit staff as a result of changes in IT.

There had been a temporary two year post to assist with the development of the Idox system which was funded from the CPA development fund, the holder of this post left in April, six months early, there is subsequently a saving of £12,110. There is shortly to be a recruitment process to fill a vacant, permanent post in IT. Implementation of TLC, the new Land Charges software version, would not take place until such time as that post is filled and the officer trained on the IDOX system, which means it is likely to be the New Year before implementation starts.

With regard to Land Charges, there are 3 part time officers in this section, one of whom is the Legal and Land Charges Officer who spends half her time on Land Charges and half on legal. It will take the whole of the Land Charges time of the Legal and Land Charges Officer to complete the necessary work to implement the new version. The timetable for this would be 3 months if all goes well.

The cost of the upgrade is £23,450 and it is proposed to fund this partially from the ICT and Office Equipment reserve and partially from the saving for the Idox post.

ISSUES/OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

The purchase of the software as described in the report and the delay of implementation of the version until the recruitment of the IT post is completed, the officer is in place and trained on Uniform. Member should note the implication for resources in Land Charges.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial:	£50,340 from the reserve with £11,773 being returned annually
	£12,110 from the CPA Development fund allocated to Idox development
Legal:	None
Human Resources:	None

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the purchases be approved on the basis outlined in the report

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

To ensure that the Council's software systems deliver the small saving identified, deliver value for money and that any risk is minimised.

ATTACHMENTS: **N**
FILE REFERENCE:
SOURCE DOCUMENT: