



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

Cabinet

7 FEBRUARY 2011

LEADER

Councillor Stephen Greenhalgh

E-BOOKING PROJECT

This paper outlines the benefits and cashable savings that can be realised through the implementation of an e-booking project. The project will centralise the booking and payments of facilities and services provided by the Council and provide an online facility for residents. The paper seeks budget approval to implement the project, with benefits and cashable savings being realised from 2011/12.

**Wards:
All**

CONTRIBUTORS

All departments
ADLDS
DFCS

Recommendation:

That funding of £145,412 be made available from the Efficiencies Project Reserve pot to implement the e-booking project.

**HAS A EIA BEEN
COMPLETED?
YES**

**HAS THE REPORT
CONTENT BEEN
RISK ASSESSED?
YES**

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 One of the key priorities for the organisation as part of the overarching transformation agenda is to rationalise and optimise customer access points to Council services and to reduce customer reliance on traditional access channels in order to reduce costs. This includes a specific focus on improving the information, advice and transactional capability of the website.

1.2 Hammersmith and Fulham currently provides access to services, facilities and appointments with staff through a number of different channels: by telephone, face to face and through the website. On the whole, bookings and appointments are made within services.

1.2 A number of key issues have been identified with the current approach:

Residents

- Residents can only make bookings and payments during times when the council and contact centre are open for business;
- Bookings and payments are in a number of different places;
- Visibility and availability of services and facilities is in some areas poor;
- There is currently no self serve facility for customers.

The Council

- Significant double handling of customer contact;
- Payment for bookings and services are through a variety of expensive channels;
- Bookings for income generating services cannot be taken outside core hours- thus limiting revenue generation potential;
- Numbers of missed appointments too high
- Ineffective use of resources (both staff and facilities)

1.3 The introduction of an e-booking system will centralise the booking and payments of facilities and services provided by the Council to residents. The project will provide a web-based booking facility which will allow internal management of facilities and enable residents to book a wide range of facilities, appointments and services, paying for these facilities and services at point of booking.

1.4 An options analysis of seven suppliers, who have e-booking products has been conducted. And as a result, Zipporah has been chosen as our preferred supplier. The basis of this decision was that the product most closely met H&F requirements, the supplier has a good track record of implementing similar systems within the public sector and their bid represented best value for money.

2. PROJECT SCOPE

2.1 A wide range of services are in scope for this project and a phased approach to implementation is proposed:

Phase 1

- Sports Pitches Bookings – all sports pitches, tennis courts and sports activities will be listed on the website, along with their availability, allowing residents to book and pay for these facilities in advance.
- Registration Services – appointments to complete the new nationality checking service will be available online and all fees payable collected prior to the appointment being completed.
- H&F Direct- customer appointments for Council tax, Housing benefit assessments, blue badges and freedom passes will be available online, and include SMS text reminders to reduce missed appointments
- Hall and event bookings – these services will be centralised as a bookable resource. Payment from external customers will be collected at the point when the booking is confirmed, and collected electronically rather than manually.
- Course bookings for Local Safeguarding Children's Panel – the courses provided by H&F to support care professionals working with children and families will become fully bookable online.
- Adult Learning bookings – the full range of adult learning courses available within the borough will be bookable online.

Phase 2

- Pest control appointments – scheduling and payment of pest control appointments.
- Duty planner – booking appointments for pre-application advice to residents and commercial agents who are wishing to alter existing buildings.
- H&F Advice – appointments for assessments
- Bulky Waste Uplifts - handling scheduling and payments for bulky waste uplift

3. KEY BENEFITS

3.1 Key benefits for residents are:

- Increased convenience and ability to make bookings and payments at a time which suits the resident;
- Less time taken to make bookings; and,
- Increased knowledge of facilities, through resources shown on website.

3.2 Key benefits for the Council are:

- Reduction in number of staff required to handle bookings
- Increase in income generated
- Reduction in transactional costs incurred through handling cash/cheque payments
- Reduction in applications support charges through rationalising to one central system

4. FINANCIAL CASE

4.1 £145k is sought to deliver the e-booking project. This will deliver net general fund savings of £110k by 2012/13 and £230k in 2013/14. These are ongoing savings that have been accounted for in the MTFs.

4.2 Project Costs

4.2.1 Cost to implement

| Supplier Costs | | H&F Staff Resources | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------|
| HFBP | £69,500 | H&F Client Project Manager (1) | £20,250 |
| Zipporah | £70,650 | Business Transformation Team (2) | £9,000 |
| Kiosks | £2,635 | Communications Team (3) | £7,500 |
| SMS prepaid | £1,100 | | |
| 2010/11 Support costs (1 month) | £1,527 | | |
| Total | £145,412 | Total | £36,750 |

Notes on H&F Staff Resources:

1. Project Manager will collect system requirements, develop UAT plan, support staff in carrying out UAT, and support through training in addition to client manager role.
2. Business Transformation Team - Involvement of the Business Transformation Team will be supporting UAT, embedding the cultural change and supporting transition to business as usual.
3. Communications Team - This work stream will ensure that the website channels lead residents to the appropriate areas and update and refresh the communication content and branding around the bookings portal.

4.2.2. Total Costs and funding sought to implement

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Supplier Costs | £145,412 |
| 2. H&F Staff Costs | £36,750 |
| Total Cost to implement | £182,162 |
| Funding sought | £145,412 |

4.2.3. Ongoing Support Costs (to be met from existing budgets)

| | Year 1 2011/12 | Year 2 2012/13 | Year 3 2013/14 | Total |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Application services – support | 7,500 | 7,500 | 7,500 | 22,500 |
| Technical services – Unix/Win | 3,000 | 3,000 | 3,000 | 9,000 |
| Shared services – Infrastructure | 6,542 | 6,542 | 6,542 | 19,626 |
| 3 rd party infrastructure | 14,620 | 14,620 | 14,620 | 43,860 |
| 3 rd party leases | 510 | 510 | 510 | 1,530 |
| Total support costs | £32,172 | £32,172 | £32,172 | £96,516 |

4.3 Cashable savings and income generation

4.3.1 Cashable Savings

| Savings identified | Benefit Realisation (Cumulative cashable savings) | | |
|--|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| | Year 1 2011/12 | Year 2 2012/13 | Year 3 2013/14 |
| Reduction in number of staff required to handle bookings (already in MTFS) | 109,495 | 218,990 | 328,485 |
| Increase in income generated (already in MTFS) | 24,560 | 49,120 | 73,680 |
| Reduction in application support costs | 18,800 | 37,600 | 56,400 |
| Total project savings | £152,855 | £305,710 | £458,565 |

4.3.2 Income generation opportunity

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Project Management on behalf of other Boroughs | £50,962 |
|--|----------------|

4.4 Cost/ Benefit analysis

| Cost benefit analysis | Year 1 2011/12 | Year 2 2012/13 | Year 3 2013/14 |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Project Management on behalf of other Boroughs | £50,962 | - | - |
| Annual savings | £152,855 | £152,855 | £152,855 |
| Income and annual savings (cumulative) | £203,817 | £356,672 | £509,527 |
| Costs to implement and support (cumulative) | £214,334 | £246,506 | £278,678 |
| Net benefits realised | (£10,517) | £110,166 | £230,849 |

5. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER BOROUGHS- COMMERCIALISATION OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1 H&F will be the first London Borough to implement a corporate solution for bookings across multiple services. Since embarking on scoping this project, we have become aware of at least 9 other London Boroughs who are looking to pursue similar projects and are interested in using our experience and expertise. RBKC are particularly keen. In line with the Council's commercialisation agenda, we have therefore included an income line in the cashable savings which involves us selling project management skills and expertise to other boroughs for e-booking projects.

6. PROJECT GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

6.1 Governance

The project has a project board of senior officers and associated stakeholder forum which will meet on a regular cycle and whose function is to discuss stakeholder interests and escalate these, as appropriate, through to project board for decision.

6.2 Implementation schedule

The project will be delivered within a 5 month timeframe from the point of approval. It is therefore assumed that the project will be delivered between mid February and June 2011.

7. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

The e-booking project will deliver on-going net general fund savings of £110k by 2011/12 and £230k in 2013/14. One-off cash funding of £145,412 has been requested to deliver these efficiencies. This funding will be made available from the Efficiencies Project Reserve pot.

8. COMMENTS OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES)

- 8.1 No comments.

9. COMMENTS OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PROCUREMENT & IT STRATEGY

- 9.1 There are no procurement-related issues as this relates to software acquisition which is managed through the contract with H&F Bridge Partnership.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

| No. | Description of Background Papers | Name/Ext of holder of file/copy | Department/ Location |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. | E-booking Business case | Stephen Menzies 4050 | FCS |
| CONTACT OFFICER: Programme Management Officer | | NAME: Stephen Menzies | |