

PART 1 - PUBLIC

Decision Maker: Improvement and Efficiency Sub-Committee

Date: 11th February 2010

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: VOICE RECOGNITION PROJECT

Contact Officer: Sarah Lyons, Programme Support Officer
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Chief Officer: Doug Patterson, Chief Executive

Ward: Borough wide

1. Reason for report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the findings from the market testing / mystery shopping that was requested at the last I&E Sub committee.
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2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 Members note the findings of the research undertaken and continue to support the implement Voice Recognition technology for internal switchboard calls.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
 2. BBB Priority: Excellent Council.
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Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost £23,475
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring cost. Estimated £3,560 annual support costs
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Customer Access Programme Budget
 4. Total current budget for this head: £607,000
 5. Source of funding: LPSA
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Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: N/A
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Legal

1. Legal Requirement: No statutory requirement or Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is applicable
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Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): Staff in the council and Customer Contact Centre staff will benefit.
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Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 Following discussions at the last I&E Sub committee on the 17th December 2009 it was requested by members that some market research with other local authorities (OLA's) that have implemented Voice Recognition technology be undertaken.
- 3.2 Meetings have taken place with three other London boroughs who have previously implemented voice recognition technology for internal / external switchboard calls as well as some other public facing transactional services such a payments and simple service requests. (See Appendix 1)
- 3.3 Feedback from these OLA's has been extremely positive especially relating to the level of support offered by the suppliers and the low level of maintenance the system requires.
- 3.4 In all instances OLA's reported that their experience with the Voice Recognition software provider was positive and high quality project management skills and implementation support had been provided resulting in a efficient and effective roll out.
- 3.5 The timeframe for implementation ranged between 3 and 6 months at the OLA's contacted as part of this work.
- 3.6 In all instances any problems associated with the project implementation had resulted from poor data quality within the authority's own directory. It is anticipated that this too may be an issue with the implementation of the project at Bromley but as per the experience of OLA's overcoming such problems results in a general cleansing of telephony data which improves service and the potential for avoidable contact across the entire organisation.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This project is in line with our Corporate Operating Principles, specifically delivering value for money and implementing efficiencies in the way we handle customer service requests.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 One-off capital investment estimated at £23,475 plus ongoing revenue support costs estimated at £3,560. A potential 0.7 FTE efficiency in the Customer Contact Centre.
- 5.2 Further developments such as to handle external switchboard calls or payments will require additional investment (circa £9,000 per skill) and would be the subject of a report to Members outlining the business case and requesting a decision on investment. (See Appendix 2)

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Potential changes in the Contact Centre for switchboard staff.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	