Meeting of:	**Cabinet**
Date of Meeting:	**Thursday, 08 June 2023**
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Corporate Performance and Resources
Report Title:	Hybrid Meeting Platform Update
Purpose of Report:	To inform Cabinet of the findings of the Civico Hybrid Meeting platform regression testing and recommended decision on how to proceed with hybrid public meetings
Report Owner:	Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources
Responsible Officer:	Monitoring Officer / Head of Legal and Democratic Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Chief Executive Director of Corporate Resources Head of Finance and Section 151 officer
Policy Framework:	This report is a matter for Executive Decision by Cabinet

Executive Summary:

- The purpose of this report is to inform Cabinet of the findings of the Council's Hybrid Meeting platform regression testing.

- An update to Cabinet was previously provided on Thursday 17th November 2022. That report outlined several key issues with the Council's current Hybrid Meeting platform and a plan to regression test the issues with a view to resolving all remaining issues.

- Regression testing refers to the systematic testing of, and subsequent retesting of a range of different functions and scenarios across a defined time-period to ensure that no issues remain.

- Regression testing was required to ensure that the platform used to host Council meetings conducted simultaneously both remotely and in person (i.e. multiple location meetings) met the provisions of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 and the Welsh Government Interim Statutory Guidance on Multi-Location Meetings (August 2021) and to meet the requirements of the Council's Multiple Location Meeting policy (as agreed in April 2022 and as amended in March 2023).

- Several serious issues with the platform were identified prior to and during the regression testing period. These issues and attempts at their resolution are detailed within the report. These issues have been broadly grouped within key categories such as system, human behaviour and capacity issues regarding staffing roles and responsibilities.

- The Part II report for consideration later on the agenda also recommends an approach to ensure the Council has a stable and fit for purpose Hybrid Meeting platform that supports dual language and electronic voting going forward.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet notes the position as outlined within this report and considers the data provided in the Part II report before making a decision on the way forward regarding the Council's contractual arrangements and options going forward later in the agenda.

2. That Cabinet refers this report and the Part II report on the same matter, later on the agenda, to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee for its consideration.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure that Cabinet is aware of the work that has been carried out since the last update to Cabinet on Thursday 17th November, 2022 and to approve a way forward.

2. For Scrutiny Committee's consideration.

1. Background

1.0 With effect from May 2022, Welsh Government legislated that Local Authorities in Wales would conduct their Council and Committee meetings in a manner, whereby those not in the same place for the meeting could attend remotely and provided that the condition is met of persons being able to speak to and be heard by each other and to see and be seen by each other (Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ("the Act")).

1.1 Section 46 of the Act required from 5th May, 2022, for the broadcasting of certain Principal Council meetings and for the same public bodies to publish arrangements regarding how it would comply with requirements of Section 46.

1.2 In August 2021 Welsh Government published interim Statutory Guidance on Multi-Location Meetings (MLMs) in relation to Sections 46 and 47 of the Act.

1.3 The Welsh Government Interim Guidance on MLMs states Principal Councils must:

- make broadcasts available electronically.

- make arrangements for "multi-location" meetings, at which participants can speak to and be heard by each other. Where meetings must be broadcast participants must also be able to see and hear each other (Section 47);

- publish certain information, including notices of meetings, electronically, and electronic information relating to meetings must remain available in this format for six years following the date of the meeting;

- put in place facilities for the public who would otherwise not be able to do so, to access meeting documents; and

- set out the details of its arrangements for MLMs. These arrangements must be guided by the general principles of transparency, accessibility, good conduct, Welsh language, local needs and future generations.

1.4 The Act was the catalyst for the Council to implement a Hybrid Meeting platform that aimed to, and as set out in the above general principles, facilitate bilingual hybrid meetings.

1.5 Following a procurement exercise for a technology platform capable of conducting a bilingual live meeting that was accessible from both the Civic Offices and remotely and capable of live broadcast on the internet, Civico was chosen as the Hybrid Meeting platform supplier.

1.6 The decision to award was made on the basis that Civico had been the Council's existing webcasting solution supplier of all equipment and support services needed to achieve the webcasting of Council meetings from the Council Chamber from 2018, with that contract due to expire in October 2021. The Council's Strategic Leadership Team in July 2021 agreed that a new procurement exercise should be undertaken given that the above contract was coming to an end and due to the likely increased costs of broadcasting meetings as a result of the introduction of hybrid meetings from May 2022. As the Council's current broadcasting supplier, Civico was invited under the Council's Procurement rules to provide a quotation for the provision of a Hybrid Meeting Solution for a 3-year period (with an option to extend for a further year).

1.7 After the initial implementation, a number of issues were identified that required the attention of Civico, and reassurances were subsequently provided by the supplier to the Council that these issues had been satisfactorily resolved.

1.8 As a result of further internal officer testing, it was decided to launch the Civico Hybrid Meeting platform for Council and Committee Meetings.

1.9 During the meeting of Full Council on 26th September, 2022, it was immediately evident that there were issues with the platform despite the testing undertaken.

1.10 A number of remote attendees were unable to connect to the meeting, some remote attendees could not be seen or heard, there was interference in the Council Chamber which meant that any translation provided was intermittent through the headsets provided, resulting in a Welsh language presentation having to be presented in English, and there were performance issues from the perspective of remote attendees where the video stream on their devices was pixelated and the audio dropped in and out.

1.11 Following this experience, an internal officer project team was established, made up of colleagues from Democratic Services, ICT, Human Resources and Business Improvement. The team reviewed the Council meeting and issues arising and developed a detailed testing schedule to identify the platform issues and to put in place a detailed mitigation plan for Civico to resolve these issues as they were identified.

1.12 Civico carried out the following work with a view to mitigate all the issues that had been identified during testing:

- re-configured and re-sized their server environment to manage and route audio and video traffic more efficiently though their Hybrid Meeting platform and across the internet. This was intended to address the issues relating to remote delegates not being able to be seen or heard, and the platform performance issues experienced by remote attendees and those who were viewing the live stream on the internet;

- installed a second infra-red (IR) emitter and re-positioned the original emitter in the Council Chamber to provide better coverage for the audio channel that broadcasts the translation to the IR headsets;

- re-configured the IR receivers on the headsets to enable them to effectively maintain the charge of their batteries to allow them to pick up the translation signal more efficiently;

- re-balanced the audio levels in the Council Chamber, in their remote attendance/viewing software and on their live viewing portal so the audio from local and remote meeting delegates (and the translator) could all be heard at the same volume; and

- replaced several faulty and un-shielded cables in the Council Chamber and Audio-Visual Room to remove the potential for interference.

1.13   Following the completion of the above works in line with the mitigation plan, a programme of 'regression testing' was scheduled and took place through November and December 2022. Regression testing is a term used to systematically test, and retest, a range of different functions and scenarios across a defined period of time to ensure that no issues remain.

1.14   This regression testing entailed the use of the Civico Hybrid Meeting platform for internal staff meetings to ensure that no further issues were found, and that any issues that had previously been declared resolved remained resolved.

1.15   Microsoft Teams was used as a backup platform to facilitate meetings while the regression testing was taking place. This enabled Members to join meetings remotely or alternatively attend the Council offices in the interim connecting to the meeting on Microsoft Teams via the Lupus Network.

2. Key Issues for Consideration

2.1   The test meetings were carried out and facilitated by Civico, with varied levels of success.

2.2   Regression testing and appraisal of alternative options took place through November and December 2022, and the results of each of the test meeting was captured into a single document. Officers in IT, Democratic Services and Business Improvement Teams were involved in the planning and delivery of this test period, alongside representatives of Civico.

Identification and Re-occurrence of Issues with the Platform

2.3 A range of issues were experienced by meeting delegates in the majority of the test meetings. Issues were captured and categorised within three broad categories:

- System – where the issue was formally identified as a result of a technical problem with the system itself;

- Functional/Behavioural – where the issue was connected with a user's ability to successfully navigate the platform interface or where the user had not been able to follow the pre-requisites required to connect (e.g. an issue with the user's ability to log on and reset a password successfully to facilitate the joining of a meeting);

- Capacity/role – where the issue was identified as occurring due to an over-reliance on staff capacity at meetings (over and above the level of capacity normally required to facilitate a multiple location meeting).

2.4 System issues included:

- minor audio and video quality issues;

- serious platform stability issues where delegates were being disconnected mid-meeting with some being able to re-join and others not.

2.5 Functional and Behavioural type issues included:

- document sharing functionality not working and corrupting the session,

- meeting delegates not being able to see or hear one another,

- the need for multiple session refreshes by users to regain access to content.

- the inability for some meeting delegates to connect to the meeting resulting in the need for multiple password resets, etc.

2.6 Capacity and role related issues:

- To facilitate meetings included within the regression test, officers were required to take on additional administrative duties to enable all new users to engage via the Civico platform, over and above the technical set up required in the Chamber. Those new users were not included on the initial implementation or training and therefore required assistance from officers in setting up accounts and passwords. It was also essential to ensure that all new users had access to adequate training, so that they could engage fully with the new platform during the test meeting.

- Lack of meaningful training resource available requiring Democratic Services staff providing additional assistance and ad hoc training to Elected Members and staff on a regular basis.

2.7 Issues identified by the regression testing were recorded with Civico throughout the testing period. Several issues were resolved by the supplier, but several serious issues would resurface in later regression tests.

Results of Testing and Implications for Current Arrangements

2.8 As a result of the Council's user experience of the solution during July and September 2022, the project team and other Council officers have ensured rigorous testing to achieve the full potential of each test. In addition to this, ensuring that all attendees had sufficient training and knowledge of the platform, to allow all functionality to be fully tested throughout the regression test period.

2.9 It was agreed by Cabinet in their meeting of 17th November, 2022, that the results of the regression testing would inform a decision as to whether Civico was in a stable enough form for the Council to confidently use it to facilitate its Hybrid meetings (Minute C135). Based on the results of the regression testing, it is recommended that Civico is replaced with an alternative Hybrid Meeting platform.

2.10 The project team has recently met with Civico, as Civico have confirmed that they are no longer going to develop the platform that they are currently under contract with the Council to provide, instead they have developed a new solution with additional functionality such as hybrid voting to the Microsoft Team platform.

2.11 Civico have demonstrated the new 'solution' to the project team, but the new voting functionality did not work as intended and performance issues were initially experienced during the demonstration. The Welsh language function was also not able to be fully demonstrated as expected.

2.12 Following a number of attempts, the project team has not been able to secure costings for the new Civico solution, so they have not been included in this report.

2.13 Since January 2023 some members of the project team have visited a number of Local Authorities i.e. Bridgend, Cardiff, Neath Port Talbot, Rhondda Cynon Taf and Swansea to view their systems for hybrid meetings and demonstrations with suppliers such as Auditel, Civico, Public-I and MVI Easy Conf have been undertaken to inform this report.

Review of Requirements and Approach to Market

2.14 The project team having met with the Local Authorities referred to above have also been in contact with the majority of Local Authorities in Wales regarding their suppliers for hybrid meeting arrangements to inform an approach to procuring a replacement platform. These meetings and the information obtained have been used as pre-market engagement sessions, designed to collect information regarding potential solutions and help define the Council's requirements.

2.15 The results of these requirement gathering exercises have been collated into a requirements document attached at Appendix A to the Part I report. Requirements are split between two categories. The first category of requirements refers to those functional and technical requirements identified as essential.

2.16 The project team, in conjunction with the Council's procurement team has considered several potential approaches to procurement in relation to how best to replace the current platform in a timely manner whilst also reinvigorating the confidence of officers and Elected Members in hybrid meeting platforms and ensuring flexibility for the Council should technical difficulties arise with the supplier.

2.17 One approach would be to specify the Council's hybrid meeting platform requirements and go out to market, either by way of open tender, via a procurement framework or via the Digital Marketplace, and enter a three to five year contract. However, the current value of the potential contract does not meet the regulated threshold requiring an open market tendering exercise.

2.18 Another approach would be to enter into a performance assessment / proof of concept agreement with an alternative supplier on a short-term basis (up to 12 months) to live-test the preferred solution and at the Council's discretion enter into a three year contract with an option to extend for one additional year.

2.19 The preferred and recommended approach is to proceed in line with the approach set out in paragraph 2.18 above. Such an approach would allow further testing during the initial year to build confidence in the new system in advance of entering into a longer-term contract arrangement.

Costings and Lead Times

2.20 Indicative costs from suppliers have been sought (however these have not been received from Civico) but sample costs that have already been obtained are provided within the Part II report to be considered later in the agenda as they are commercially sensitive). The lead time to set up an alternative hybrid meeting platform would be approximately 5 weeks from the date of purchase order approval.

Project Recommendations

2.21 The detail concerning the project recommendations are described within the Part II report later on the agenda.

2.22 It is recommended that a dedicated 500Mbps broadband link is installed into the Council Chamber Audio/Visual Room to allow the hybrid and streaming systems to be completely separated from the Council's internal network. This arrangement will also remove potential ICT / internal network security issues and provide an uncontended / dedicated internet link to support high quality live hybrid meeting streams to the internet.

2.23 Microsoft Teams does not currently provide hybrid electronic voting functionality, or the ability to upload agendas or bookmark agenda items, so should be ruled out as a prospective solution in favour of a purpose designed proprietary hybrid conferencing interface which does deliver all the functionality required.

2.24 The project team also proposes to review the options to facilitate hybrid meetings from one of the Committee rooms in parallel with the above recommendations, to cater for multi-layout and multi-use meetings.

2.25 Work is currently underway to evaluate the cost of these options and will be reported back to Cabinet.

2.26 Microsoft Teams and live stream via OBS and YouTube will continue to be used to facilitate remote meetings until a replacement Hybrid Meeting platform capable of providing suitable translation requirements has been identified and implemented.

Practical and Resource Implications (Room Layout, Welsh Language)

2.27 As a result of discussions with other Local Authorities in Wales regarding the provision of support for Multiple Location Meeting arrangements, a number of issues regarding current approach to support was discussed.

2.28 To support hybrid meetings hosted in the Council Chamber going forward, it is strongly recommended that the room and desk layout becomes a fixed layout. This has been the arrangement in all the other Local Authorities that the project team has visited, and the operational efficiencies of a fixed layout are several-fold.

2.29 Adopting a fixed layout would only require a single meeting template for all meetings that are hosted in the Council Chamber ensuring that cameras will not have to be significantly adjusted before or during each meeting due to the tables / microphones being laid out in a different location within the room. Such an approach would make for a far more efficient use of time and resources in the lead up to and during meetings. It should be noted that the fixed layout would be in the template design as if a Full Council meeting was sitting. A number of alternative seating / table layouts have been reviewed based on approximately 50% on-site attendance.

2.30 Despite moving to a fixed layout for the Council Chamber, it is envisaged that the room would still be capable of multiple use, albeit in one fixed physical layout as recommended by the three suppliers contacted and by four Councils visited by the project team.

2.31 It is therefore recommended that a feasibility study be undertaken regarding the possibility of moving to a fixed layout in the Council Chamber and Committee Rooms. A fixed layout as mentioned above will provide technical and operational efficiencies.   That feasibility study will enable the project team to further consider the advantages and disadvantages of moving to a fixed layout approach.

2.32 Other Councils in Wales have also advised that the ability to provide Welsh Language translation is met by speakers providing 72 hours' notice to indicate that they would like to conduct their speaking in Welsh. This enables the allocation of translation resources and ensures that translation resource can be allocated across a variety of meeting types at short notice. This is similar to the arrangements in place for the Vale of Glamorgan Council, insofar as the contract for Welsh translation requires the current supplier to be given 72 hours' notice.

2.33 As the service will be required by 22 Local Authorities there is a small pool of translation suppliers who can / will be able to accommodate this service. Other neighbouring Councils only provide Welsh Language translation services for some Committees, not all, they also only live stream some Committees with others being recorded and uploaded to the internet the day after or a few days after a meeting given the resource implications. This view has been informed by externally commissioned advice on the inter-relationship between legislation regarding MLMs and Welsh Language Standards.

2.34 Some Councils that the team visited can provide a hybrid service but not all Councils livestream all their meetings. Some record the meetings and upload after the meeting has taken place. It being noted that the Vale of Glamorgan Council currently livestreams and records all its remote meetings, save for confidential matters.

2.35 In summary, what has been observed in other Councils is that not all broadcast their meetings live with Welsh language provision only being provided on request in the majority of Councils. However, others have specified which Committee meetings will provide Welsh language translation as a matter of course. It is therefore recommended that during the review of the MLM Policy , which is due to take place shortly, these matters be considered further with a view to recommending that Full Council, Cabinet, Planning Committee , Governance and Audit Committee, and a Scrutiny Committee with a county-wide public interest be live streamed and meetings of other Committees be recorded and uploaded to the Council's website following the meeting. In relation to Welsh language translation being made available at Council and Committee meetings, one approach would be to initially canvass all Elected Members to establish their choice of language when participating within Council and the Committee meetings of which they are a member. Members could indicate whether they would wish to speak in English, Welsh or both and a translation service would be scheduled for all those meetings where members have indicated a desire to speak in Welsh, subject of course to there being sufficient translation capacity available. This would avoid Members repeatedly having to ask for translation to be made available for Committee meetings of which they are members. This approach and the live streaming approach would be subject to review to take into account availability of resources and the approaches being adopted across Wales, as well as the outcome of the initial 12-month performance assessment. Given that this report is being referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee, this is a matter which the Committee can also consider as part of their wider scrutiny.

3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?

3.1 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2005 mandates that public bodies in Wales must comply with the Sustainable Development Principle. Sustainable development means the process of improving the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales by taking action, in accordance

with the sustainable development principle, aimed at achieving the "well-being goals".

3.2 The proposals set out in this report are consistent with the five ways of working which demonstrate that we are working in accordance with the Sustainable Development Principle. The approach seeks to balance the immediate need of the Council to adopt a hybrid solution with a longer-term sustainable solution in the approach to procurement which also seeks to take a preventative approach to future issues arising. The proposals have been developed following contact with other Local Authorities who have been happy to collaborate with the Council to inform our plans. The proposals are consistent with encouraging public participation and improving involvement in the democratic process. As set out in the body of the report, the proposed approach considers multiple pieces of legislation, demonstrating an understanding and appreciation of the integration between the duties the Council is required to comply with.

3.3 The Council's Multiple Location Meeting Policy has also been written having regard to the Council's Project Zero position and Diversity in Democracy Action Plan

3.4 Ensuring Elected Members are able to conduct formal Council business in accordance with the MLM is consistent with achieving the Council's well-being objectives and will play an important part of the Public Participation Strategy.

4. Climate Change and Nature Implications

4.1 The implementation and operation of a hybrid meeting system will reduce the need for remote attendees and members of the public to travel into the Civic Offices, in line with the Council's Project Zero commitment.

5. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

5.1 Indicative costs for a 12 month pilot are contained within he Part II report to be considered later on the agenda.

5.2 A revenue budget of £4,740 will be required to cover the annual cost of the new 500Mbps dedicated broadband link to the Audio/Visual Room. This new dedicated broadband link to the internet is recommended as it will provide uncontended / dedicated internet bandwidth for the webcasting encoder in the Audio/Visual Room to stream quality, live hybrid meeting content to the internet.

Employment

5.3 There are no direct employment implications associated with this report.

Legal (Including Equalities)

5.4 The legislative requirements to provide for Multiple Location Meetings are set out in the body of this report.

5.5 The Council has entered into a contract with Civico which ensures that the Council's legal position and interests are maintained. Termination provisions within the contract are available to be relied upon in the given circumstances.

5.6 A contract reflecting the Resolution of contract will be entered into with an alternative Supplier (if necessary) to protect the Council's legal interest.

6. Background Papers

None.

1   Introduction

The Vale of Glamorgan Council (The Council) are looking to procure a service for the recording, live transmission and archiving of Council and Committee meetings/events (and associated media) from the Council Chamber.

In line with statutory guidance and legislation, the Council are looking for a software package that will facilitate bilingual, multi-location meetings and the live broadcast of such meetings. Further details of guidance and legislation can be found within this document.

2   Background

With effect from May 2022, Welsh Government legislated that Local Authorities in Wales would conduct their Council and Committee meetings in a manner, whereby those not in the same place for the meeting could attend remotely and provided that the condition is met of persons being able to speak to and be heard by each other and to see and be seen by each other (Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ("the Act")).

Section 46 of the Act requires from 5th May 2022, for the broadcasting of certain Principal Council meetings and for the same public bodies to publish arrangements for how it would comply with requirements of Section 46.

In August 2021 Welsh Government published interim Statutory Guidance on Multi-Location Meetings (MLMs) in relation to Sections 46 and 47 of the Act.

The Welsh Government Interim Guidance on MLMs states Principal Councils must:

- Make broadcasts available electronically.

- Make arrangements for "multi-location" meetings, at which participants can speak to and be heard by each other. Where meetings must be broadcast, and participants must also be able to see and hear each other (S47).

- Publish certain information, including notices of meetings, electronically, and electronic information relating to meetings must remain available in this format for six years following the date of the meeting.

- Put in place facilities for the public who would otherwise not be able to do so, to access meeting documents.

- Also set out the details of its arrangements for MLMs. These arrangements must be guided by the general principles of Transparency, Accessibility, Good Conduct, Welsh Language, Local Needs and Future Generations.

The Act was the catalyst for the Council to implement a Hybrid Meeting platform that would also, and as set out in the above general principles, facilitate bilingual hybrid meetings.

2.1 Current Situation/ Set Up

Council and Committee meetings are currently being held via Teams remotely, with occasional Senior Management interviews being facilitated in person where appropriate.

Live streaming of all meetings is taking place via OBS (Open Broadcaster Software) and YouTube.

2.2 Objectives

The Council have identified and number of key objectives that supports our ambition to procure a quality service:

- To fully comply with the Section 46 of the Act in relation to the publication and broadcasting of Principle Council meetings
- To fully comply with Section 47 of the Act in relation to the provision on multi-location meetings and meet the conditions to allow all persons to be able to speak to and be heard by each other and to see and be seen by each other
- To provide all meetings bilingually in Welsh and English
- To provide all necessary information and documentation electronically and made available to the public
- To ensure that all electronic data and documentation related to such meetings, be held in accordance with the required six-year retention period from the date of each meeting.
- To ensure that we can make arrangements for such meetings that are guided by the general principles of Transparency, Accessibility, Good Conduct, Welsh Language, Local Needs and Future Generations.

3   Detailed Requirements

The Council requires a solution inclusive of all required equipment and associated installation and support services needed, to achieve the webcasting of Council meetings from the Council Chamber.

All proposals for a solution from suppliers will be considered, including options that include the continued use of OBS to live stream to YouTube.

3.1 Essential and Desirable Criteria

The requirements are split into Essential and Desirable Criteria. The solution must be capable of performing the following essential tasks. We will be taking into consideration, any opportunities to fulfil the desirable criteria.

*AV Conference system

- Welsh Language
- Hybrid
- Voting
- More than 8 tiles viewable

3.1.1 Website:

Essential	Desirable
If the provider's solution doesn't include the option to live stream to YouTube, the webcasts must be made available via the provider's website and be managed externally. The Webcast will then either be embedded on the relevant sections of the Authority's website (www.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk) or viewers directed via a link to the external site.	Website to hold documents associated with each Council meeting e.g. agendas, minutes, reports and PowerPoint presentations.
The website must allow the inclusion of links that point to PDFs of the documents being discussed at the meeting.	The ability to moderate any social media interactions prior to their appearance on the website
An option must be included within the solution's live feed and archive web pages which enables the user to open the live feed or archive recording in a new browser window.	The ability to show or hide the social media content for a particular meeting.
Website must be branded with the Council's logo and the layout must be subject to the Council's approval	Ability to display voting results on the website in real time.
The system must allow for a simultaneous presentation feed to be available for the viewer, as well as the camera feed. This presentation feed must come directly from the AV distribution system in the Chamber; such that viewers of the webcast can see the camera feed of the meeting participants within the Chamber, as well as the content of the presentation feed which the meeting participants are viewing within the Chamber.	Website search facility to include the option of searching for a particular attendee's contribution to a meeting (e.g. Councillor, Officer, etc.) and the option of searching by tags.
Ability for the public to switch between live camera feed and presentation feed (in live broadcast).	Capability to undertake portable recording of meetings for archiving

The video player for the viewer must clearly display a switch icon in order to change seamlessly between the presentation feed and the camera feed.	
Presentation feed should have the ability to display any content including presentations and voting results.	The website hosting the broadcast feed should be capable of embedding feeds from popular social media
The Council must retain control over the website – it must not contain 3rd party links or advertisements (including pop-ups or embedded items) without the Councils prior consent.	The ability to share content across popular social media (including the ability to share the content so that it starts at any point in the timeline
The website will contain a search facility to enable the public to quickly identify a specific archived broadcast	
The web front end must be accessible to users with disabilities. The site content must meet level AA of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) as a minimum.	
Website must be freely accessible to the public with no requirement to log in or register.	
The broadcast feed must be publicly available 24 hours a day. We will require the archive version of the broadcast to be made available within the maximum time of 12 hours. Webcasted meetings should load automatically.	
Capability to report on website traffic; e.g. viewing traffic, volumes.	
Website Maintenance which results in webcasts being unavailable to the public must be completed between the hours of midnight and six a.m. and must be limited to a maximum of four hours a week unless prior agreement provided by the Council.	

Providers must advise on their contingencies for the website and any information not stored as a hard copy at our premises (e.g. provider store a backup of website).	

3.1.2   Live Webcast:

Essential	Desirable
The solution must facilitate hybrid meetings, where delegates can attend remotely and/ or locally, be seen and heard when they speak, can vote and can hear the language translation if required.	
Public access to live/ archived Council meetings (including associated media) will always be free of charge to the public.	The Audio/Visual quality needs to facilitate the maximum output from the installed recording medium.
Broadcasts must be available for the public to view in live form (when being broadcast).	
The Council would have the ability to create a local audio and visual recording of each Council meeting/event using a digital recording device (e.g. a hard drive, DVD or Blu-ray) at the Council's premises. This recording will be the sole property of the Council.	
Functionality must be included to enable meetings in the Council Chamber to be broadcast bilingually, via an option for users to select an alternative audio feed. At return of tenders, please state how this will be achieved and any additional costs. (Please note any requirement to translate will be provided by the Council). *Please see further details of Welsh Language standards in 3.2.2*	
The viewing front-end must support the ability to view associated documentation at the same time as the video stream.	

Meetings Webcast in this controlled environment must never be made publicly available unless at the instruction of the Council.	
Camera feed for webcast must provide an option to carry all pertinent meeting information such as speaker name & party, time, date, name of meeting, in a professional overlay.	
The camera operator is able to manually adjust; camera angles, onscreen text, microphone settings, etc., during live broadcast.	
The Council would retain any copyright of all recordings.	
A schedule of the meetings to be Webcast for each Municipal year will be provided to the chosen supplier. However, these meetings are subject to change. The Council will provide the successful provider with 24 hours' notice for any amendments to this schedule (delays, additions, cancelations etc.). The information relating to Live System Availability must be in relation to these dates and times.	

3.1.3   Archive broadcast

Essential	Desirable
Broadcasts must be available for the public to view in archive form.	
The provider must store the broadcast feed within the European Economic Area (or request permission if this is to be stored elsewhere) and make it available via a website. At return of tenders please state where the recording of each meeting will be stored.	
The video and audio recording of each meeting must be available for a minimum of 12 months from the date of the original meeting. Following this	

period the recordings must be passed to the Council to utilise as it wishes. At return of tenders, please state how long video and audio feed will be stored and how long it will be made publicly available.	
Recorded streams must be able to record directly onto the conference control Computer for internal archiving.	

3.1.4   Equipment/Software

Essential	Desirable
Software package that allows us to provide a solution for Hybrid meetings. It is essential that all existing microphones and cameras are to be used as part of the solution. Equipment Specifications: • 58 x Confidea G3 Delegate Units • 3 x Sony IP SRG300SE PTZ Cameras •	The provider should offer different video qualities during the live webcast to support visitor broadband speeds. Support should be given for number of different devices using various formats including PCs, laptops, tablets and mobile phones.
Video and audio must be controllable by a single operator, using a user-friendly console. The ability to start/stop/pause webcasts/recordings through a user-friendly interface.	The broadcast should be accessible via a number of different devices using various formats including PCs, laptops, tablets and mobile phones.
Ability to provide multi-lingual webcasting capability.	
Ability to webcast/record (audio, visual and transcription) questions from the public gallery.	
Ability to ensure high quality audio and the dampening/cancelling of any background noise (such as the use of appropriate Digital Signal Processor).	
The Council should be able to record a meeting to local storage (USB, CD, etc.) without the meeting/event being webcast.	

Ability to display media on display panels (x4) with the Chamber, including (but not limited to), voting results, presentations, video, etc., either from control room equipment or from presentation feed from the existing Chamber projection equipment.	

3.2 Additional Essential Tasks

3.2.1 Security

A separate Cloud and IT Security Impact Assessment document will be provided to the provider. This document also follows the standard of Essential and Desirable criteria and must be returned to our internal Compliance and Business Support Manager for review, before any agreement takes place.

3.2.2 Welsh Language

The solution must be able to provide capability for **bilingual webcasting/recording/archive.**

The Council has a requirement to comply with the The Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct) (Wales) Order 2008.2.4 - Use of English and Welsh Languages.

> *The code set out the requirement for relevant authorities to:*

> *"...ensure that English and Welsh are treated equally and support and promote the Welsh Language. The use of the Welsh medium can be provided for in multi-location meetings – and normalised in a wide range of settings – in ways which might historically have proven challenging for physical meetings. Relevant authorities will also need to take account of their individual Welsh language standards. (Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011)"*

Taken together with the requirements set out above, this reinforces the need to ensure that both languages are provided for equally but relates the operational side of how this is done to the relevant authorities' own standards, which are set out by the Welsh Language Commissioner in individual Compliance Notices.

https://staffnet.valeofglamorgan.gov.uk/Staff-Central/Welsh-Language/Welsh-Language-Standards.aspx

SECTION 44 WELSH LANGUAGE (WALES) MEASURE 2011
Standard 33
> *"If you arrange a meeting that is open to the public, you must ensure that a simultaneous translation service from Welsh to English is available at the meeting, and you must orally inform those present in Welsh - (a) that they are welcome to use the Welsh language, and (b) that a simultaneous translation service is available. You must comply with standard 33 in every circumstance, except: ' where an invitation or material advertising the meeting has asked persons to inform you whether they wish to use the Welsh language, and that no person has informed you that he or she wishes to use the Welsh language at the meeting."*

3.2.3   Upgrades

Upgrades and new software/ Firmware versions should be made available free of charge throughout the term of the agreement. Any upgrades or version updates will be installed by the provider following our agreement.

If the upgrade involves any amendment to our existing infrastructure, the cost will be discussed before the upgrade is agreed to.

The provider must give the Council advance notification to ensure the system can be tested in advance of the next meeting.

Should the Council not take up any option to upgrade or take up new versions, the provider must maintain the existing version throughout the term of the contract.

3.2.4   Training and Support

The provider must provide a proposal for the necessary training of staff and members if required, to operate the solution. The proposal must detail the format of training and any instruction manuals or documentation to be provided.

3.2.5   Ongoing Support and Maintenance

The provider must provide a proposal for the maintenance of any equipment provided and the arrangements for support services to prevent and resolve operational problems.

The provider will have a support desk (English Language) that is operational during the regular office hours (8 a.m. – 6 p.m.) and during all live streaming of meetings. Please be aware that the Council hold regular evening meetings outside of these hours. This and all on site assistance will be included within the contract and no additional charges will be raised if this is necessary.

The provider will ensure that all High priority calls that are not resolved within the above resolution period are escalated to the support manager once the resolution period has been met. Further escalation within the management structure will take place every 4 hours that the problem is not resolved. The provider will communicate fully with the Council throughout this period and provide updates and estimated resolution times.

The provider will perform an annual health check on the solution and the cost of this health check will be included in the solution price.

There may be occasions where support will be required outside of these hours. The provider will state the cost of such service in the pricing schedule as an optional item.

3.2.6 Implementation

The display screens within the Council Chamber are to be used to display various types of media (Voting results, presentations, video, text, etc.). As such, the provider is required to evaluate the appropriate screen size dependent of the viewing distance within the Chamber

Some meetings/events require speakers to stand or to have material in their hand for reference when addressing the Council/Public/Audience. A provision of both single and dual delegate units is to be considered, when looking at any new solution.

3.3 Contract Management

Quarterly Contract review meetings will be held in order to facilitate communication, share information, undertake reviews of the activities being undertaken and monitor performance. The provider must ensure that relevant personnel attend these meetings. The provider must attend these meetings free of charge.

The provider must produce to the Authority reports containing the following information as and when required:

- Ability to gather analytics including, the ability to compare analytics for a number of broadcasts and archive views across a date range
- The number of Users who have visited the Web Site;
- The number of Users who have viewed each Webcast (both Live Webcasts and the Back Catalogues);
- Page views
- Unique visitors
- User location
- How many times was the webcast was watched
- Browser
- Operating system
- Device used to access (Desktop/Tablet/Mobile phone)
- An analysis of the days and times at which Users accessed the Web Site and Webcasts the duration of their visit; and
- Such other information as the Authority may reasonably request from time to time.

3.4 General

The Supplier will be required to:

i. Comply with all statutory obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and operate in a non-discriminatory manner. Bidders are advised that the Council has a Procurement Policy and Strategy and Equalities policies, copies of which are available upon request. Bidders are required to take account of these policies whilst providing the Goods/Services/Works;

ii. Hold valid public liability and employer's liability insurance. The Council's current minimum insurance thresholds are £10m public liability and £10m employers' liability;

iii. hold all relevant licences for the management, transport and control of waste;

iv. ensure the Services are undertaken in a competent and safe manner and adhere to Health and Safety legislation, guidance and relevant Council policies and procedures and take

reasonable care for the health and safety of himself and other persons who may be adversely affected by his acts or omissions;

v. immediately advise the Council of any serious health and safety incident;

vi. Recognise that failure to comply with the health and safety requirements under the Agreement constitutes a substantial breach of contract.