NHSBT Board

Connectivity Outline Business

27th September 2022

Status: Official

1. Summary and Purpose of Paper

NHSBT has 93 locations connected to a Vodafone Wide Area Network (WAN). The Vodafone contract ends in February 2023 and a suitable arrangement needs to be selected for the next 5-year term.

The OBC recommends an option which minimises business risk by contracting for a further 5-year term with Vodafone, improves services and provides a saving of £3.17m (29%) across the 5-year term.

There are project costs of c.£2m to replace the end-of-life Infrastructure at each NHSBT location and this budget has been provisioned in the transformation portfolio.

2. Action Requested

The Board is asked to approve:

- The renewal with Vodafone for a 5-year term using a Crown Commercial Services framework at £1.53m per annum saving £3m (29%) across the 5-year term compared to the existing arrangements.

- Investment of £2m to replace network components at each NHSBT site which are now more than 7-years old.

3. Background

NHSBT have 93 locations connected to a Vodafone Wide Area Network (WAN) across the UK, these range from very small blood collection team bases through to large centres such as Filton and our two SCC data centres.

The WAN is owned and operated by Vodafone through a contract which has been in place since early 2015 and which expires in February 2023.

The current physical assets, the majority of which will reach 7-years old at contract end, in the computer rooms are mostly owned by NHSBT.

4. Detail of report

4.1 NHSBT have 93 locations connected to a Vodafone Wide Area Network (WAN) across the UK.

4.2 These range from very small blood collection team bases through to large centres such as Filton and our two SCC data centres.

4.3 The WAN is owned and operated by Vodafone through a contract which has been in place since early 2015 and which expires in February 2023.

4.4 The Vodafone contract includes –

- Local Area Network (LAN) - the devices in each of the computer rooms which every PCs, analyser and telephone connects to.
- Wi-Fi Provision - the transmitters in the ceilings which provide access to guest and corporate Wi-Fi.
- Wide Area Network (WAN) - the cables which run underground into each of our centres and provide access to the data centres and to the Internet.
- Support for the Core Network - the devices in the data centres which all of the servers connect to including Pulse and Hematos.
- Internet Provision - providing access to the Internet from within our centres and also to donors and hospitals accessing our systems, including the Donor Portal and Online Blood Ordering.
- Other supporting services.

4.5 We spend c.£145K per month on these services. The current physical assets in the computer rooms are mostly owned by NHSBT.

4.6 The majority of assets will reach 7-years old at contract end.

4.7 Four options were considered for the renewal of this contract -

- **Option 1** is the 'do minimal' case; not viable in view of the lack of a commercial option and the age of the equipment.
- **Option 2** is the recommended option, causing least business disruption by renewing the contract and refreshing the Infrastructure.
- **Option 3** provides an alternative using new technology but has much higher delivery costs and offers little benefit to NHSBT until many more applications and services have been moved to Cloud. It will be the preferred option at the next contract renewal in 2027.
- **Option 4** (discounted October 2021 by NHSBT Exec and shown for completeness) is similar to Option 3 but with a new supplier. It was discounted through an October submission to the Exec

4.8 Option 2 is the recommended option and includes a £3.17m saving, increases bandwidth at 20 NHSBT locations and provides improvements to the management arrangements with Vodafone.

4.9 Project costs (to replace the end of life Infrastructure) are £2.042m inclusive of VAT within the 2022/23 and 2023/24 Financial Year. An additional 11% optimism bias is excluded from this total. This is included within DDTS forecasts.

5. Sign off

The next stage will be to confirm the delivery plan and resource requirements working with Vodafone to further define a more detailed timetable and financial summary for inclusion in the FBC, which will either be approved at the NHSBT Executive if costs stay within the current envelope or at the November NHSBT Board should they increase.

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