

# Public Document Pack



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20 September 2022

Dear Councillor

## **NOTICE OF DELEGATED DECISION – (DD17 22) APPROVAL OF PROJECT TO UPGRADE IDOX SOFTWARE**

Please find attached details of a decision taken by Mr Brinley Hill, Head of Community and Digital Services, to approve a project to upgrade the Council's Idox software.

As a non-Key Officer decision, call-in does not apply (Paragraph 18(a) of Part 4 (Rules of Procedure) of the Constitution).

Members of the public who require further information are asked to contact Kate Batty-Smith, Democratic Services Officer, on 01304 872303 or by e-mail at [democraticservices@dover.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@dover.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kate Batty-Smith". Below the signature is a short horizontal line.

Democratic Services Officer

ENCL

1 **NOTICE OF DELEGATED DECISION - (DD17 22) APPROVAL OF PROJECT TO UPGRADE IDOX SOFTWARE** (Pages 2-6)

## Decision Notice

## Delegated Decision

<b>Decision No:</b>	<b>DD17</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>UPGRADES TO IDOX SYSTEMS</b>
<b>Date of Decision:</b>	<b>13 September 2022</b>
<b>Notification Date:</b>	<b>20 September 2022</b>
<b>Implementation Date:</b>	<b>14 September 2022</b>
<b>Decision taken by:</b>	<b>Brinley Hill, Head of Community and Digital Services</b>
<b>Delegated Authority:</b>	<b>Authority delegated by Cabinet (Cabinet decision CAB 87 of 28 February 2022) and Council (at its meeting held on 2 March 2022) when approving the Council Budget 2022/23 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2022/23-2025/26 (as set out in Annex 10 of the report) as follows: ‘Delegate the approval of projects included in Annex 6D, the Digital &amp; ICT Programme, to the Head of Community and Digital Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, Digital and Climate Change</b>
<b>Decision Type:</b>	<b>Executive Non-Key</b>
<b>Call-In to Apply?</b>	<b>No (<i>Call-in does not apply to non-Key Officer decisions</i>)</b>
<b>Classification:</b>	<b>Unrestricted</b>
<b>Reason for the Decision:</b>	Procurement of various upgrades to the Idox software to improve software performance and utilise new functionality, and to move the software to up-to-date servers.
<b>Decision:</b>	To approve a new project to procure upgrades to the Council’s Idox software, servers and Oracle database.

1. **Consideration and Alternatives** (*if applicable*)
  - 1.1 See attached report.
2. **Any Conflicts of Interest Declared?**
  - 2.2 None.
3. **Supporting Information** (*as applicable*)
  - 3.1 See attached report.

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>UPGRADES TO IDOX SYSTEMS</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>13 September 2022</b>
<b>Decision to be taken by:</b>	<b>Brinley Hill, Head of Community and Digital Services</b>
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Abi Robinson, Digital Services Manager</b>
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	<b>Councillor Chris Vinson, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, Digital and Climate Change</b>
<b>Decision Type:</b>	<b>Executive Non-Key Decision</b>
<b>Call-in to be Suspended:</b>	<b>No (<i>Call-in does not apply to non-Key Officer decisions</i>)</b>

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**Classification:** **Unrestricted**

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**Delegated Authority:** Authority delegated by Cabinet (Cabinet decision CAB 87 of 28 February 2022) and Council (at its meeting held on 2 March 2022) when approving the Council Budget 2022/23 and Medium-Term Financial Plan 2022/23-2025/26 (as set out in Annex 10 of the report) as follows: ‘Delegate the approval of projects included in Annex 6D, the Digital & ICT Programme, to the Head of Community and Digital Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance, Digital and Climate Change.

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**Purpose of the report:** Procurement of various upgrades to the Idox Software to improve software performance and utilise new functionality, and move the software to up-to-date servers.

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**Recommendation:** To approve a new project to procure upgrades to the Idox software, servers and oracle database.

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## 1. Summary

Idox have released various upgrades to the Idox software that is used by the Council – Uniform, Document Management System (DMS), Public Access (Website) and Total Land Charges (TLC). This report is to seek approval of a project to purchase and implement the upgrades and to move the software applications onto current servers and update the oracle database.

## 2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 Uniform is the primary system that is used by Planning, Planning Enforcement, Building Control and Tree Preservation in the managing and dealing of applications and cases.
- 2.2 Currently the software is on version 10.4.1 and Idox have released version 10.7.1 which means the Council is currently out of support, and could have an impact on the service areas productivity. Moving to the latest version of the software would mean we are back in support until the end of 2023 without any further upgrades or disruption to the mentioned service areas.

- 2.3 The upgraded software would enable DDC to use the updated functionality and Idox have resolved various bug issues. The new version will deliver enhanced functionality in terms of:
- (a) Improved recording of applications in both Planning and Building Control as various fields have been added – such as recording site visit notes, additional information against plots.
  - (b) Improved document generation and email capability.
  - (c) Various bug fixes.
- 2.4 The DMS is used to store documentation relating to applications electronically. DDC are currently on version 5 of the software, this was de supported by Idox in July 2022. The new version will deliver enhanced functionality in terms of: -
- (a) Retiring Check in Check out (CICO) of emails in the DMS – there have been issues with this since moving to MS365. The upgrade will allow for emails to be directly inserted into the DMS.
  - (b) New document viewer and new redact products which will make annotating and redacting documents easier.
  - (c) Various bug fixes.
- 2.5 TLC is a web-based application which DDC uses to process searches for restrictions and obligations on pieces of land/properties. The search requests generally come from conveyancing solicitors, National Land Information Service (NLIS) or the public. Currently the Land Charges Team in Development Control primarily use the system. Private Sector Housing, Building Control and Environmental Health also have access to answer search queries.
- 2.6 The current version of TLC 10.0.1 is reliant on Internet Explorer (IE), this web browser has been replaced by Microsoft Edge and is no longer supported. There is currently a work around in place to enable TLC to continue to function on IE, but this will be removed by Microsoft in 2024. The new version of TLC is compatible with Microsoft Edge and Google Chrome.
- 2.7 There is also additional functionality that has been included in the upgrade, such as –
- (a) The interface has been updated to give a more modern look.
  - (b) Email functionality has been increased – which in turn should reduce the departments postal costs.
  - (c) NLIS search file size has been increased – some NLIS searches could not be returned directly via TLC, as they exceeded the maximum file size, this has now been increased to 8Mb.

### Servers

- 2.8 The Idox applications Uniform, DMS and Public Access (PA) are currently installed on 2012 servers, which are being unsupported in 2023, these need to be upgraded to 2016 servers and the data migrated across from the old servers to the new. To

minimise disruption to the service areas it is suggested to carry out the upgrade to the servers whilst the software is being upgraded.

#### Oracle Upgrade

- 2.9 The Oracle database holds all the case/application data needs to be upgraded to ensure that Idox meet their security and compatibility standards. Currently DDC are running Oracle 19 which is compatible up to version 10.6 of Uniform. DDC will not be able to upgrade the software any further without upgrading Oracle to 19c.
- 2.10 Due to the nature of the upgrades, it will be necessary for Idox to undertake the work.
- 2.11 By upgrading the software to the latest version, the departments will be able to use improved functionality which in turn will improve productivity, such as the work around for CICO will be removed, improved email functionality which will lower postage costs.

### **3 Identification of Options**

- 3.1 Option 1 – To upgrade the Idox Applications to the current release bringing the systems back into support, upgrade the relevant servers and carry out the Oracle upgrade.
- 3.2 Option 2 - To leave the software on the unsupported version of the software, out of and unsupported servers and due to Oracle not being upgrade we would be unable to upgrade past version 10.7.1 of Uniform which will mean DDC will be out of support again in the future.

### **4 Evaluation of Options**

- 4.1 The recommendation would be to carry out the upgrades it would put the software back in support with Idox, resolve known bug issues and use the new functionality. The servers would be updated and will be removed from ICT's risk register. Oracle will be on a supported version allowing for future upgrades to the Idox software.
- 4.2 Idox have provided a quote to carry out the upgrade at a cost of £21,802.50 This includes Idox engineers to carry out the upgrades and migration of databases.

### **5 Resource Implications**

- 5.1 Digital Team member to co-ordinate the upgrade.
- 5.2 Service areas to carry out testing.
- 5.3 ICT to provide support if required.
- 5.4 Financial Costs – There is budget allocated within the existing ICT reserve for this project

Uniform – Upgrade to 10.7 on Live and Test on new servers (2016)	£4,959
DMS – Upgrade Live and Test on new servers (2016)	£4,959
Upgrade and migration of Oracle to 19c on new servers	£5,814
PA - Upgrade of databases, application server and web server (2016)	£3,676.50
TLC Upgrade	£2,394
Total	£21,802.50

### **6 Climate Change and Environmental Implications**

6.1 There should be no environmental or climate change implications as a consequence of this decision being taken.

## 7 **Corporate Implications**

7.1 Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP): Accountancy has been consulted on the report and have no further comments to add. (LS)

7.2 Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comments to make.

7.3 Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however is discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

7.4 Other Officers (as appropriate):

## 8 **Appendices**

None.

## 9 **Background Papers**

Relevant correspondence on file held by Digital Team

Contact Officer: Abi Robinson, Digital Services Manager