



Accounting Officer Memorandum

Print Recompete Project

It is normal practice for accounting officers to scrutinise significant policy proposals or plans to start or vary major projects, and then assess whether they measure up to the standards set out in Managing Public Money. From April 2017, the government has committed to make a summary of the key points from these assessments available to Parliament when an accounting officer has agreed an assessment of projects within the Government's Major Projects Portfolio.

Background and context

The Ministry of Justice (MoJ) print service is a business-critical activity for all MoJ agencies and business units. The current print services contract was awarded to Xerox UK Ltd in May 2014 for a period of 5 years - up to May 2019 and has subsequently been extended for the maximum two-year period until 18th May 2021.

The current contract value was £31.86m over 5 years and the Department currently has approx. 18000 devices deployed under this agreement.

Print Recompete Project Objectives:

- To carry out a re-procurement of the Ministry of Justice print services, including:
 - A fully managed print service including provision for a full estate device refresh.
 - Prison service break-fix service, plus budget for replacement devices
 - Off-site bulk printing
 - HQ Print room facilities
- The assessment was made in November 2020, at the Outline Business Case stage of the project lifecycle. The accounting officer is responsible to the Ministry of Justice.



Assessment against the accounting officer standards

Regularity

The project is considered to be uncontentious with no significant policy, parliamentary or legislative requirements. It is therefore not outside legal powers, parliamentary authority or HMT delegations. The procurement of print services aligns with the Authority's legal obligations, with external legal support in place to ensure adherence to procurement law and standards.

Propriety

- The proposal for the re-competition and its implementation aligns with managing public money standards and obligations.
- The re-competition will be conducted fairly, and all suppliers will be treated equally.
- The re-competition will be administered to a standard that meets public expectations.
- The risks associated with the re-competition are known, manageable and acceptable.
- The proposals are sustainable, and sufficient public resources are available and are likely to continue to be available to support the re-competition and the new contract.

Value for Money

The Print Recompete project will meet business and business user needs while also offering value for money to the taxpayer and ensuring affordability for the MoJ.

Value for money has been assessed throughout the Outline Business Case, in the options appraisal and will be regularly assessed throughout the Procurement. It will be further assessed and confirmed in the Full Business Case at the end of the Procurement exercise.

Feasibility

The managed print service, which makes up most of the cost of the print service, is currently a “pay as you go” service, in which the authority is charged on a per print impression (PPI) basis, i.e. per copy, per print. This is also known as the “click charge”. The click charge captures all supplier costs including supply of assets, training, service desk, transformation, future service management, and non-paper consumables. The existing charging model for replacing the print contract is considered feasible as per the projected costs set out in the outline business case and will be used to provide a level playing field for bids and their evaluation. Both MoJ and the supplier have the opportunity post contract award, as part of continuous improvement, to drive further value for money through variations to the payment model that will encourage print volume reduction. This would be managed through change control.

Conclusion

As the accounting officer for the Ministry of Justice I considered this assessment of the Print Recompete project and approved it on 8 January 2021.

I have prepared this summary to set out the key points which informed my decision. If any of these factors change materially during the lifetime of this project, I undertake to prepare a revised summary, setting out my assessment of them.

This summary will be published on the government's website (GOV.UK). Copies will be deposited in the Library of the House of Commons and sent to the Comptroller and Auditor General and Treasury Officer of Accounts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Driver', with a horizontal line underneath.

Mike Driver
8 January 2021