



Accounting Officer Assessment Memorandum

Future Voice Service Full Business Case (FBC)

03/02/2025

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 a project within the Government's Major Projects Portfolio.

Background and context

The Future Voice Service FBC seeks approval for two contracts for Voice Infrastructure Services (VIS) and Voice Hardware. This is to enable an effective replacement of services and allow exit from the current arrangement with the incumbent Voice suppliers. The FBC builds upon the Future Voice Services Outline Business Case (OBC), reaffirms the preferred option from the OBC, and provides an updated view that reflects the preferred bidders for VIS and Voice Hardware.

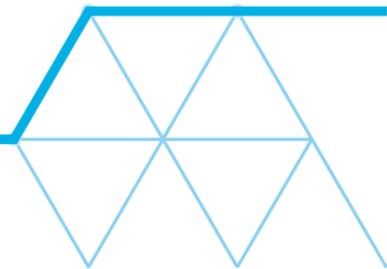
Voice services enable MoJ staff to make internal and external calls, which underpin the vital functions of justice services. They include the supply, installation, and support of telephony equipment and supporting infrastructure. These services fulfil a key strategic role in the delivery of the MoJ's mission to deliver swift, secure, and uninterrupted access to justice.

Assessment against the Accounting Officer standards

Regularity

The Whole Life Cost of the proposal is considered as affordable. Funding has been secured for the current Spending Review (SR) period up to and including Financial Year 2024/25. Funding for the next SR period is not yet agreed and will be subject to future SR negotiations, but assuming future allocations remain broadly consistent with present allocations, this is deemed affordable.

The provision of Voice services is set out within the Ambit of the Vote and the project seeks to continue and enhance business-critical services. Therefore, it meets the criteria laid out in *Managing Public Money*.



This project has been assessed as regular.

Propriety

A Board has been established to support the Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) in delivering the programme and its benefits. The Board and SRO are supported by the department's key functions including His Majesty's Courts & Tribunal Service (HMCTS), National Probation Service (NPS), His Majesty's Prison & Probation Service (HMPPS), Headquarters (MoJ HQ), Legal Aid Agency (LAA), Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) and Arm's Length Bodies (ALBs). Furthermore, Board representatives are drawn from wider functional areas like Commercial, Finance and HR. The FBC has been scrutinised by the department's Investment Committee.

This project has been assessed as proper.

Value for Money

The Future Voice Service will meet business and user needs while also offering value for money to the taxpayer and ensuring affordability for the MoJ.

The FBC has assessed value for money through a full options appraisal, reflecting the tenders from the preferred suppliers for VIS and Voice Hardware. This has allowed MoJ to identify the Future Voice Service as the preferred way forward. The preferred suppliers have been determined through a procurement exercise set out in the Commercial Case.

This project has been assessed as value for money.

Feasibility

The project team is fully resourced with the necessary skills required to implement and deliver the proposal.

This project has been assessed as feasible.

Conclusion

As the Accounting Officer for the Ministry of Justice I considered this assessment of the Future Voice Service Full Business Case (FBC) and approved it on 12 February 2025.

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.

Dame Antonia Romeo DCB

Permanent Secretary

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ARDCB', followed by a period.

Dame Antonia Romeo DCB, Permanent Secretary, 12.02.2025

