



The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Officeholders – Scottish Biometrics Commissioner’s ICT Determination

By Correspondence

Reference: SPCB (2025) Paper 14

Executive summary

1. The Scottish Biometrics Commissioner (“the Commissioner”) is seeking the SPCB’s approval to migrate his ICT system from SCOTS to another provider and to refresh his ICT hardware.
2. A copy of the Commissioner’s determination and follow-up email are attached at Annexes A and B.

Issues and options

3. The Commissioner’s reasons for wishing to change his ICT provider includes –
 - increased rental costs
 - SCOTS restrictions, and
 - the support service being too slow
4. The Commissioner currently pays around £8k for 5 users to access SCOTS. He considers he may be able to reduce these costs by using a different provider.
5. With so many users, capacity issues have started to arise with SCOTS. The Commissioner cites two recent examples, one where a member of his staff was unable to send a PDF copy of a draft report to their publishers because it was too large and the other where due to SCOTS security restrictions, he was denied access to complete an on-line questionnaire for the Northern Ireland Assembly.
6. The Commissioner is seeking approval to explore ICT migration options including a hardware refresh for his office and to migrate to a new supplier if one is identified which delivers better value for money than SCOTS.
Does the SPCB agree?

Governance

7. The Commissioner must seek the SPCB's approval for spend not previously approved as part of the budget process.

Resource implications

8. The Commissioner estimates that the cost of an ICT migration will be circa £11k and a hardware refresh would be about £9k (5 x laptops @£1500 and 4 x phones @ 250). He is therefore seeking approval to spend circa £20k. The Commissioner can meet these costs from his approved budget for 2024/25.
9. The Commissioner also estimates that the annual costs of hosting could be £2-£3k less than he is currently paying for SCOTS.

Publication Scheme

10. This paper can be published in line with the SPCB's publication scheme.

Decision

11. The SPCB is invited to approve the Commissioner's determination for an ICT refresh and migration to a new supplier if the annual cost of hosting is less than he is currently paying. No additional funding is required in 2024/25.

Officeholder Services

20 February 2025