

**Proposed Decision to be taken by the  
Deputy Leader  
on or after 24 October 2014**

**Addition to the Capital Programme for Replacement of  
Mass Calibration Comparators**

**Recommendation**

That the Deputy Leader gives approval to add the purchase of two new mass comparators to the 2014/15 capital programme at a total cost of £45,045; the entire cost to be funded from the existing calibration revenue reserve.

**1.0 Key Issues**

- 1.1 The mass calibration laboratory constitutes the second largest contribution to the revenue of calibration services as a whole and continues to see a steady increase in business customer base. Although the lab retains the majority of facilities, certain pieces of essential equipment are either becoming obsolete or developing intermittent faults.
- 1.2 Whilst the laboratory remains functional, the current comparators do not cover as broad a range as customers are now demanding. The comparators are old and will require replacement in the near future. New comparators are easy and quick to use which would make the laboratory more efficient enabling operators to deal with increased demand from business.
- 1.3 Mass comparator balances are sensitive weighing machines that can produce absolute weighing results to an extremely high resolution. The comparators can detect small changes of weight and allow the comparison of trade weights against our County Local Standards of mass.
- 1.4 Warwickshire metrology and calibration laboratory is a centre of excellence nationally and as other local authorities' calibration laboratories close, there has been an increase in demand for our services from local authorities and independent businesses. Warwickshire is capitalising on this opportunity for increasing the customer base.

**2.0 Option & Proposal**

- 2.1 To enhance the facilities offered by the mass calibration laboratory by replacing two ageing comparators, thus enabling the laboratory:
  - to extend the range of weights that can be submitted for calibration,
  - to obtain UKAS accreditation for Mass Calibration,
  - to offer a wider scope of calibration options for businesses,
  - to grow the customer base and increase income generation by the laboratory

2.2 Funding for the replacements is already in place within the calibration revenue reserve, which has been accumulating trading surpluses year on year in order to fund replacement equipment.

### 3.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

3.1 Following the approval of this proposal, the procurement process will occur and new comparators once received will be added to the capital programme.

4.0 Background Papers - None

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