NHS Electronic Booking Systems
(Part of Waiting, Booking and Choice Programme)

OGC Gateway review: Gateway 2 – Procurement Strategy

Status of report: Final

Senior Responsible Owner: <Text Redacted>

Review Date: 5th & 6th November 2002

Review team:
<Text Redacted>

OGC

Office of Government Commerce

NHS Electronic Booking Systems Project – Gateway 2 Review

November 5th & 6th 2002.

Background

The Electronic Booking Systems Project is a central pillar of the NHS National IT Strategic Programme. The strategic aims of the project are to design, procure and implement an electronic booking system capable of delivering:

- Fast and convenient access to hospital care

- Patient choice of provider

- NHS services that are designed around the needs of patients

- Improved service delivery.

There are three strands to the project:

- An **'information broker'** that provides information on where services are provided, the waiting times and how the service is delivered. This is operational but further phases of development will deliver enhancements and improve data quality.

- A **'transaction broker'** which enables the booker and/or the patient to make the booking and receive confirmation of the appointment.

- A **'booking management service'** which will provide a call centre based service to support patients and professionals in making, amending and cancelling appointments.

This review focused on the procurement strategy (Gate 2) for the transaction broker. The full project will be reviewed in early 2003.

A Gateway 1 Review of the project was carried out in November 2001. Some of the recommendations made at that review have been overtaken by events/ re-organisations/ policy changes while others – on a national strategic level are still being addressed.

Purpose and conduct of the review

The purpose of the review was to examine (partly in retrospect) the procurement strategy for the 'transaction broker' element of the project and in particular to:

- Ensure that the procurement strategy is robust and appropriate

- Ensure that the project plan through to completion is appropriately detailed and realistic

- Ensure that the project controls and organisation are defined, financial controls in place and resources available

- Confirm that the development and delivery approach and mechanisms are still appropriate and manageable

- Check that the supplier market capability and track record is fully understood.

The Gateway 2 Review was carried out on November 5th and 6th 2002 at Quarry House, Leeds. The team consisted of:

<Text Redacted>

The people interviewed are listed on page 6.

The Review Team would like to thank the Project Team for their support and openness which greatly contributed to our understanding of the project and the outcome of this review.

Conclusion

The Review Team finds that

- There is a tremendous drive and belief at all levels within the Project Team.

  It is seen as a key element in the delivery of NHS services and despite immense change all around them they are working very hard to keep their project on course and successfully interfacing with a changing environment.

- The Project Team is under resourced and to some extent dependent on others for deliverables. As a result decisions, material and arrangements essential for the next stage of the project are not yet in place.

- The procurement process has produced a limited choice of prime service provider and information and decisions necessary to select the winner are not currently available.

- Governance arrangements, although planned are not yet in place.

- There is no overall concept of affordability or ability to demonstrate value for money.

Status of Project

Under the following classification:

- Red – to achieve success the project should take remedial action immediately

- Amber – the project should go forward with actions on recommendations to be carried out before the next OGC Gateway Review

- Green – the project is on target to succeed but may benefit from the uptake of the recommendations

the project is categorised as 'Red' due to the urgent work required on the procurement strategy and process and governance arrangements.

Summary of recommendations

The Review Team finds that the following recommendations are critical (Red) and need immediate remedial action:

1. **(a) The procurement strategy should be re-assessed to determine whether it will deliver the required results**

   (b)There should be clarity on the regime for monitoring and managing the PSP.

2. **The selection process for the PSP, the selection criteria, model(s) of delivery and the risk transfer mechanisms including any redress need to be defined.**

3. **The Project Team should urgently implement in full the proposed governance arrangements by**

   (a) drafting in appropriate resource for the Electronic Booking project and.

   (b) putting in place the WBC governance arrangements.

The following recommendations are critical before the next review (Amber) and should be actioned before then

4. **The role of the Project Board should be re-examined and re-focused.**

5. **The programme should put in place mechanisms to forecast expenditure and to demonstrate value for money.**

6. **The current significant under-resourcing of the project should be corrected.**

Findings

Potential for Success

- The project has immense drive and support from the highest levels of government and is seen as a keystone for the future development of the NHS. There is less evidence of knowledge and support at Trust level outside the Enterprise and Shadow communities although this is being energetically worked by the Project Team.

- The scope of the Project (and the whole Waiting, Booking and Choice Programme) is still evolving so the total business change is not clearly defined. Similarly the benefits to be delivered are not clear or quantified at this stage.

- The procurement strategy was developed about 1 year ago. It is compliant with EC regulations but the decision to go down a negotiated route with suppliers from NHS

- The 'end game' for the procurement activity – the selection of the PSP – has not yet been decided even though current plans show the final selection being made in January 2003. In particular:

  - the process for selecting the PSP from the two currently in the frame has not been defined

  - the selection criteria have not been established

  - contract management arrangements and the model(s) of delivery expected from the PSP are not clear

  - the mechanisms for transferring risk to the PSP and means of redress for poor performance have not been defined

  - potential PSP interfaces between the e-booking PSP and any Strategic Health Authority needs exploration and definition.

  - as the e-booking PSP defines its services and develops modernised ways of working these will have to map onto local strategies being developed in conjunction with Trusts and any Strategic Health Authority PSP.

  - we strongly support the project team's intention to keep the two potential PSPs in the frame until satisfactory arrangements have been negotiated.

- These procurement issues are critical to the success of the procurement and need to be urgently addressed. We therefore recommend:

  - **the procurement strategy should be re-assessed to determine whether it will deliver the required results**

  - **there should be clarity on the regime for monitoring and managing the PSP**

  - **the selection process for the PSP, the selection criteria model(s) of delivery and the risk transfer mechanisms including any redress need to be defined**

Review of current phase

- The project is complex, has many facets and the current project team is under resourced. As a result there is 'themed' control of the project – in those areas where the project team are devoting attention to keep on schedule. At this time there are no comprehensive governance arrangements in place although the proposals presented to the Review Team will be satisfactory if fully implemented.

- The project is about to gear up – with increased spend and a national roll out. Proper governance is critical to success. Accordingly we recommend:

- **the Project Team should urgently implement in full the proposed governance arrangements**

  (a) by drafting in appropriate resource for the Electronic Booking project

  (b) putting in place the WBC governance arrangements

- The Project Board appears to operate as an 'approving body' after the event, rather than as a forward looking decision making body.

  - **we recommend that the role of the Project Board should be re-examined and re-focused.**

Business case

- The e-booking programme receives funding from a number of streams which individually appear to be satisfactorily controlled. However there is no overall view of the total cost of the programme and hence no evidence that what is being delivered represents value for money or is ultimately affordable.

- There is also a need for some clarity on likely expenditure with the PSPs in order to inform negotiations with them. We recommend that:

  - **the programme should put in place mechanisms to forecast expenditure and to demonstrate value for money.**

Risk management

The major project risks have been identified and outline management plans have been established. A comprehensive risk and issue management programme is starting to be introduced as part of the overall governance arrangements but needs rapid implementation.

See recommendation on governance.

Readiness for next phase – investment decision

- The e-booking programme is a national strategy with local implementation. Even though it is billed as 'local implementation' there is still a need for significant central resource to manage and control such an activity. The resources in the current programme team are not yet sufficient to manage to the level required for success. We recommend that:

  - **the current significant under-resourcing of the project should be corrected.**

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

The following were interviewed by the Review Team:

<Text Redacted>

SRO - REVIEW FEEDBACK FORM

Once completed please send to, Office Manager, Gateway Team, Fleetbank House,
2-6 Salisbury Square, London EC4Y 8AE

OGC Reference Number for Review: **Programme/Project Title:** **Department:** **Gateway Review: 0 1 2 3 4 5** **Project Risk Level (please indicate)** **High** ☐ **Medium** ☐ **Low** ☐	**Date of Review:** **Your name:** **Your Role in the Project:**

Your feedback on various aspects of the Review are an important aspect of ensuring that Best Practice is maintained and that OGC can learn from your experiences. Please respond to the questions below, and add any further comments at the end of this form.

STATEMENT	Disagree Strongly 1	Disagree Somewhat 2	Neither agree nor disagree 3	Agree somewhat 4	Agree Strongly 5
IMPACT ON THE PROJECT Overall, this review was beneficial and will impact positively on the outcome of the project					
THE REVIEW REPORT The Report's conclusions and recommendations were clear, concise and understandable The Report recommendations will enable me to achieve improvements in project outcomes (i.e. cost, schedule, functionality)					
THE REVIEW ITSELF The Review was conducted on a timely basis The time taken for the Review was appropriate for the Risk level and stage of the Project The Review met my needs The Review exceeded my expectations					
THE REVIEW TEAM The skill and experience levels were appropriate The approach used was appropriate (i.e. style, method, pace) Review Team members related well to the Project Team Ideas, concepts and suggestions were effectively presented					

THE REVIEW TEAM (continued) Satisfactory responses were given to issues raised The Review Team Leader fulfilled his/her role effectively Overall, the Review Team were an effective team					
GATEWAY PLANNING MEETING (Please answer the questions below if a Planning Meeting was conducted prior to the Project Review) This meeting was worthwhile This event increased the effectiveness of the Review The session facilitator's style, method and pace reinforced learning amongst the group I would recommend such a meeting to others					
QUALITY OF SERVICE FROM OGC OGC personnel were easy to contact and provided a satisfactory service with timely and helpful responses to my queries					

FURTHER COMMENTS

Please use this section to comment more broadly on the Project Review and/or Planning Meeting

- What comments do you have about the Review and/or Planning Meeting content (e.g. what you liked, what should be added, or removed)?

- What comments do you have about the Review Team Leader, Review Team Members or facilitator for the Planning Meeting?

- What comments do you have about Project Review or Planning Meeting administration/logistics?

Describe any requirements for further help, or concerns that might hinder you in successfully applying the results of this Review to your project.

Name…………………………………………..Signature ....

Date…………………………………....