

INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DELEGATED DECISION

CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE, PROCUREMENT, ICT AND OPERATIONAL ASSETS

CLLR PHILIP WHITEHEAD

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THE ADOPTION OF ELECTRONIC "E" SIGNATURES FOR EXECUTING FORMAL CONTRACTS VALUED BELOW THE EU SUPPLIES AND SERVICES THRESHOLD

Purpose of Report

1. To improve the process for execution of contracts by allowing e-signatures to be used by Officers to execute the subject contracts, except where Legal requirements preclude it, such as deeds and other documents to be registered at the Land Registry.

Consultation

2. There has been no formal consultation on this issue and there is no legal requirement to do so.

Options Considered

3. Options were:
 - a. Continue with the current requirement to execute these contracts with a "wet" i.e. ink signature.
 - b. Improve the process to eliminate wasted activity and speed up the process by permitting e-signatures for the subject contracts. An e-signature might be a scanned image of a signature or the name typed into the document and sent from the senders e-mail account.

Reason for Decision

3. To reduce waste, improve efficiency and adopt more commercially acceptable practice. This will allow Officers to finalise and e-mail simple contracts speedily and securely, rather than continue with the current protracted administrative burden of printing multiple hard copies, managing their signature by the parties by post as well as the subsequent document storage by Legal Services. It will further reduce postal physical document storage requirements/costs and support faster access to contract documents when they are retrieved.

