

SUMMARY POLICY ISSUE PAPER – FOR DA DISCUSSION

Title of Paper	Solution Architecture Options for RFI		
Issue Ref		Date:	13 December 2016
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Discussed at User Group	15 August 2016	Discussion at EDAG Group	22nd August 2016
Issued to DA	30 August 2016	Discussion at DA	31 August 2016

Summary and recommendation

1. This paper summarises the recommended solution architecture options to be carried forward into the RFI.
2. The options were chosen after a comprehensive exercise to initially establish a long list of options, numbering 10 in total. The decision criteria were developed following review of the Ofgem design principles, supported by TOGAF¹ technology selection criteria. Market participants were then asked to apply the decision criteria to the long list to identify preferred options.
3. Bilateral conversations were held with small and medium sized suppliers to further gauge support for the long list of options. These organisations typically did not have the resource available to respond to the ranking exercise, but their comments were very valuable in establishing key themes
4. Further internal review by Ofgem and DCC, along with reference to HM Treasury guidelines for programmes such as faster switching, allowed for four options to be selected for inclusion in the RFI. These are extensively discussed in the supporting EDAG paper and slide pack, but are summarised here;
 - a. **'Option 0: Do Nothing'** – The counterfactual option and a representation of current system arrangements.
 - b. **'Option 1: Do minimum'** – Existing systems would be enhanced to run every calendar day, and new systems implemented to reduce switching times to a 2-3 day window. There would be no improvement to reliability
 - c. **'Option 2: Switching system with middleware'** – A centrally hosted switching database, built on new or existing infrastructure, holding a relatively small set of data elements. This would be the definitive central registration system, providing real time confirmation of a switch.

¹ The Open Group Architecture Framework: A systems solution design standard.

Supporting data would come from existing enquiry systems. The system would also host a Middleware platform to allow flexible transport of data between participants. This option can deliver next day switching

- d. **Option 3: 'Switching system and MIS database with middleware'** – Centrally hosted database, built on new or existing infrastructure, with the switching system holding a relatively small set of data elements. Supporting MIS data would be held in a centrally hosted MIS database, also updated from existing systems. The system would also host a Middleware platform to allow flexible transport of data between participants. Collectively both systems would be the definitive central registration system, providing real time confirmation of switch and support next day switching

Stakeholder Views

5. Both the Business Process Design User Group and EDAG provided input to the recommended shortlist options for the RFI. The key comment was that more descriptive detail will be required on each of the options to enable the industry to provide sufficient feedback on costs and the impact on existing systems and processes.
6. We are currently expanding each of the options with required detail for the RFI

Recommendation

7. We invite DA to authorise the inclusion of the four options set out in section 4 for inclusion in the RFI

DA Decision Log

Date of DA Meeting	31 August 2016
Decisions (from Ofgem website)	<p>Approved as baseline. The DA approved the inclusion of these four options in the RFI:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Switching database with middleware • Switching database and MIS database with middleware • Do minimum • Do nothing (counterfactual) <p>Individual components of each of these four options will be approved by DA to provide clarity for Design Baseline 1. The DA agreed that it is sensible to include a do nothing and do minimum option in line with HM Treasury's guidance.</p>
Notes	