

EAST RENFREWSHIRE COUNCILCABINET27 AUGUST 2020Report by Deputy Chief ExecutiveCONTINUED USE OF THE SOCIAL WORK CASE MANAGEMENT SOLUTION**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1. The purpose of the report is to request Cabinet approve the revised planned commitment of the use of the current Social Work Case Management Solution from September 2021 to a new end date of March 2023 to allow the appropriate procurement and implementation of a replacement solution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. It is recommended that Cabinet approve this request to further extend the contract with OLM for Carefirst to the additional contract value of £180,000 to cover the period 01/10/2021 to 31/03/2023 (18 months).

BACKGROUND

3. Cabinet considered and approved a report on 6th February 2020 regarding the planned extension of the use of the current Social Work Case Management Solution for a suitable period to allow the appropriate procurement of a replacement solution.

4. This planned extension had a value up to £180,000 to cover the period from 01/04/2020 to 30/09/21. This was to allow sufficient time for a planned national framework to conclude following a re-tender, and to then integrate any system changes.

5. A two year procurement process from Scotland Excel was intended to result in the publication of a framework for Social Care solutions, with an award in early January 2020. On 16 January 2020 Scotland Excel formally confirmed that the award of this framework has been rescinded and the tender process will be restarted due to the issues with the previous tender process.

6. The Social Work Case Management Solution is the key solution within HSCP which allows for the recording and management of Client Information and Case Recording within all aspects of Social Work.

7. The solution supports the delivery of critical child and adult services including the assessment and delivery of care packages to the most vulnerable citizens including home care and financial management, and adult and child protection services. It is imperative that the solution remains in place, stable and supported through any procurement and replacement activity.

8. The current contract has a required notice period to extend which must be enacted by September 2020 should we wish to continue to use the solution from September 2021.

9. The Covid-19 Coronavirus pandemic which came to the UK shortly after the approval of this previous extension, has impacted multiple projects within the Council and at the national level.

REPORT

10. As previously reported to Cabinet the replacement of a Social Work Case Management Solution is a significant undertaking. Benchmarking has been conducted with other Local Authorities indicating that the expected completion timescale for solution replacement ranges between 2-3 years. This would allow for a 3 to 6 month procurement, a 12 month implementation and 12 to 15 month contingency.

11. This level of substantial change requires significant departmental resource, and alignment with National initiatives to ensure that there is capacity and cohesion. The project that this forms a significant part of has been paused for the last 6 months due to the focus required in the pandemic response, therefore this contractual commitment is required to ensure sufficient time for all activity to be undertaken.

12. As recovery within the Council continues, in parallel to the continued response to local Covid-19 outbreaks and potential for wave 2 impact, HSCP is unable to commit to project timescales due to the current uncertainties.

13. The national procurement framework activity, led by Scotland Excel, has been paused through the Covid-19 period. Procurement have confirmed with Scotland Excel that there is currently no confirmed date when the framework procurement will restart, nor when it will conclude.

14. Covid-19 has severely impacted services, and HSCP recovery plans are now highlighting changes and opportunities for improving service delivery. Having stability in the Social Work Case Management is imperative at this time minimising the risk to the Council and providing resilience to the Service.

15. As the current contract has a required notice period to extend which is due in September 2020 it is necessary to put in place certainty for the current solution. This will allow the national procurement framework to be awarded and for HSCP to enter a period of stability to undertake the procurement and implementation activity. This will not conclude by September 2021.

FINANCE AND EFFICIENCY

16. There has been departmental scrutiny of the associated financial spend, budget allocation and fitness for purpose of the solution.

17. This work to restart the national tender process has not proceeded as planned due to COVID-19.

CONSULTATION

18. There has been significant input and consultation with the HSCP management team, departmental stakeholders and ICT. This has allowed us to formulate the replacement proposal and programme that achieves the optimum outcome in a suitable timescale.

19. Legal services were consulted on the planned further extension to this contract. They have advised that given the extreme urgency of the situation, the extension to the contract may be directly negotiated with the current supplier without further competition.

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

20. There are limited opportunities currently identified beyond the use of the Scotland Excel Framework, however identification of Lessons Learned from other authorities and ongoing collaboration with the Scottish Local Government Digital Office, the relevant services will continue to explore opportunities.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSALS

21. The continued use of the current solution is required to ensure that continuation of service and resilience for the service application, whilst the next generation solution is procured.

CONCLUSIONS

22. This approval for an extension is being sought to support the planned replacement of the Social Work Case Management Solution; ensuring suitable provisions are in place to support the transitional period. Providing stability for the critical business application throughout the programme, a sufficient contingency period allowed for to ensure success, and provision for continuity of service during a period of significant technical change.

RECOMMENDATIONS

23. It is recommended that Cabinet approve this request to further extend the contract with OLM for Carefirst to the additional contract value of £180,000 to cover the period 01/10/2021 to 31/03/2023 (18 months).

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