



Portfolio Holder Decisions

Financial Management System – Upgrade and Contract Amendment - Resources

1. **Financial Management System for Wyre Borough Council – Upgrade to System and Contract Amendment**

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Portfolio Holder Report

The portfolio holder will make a decision on this item after seven days have elapsed (including the date of publication).

Report of:	Portfolio Holder	Date of publication
Clare James, Corporate Director Resources	Councillor Michael Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder	17 June 2021

Financial Management System for Wyre Borough Council – Upgrade to System and Contract Amendment

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To agree an upgrade to the council's Financial Management System to improve workflow and accessibility of information and ensure compliance with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).
- 1.2 To authorise an amendment to the contract in relation to the Financial Management System, namely an early termination to the existing contract and a new Framework contract entered into in relation to the Provision of Data and Applications Solutions (ref: RM3821).

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 An integrated financial system which is responsive, efficient and accessible. A system which has improved usability and new functionality to enhance user satisfaction and take up, such as dynamic searching, configurable screens and forms, mobile responsiveness and is WCAG compliant.
- 2.2 A financial system that continues to provide the capability to meet current requirements and ongoing developments in working practices.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That approval is given to upgrade the council's Financial Management System, currently provided by Civica, including new system functionality relating to the Civica Financials User Interface, Digital Gateway and Business Intelligence software provision.

- 3.2 That approval is given to terminate the existing contract in place with Civica early and to enter into a new fixed term contract using the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Data and Application Solutions (DAS) Framework.
- 3.3 That approval is given by the Resources Portfolio Holder to deal with the acquisition under the exemptions to Contract Procedures contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules on the grounds that “a framework agreement is available that necessitates the Council not having to go out to tender and the goods, works and services will still provide the Council with best value for money”.

4. Background

- 4.1 The council’s Financial Management System is provided by Civica. The original system was purchased in 2006. Since that time, there have been various system upgrades and contract extensions. The last time the contract was renewed, commencing April 2015, there was no additional software provision, however the annual maintenance costs were fixed for the term of the contract; this contract is due to end in March 2022.
- 4.2 The council currently maintains and operates two versions of the Financial Management System – Civica Financials Web, which is a web browser based system accessible via the council’s intranet for all set up service users, and Civica Financials Rich Client, which is a database system utilised by the finance team.
- 4.3 Civica Financials Rich Client has been given a final support termination date, meaning that by the end of the year, this system will become unsupported; it is therefore essential that the council transition away from this software.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1 The current contract with Civica for the Financial Management System is in its final year, having been extended by two years already, to the end of March 2022. As we near the end of the existing contract term, the opportunity has arisen to review the functionality of the system and build in enhancements to assist in the usability of the system and its outputs to service users.
- 5.2 Whilst enhanced functionality is a key benefit of entering into a new contract with Civica, another key aspect is that the existing Rich Client software that is utilised by the finance team will become unsupported later this year. It is therefore essential that, to maintain data integrity and system security, a transition over to the web-based system is implemented. This will require the web system to have been upgraded and enhanced to ensure that all required tasks can be carried out.

- 5.3** The new software additions to the existing system are as follows:
- Civica Financials User Interface: this software boosts the functionality of the current financials web version. It consists of a complete visual re-design, enhancing not only aesthetics but also maximising responsiveness, efficiency and accessibility. It utilises dynamic searching, configurable screens and forms, mobile responsiveness and is WCAG compliant.
 - Digital Gateway: this software enables the use of fully user-definable web forms, which will integrate with the financial management system. This will help in the move away from paper forms and manual data entry in some areas, whilst still maintaining the security of the system and data integrity through the use of workflow approvals.
 - Business Intelligence: this software further enhances the reporting element of the system and assists in the accessibility of data for service users.

5.3 Civica are an approved supplier on the CCS DAS Framework; this framework covers software-led office systems for the public sector, including software licenses, app-related consultancy services, software support and maintenance.

5.4 Current proposals supplied by Civica, under the Framework, provide a reduced rate to the additional software provision and associated implementation and annual support costs, however, these proposals are based upon an early termination of the existing contract.

5.5 The current proposals are based upon a three year contract and will total £151,606 over the term of the contract; there is an option to extend the contract further for two years. The cost is reflective of upfront software and implementation costs, as well as fixed annual support and maintenance.

5.6 Whilst the system enhancements will not generate specific cashable savings, through development in reporting and utilisation of the Digital Gateway software, it is anticipated that over time staff time will be better utilised, as technical staff can focus on value-added tasks, rather than data entry. Improvements in the accessibility of information should also help service users, making information more readily available and in a way that is more easily understandable to non-finance staff.

6. Delegated functions

6.1 The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following executive functions delegated to the Resources Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3 of the council's constitution):

“To consider departures from Rules relating to financial and contractual matters if appropriate.”

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	<p>The cost of upgrading the system consists of the following one-off and on-going costs:</p> <p><u>One off costs:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Software licences: £46,075 - Professional services (to assist with implementation): £15,741 <p><u>On-going costs (payable annually):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support and Maintenance: £29,930 <p>The one-off costs will be drawn down from the Value for Money Earmarked Reserve. The on-going costs will be funded from within the existing ICT budget provision of £22,330 with the shortfall of £7,600 being met from savings identified over the life of the contract.</p>
Legal	<p>The contract will be awarded utilising the CCS Data and Application Solutions Framework and complies with the exemptions contained in the Council's contract procedures contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures Rules.</p>

Other risks/implications: checklist

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

risks/implications	✓ / x
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

risks/implications	✓ / x
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	✓
data protection	x

Processing Personal Data

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
None	-	-

List of appendices

None

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