



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 Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder	25 March 2021

Learning Pool Training Portal

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval for an exemption from the contract procedures.

2. Outcome

- 2.1 Maximise commercial opportunities and deliver efficiencies.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 To approve the purchase of Learning Pool Essential Plus at a cost of £9,550 per annum for a two-year contract with option to renew for further two years at no increase in annual cost. Total value of the contract is therefore £19,100 and can be met from existing training budgets.
- 3.2 To approve purchasing the system from Learning Pool through the G-Cloud framework agreement.
- 3.3 That approval is given by the Resources Portfolio Holder to deal with the procurement under the exemptions to contract procedures, contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules 6.1 on the following grounds:
- If 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 Learning Pool is an electronic training portal used by many councils throughout the UK including a number of authorities in the North West.

- 4.2** The system also comes at the recommendation of our shared Head of ICT with Lancaster City Council. Lancaster City Council is one of the authorities in the North West that already provide training to staff using Learning Pool. Officers at Wyre arranged a site visit in 2020 and have had the opportunity to see the system in use and gain positive feedback from other local authority users.
- 4.3** Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, the benefit of on-line training has become even more evident as the traditional face to face/classroom events have not been able to take place. The council is currently lacking an online alternative to face-to-face training and it is felt that this will have benefits beyond the pandemic as our workforce becomes increasingly agile. Face to face training will resume in some instances and will still have a role to play in the future development of staff but the two approaches will complement each other and provide greater flexibility. This will be particularly beneficial for staff who work from home and in the event of further emergency incidents.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** The prices quoted for the system include an on-line platform, support from Learning Pool and a catalogue of approximately 190 training courses created for Public Sector employees including light management and soft-skills.
- 5.2** There are two options that have been quoted for – Learning Pool Essential and Learning Pool Essential Plus. The advantage with the second option is that we will be able to build our own training programmes (e.g. Induction); automate mandatory and refresher training (e.g. Asbestos); create learning paths for different job roles and report evidence of informal learning or training completed externally for CPD.

The prices quoted are set out below:

- Learning Pool Essential - £6,500
- Learning Pool Essential Plus - £9,550

It is proposed that the council opt for the Essential Plus owing to the added benefits that it will provide.

- 5.3** Single sign-on will be provided by Learning Pool free of charge on the understanding that ICT will be able to implement the work needed without a representative from Learning Pool being required on-site.
- 5.4** The training budget is sufficient to meet the cost of the system. Following implementation, after twelve months a review will be carried out to determine whether further efficiencies can be delivered.

6. Delegated functions

- 6.1 The matters referred to in this report are considered under the following Executive Function delegated to the Resources Portfolio Holder (as set out in Part 3.03 of the Council's Constitution): "To consider departures from the Rules relating to financial and contractual matters if appropriate".

Financial and Legal Implications	
Finance	The cost of the initial two year contract is £19,100 (£9,550 per annum) and can be met from existing training budgets.
Legal	The proposals ensure compliance with the Council's Financial and Contract Procedures and will involve entering into a formal legal contract.

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		

Appendices

None

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