



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
Marianne Hesketh, Service Director Performance and Innovation	Cllr Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder	29 October 2018

Procurement of ICT technical skills licence

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To seek approval for the procurement of an ICT technical skills licence, costing £18,000, with the UK's leading ICT training provider QA to meet all the ICT technical training requirements up to April 2020.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1 To progress our programme of efficiency savings to ensure a balanced budget.
- 2.2 To progress the digital transformation of services.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1 That approval is given to procure the QA ICT technical skills licence via the G-Cloud 10 Procurement Framework, under the exemptions to contract procedures contained within the Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules. This is on the grounds that exemptions are permitted to contract procedures where a framework 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 There has been a lack of required technical training within the ICT team in recent years. Other than ITIL Service Management training 18 months ago, the last technical training for any individual was over four years ago. A skills audit has been undertaken and gaps have been identified which will prevent us being able to fully support our current and future planned

services and infrastructure to the desired standard. As advancements in technology occur more and more frequently, it is vitally important that technical staff have development opportunities available to them to ensure that the services and infrastructure delivered, meet the ongoing needs of the organisation.

- 4.2** QA Limited (QA) are the leading ICT technical training provider in England and as such, are able to provide all ICT technical training requirements delivered either in a relatively local classroom based environment or through the use of their “attend from anywhere” technology. QA provide the widest range of technical training and are known to provide a higher quality of training and expertise. During November 2018, QA are offering a training skills licence at a discount worth in the region of 60% off their regular retail price for specific courses. This type of offer has not been available in recent years and it represents a timely opportunity to invest in staff and deal with the current skills gap.

5. Key issues and proposals

- 5.1** The lack of up-to-date technical skills within the ICT Team has, over recent years, led to a reliance on external specialist consultancy. Although some external consultancy will always be more cost effective for bespoke technology, exposing ICT staff to development opportunities will offer staff the skills and confidence to support and deliver current and future service and infrastructure with less reliance on external consultancy support.

- 5.2** The skills licence, costing £18,000, offered by QA will allow all of our ICT staff to attend roughly two technical training courses each over the 18 month period dependant on individual and corporate requirements. This level of development will allow staff to specialise in specifically identified areas following their academic learning and will be based on the areas that will provide best value for Wyre Council’s ICT technical needs.

- 5.3** Given the cost of the training, individuals will be required to sign the repayment of training form. This means that, in the event of their leaving the council’s employment within a set period of time they will be required to repay on sliding scale the cost of the training received. This is standard practice as per the council’s training policy and demonstrates the commitment from both parties to the process.

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 of the council’s constitution): “To consider departures from Rules relating to financial and contractual matters if appropriate”

Financial and legal implications	
Finance	The initial costs of procuring the QA skills licence will be £18,000 and they will be met from the council's corporate training budget on the basis that this will meet all the ICT team specialist training needs up to April 2020. The total costs will be divided over two financial years: 2018/19 and 2019/20. In the event of a shortfall in the corporate training budget for 2018/19 a sum up to the maximum of £5,000 will be provided from vacancy savings on the ICT staffing budget.
Legal	The procurement of the QA skills license complies with the exemption set out in the report to Contract Procedures contained within the Council's Financial Regulations and Financial Procedure Rules. A contract for the provision of the services will be entered into with the Supplier in accordance with the Framework's Call off procedure.

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	✓

Processing Personal Data

If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in personal data being processed, a primary impact assessment (PIA) will have been completed and signed off by the council's Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken (as required by the General Data Protection Regulations 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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