

OPEN

Adult and Health Committee

18th November 2024

Re-procurement of core systems for Adult and Children services

**Report of: Helen Charlesworth-May, Executive Director of Adult,
Health and Integration**

Report Reference No: AH/22/2024-25

Ward(s) Affected: All Wards

For Decision or Scrutiny: Decision

Purpose of Report

- 1 There is a service requirement to continue with the existing case management, financial systems, and online provision for Adult and Children services as the current system contracts expire at the end of March 2025. An exercise has started to re-procure a new contract.
- 2 As the procurement is in excess £2M for a 4-year term, (or just over £4M for 8-year term), approval is sought to continue through to contract signing. Funding is already in place for this ongoing essential system requirement.

Executive Summary

- 3 The recommendation is to go to direct award for the current software supplier (System C) using a procurement framework. This is based on matching required functionality, strategic needs of services, IT standards, and affordability.
- 4 There could be a break clause at 2 years of a new contract (or sooner) to allow time for a review of the whole market and prepare services for full end to end process mapping, should this option be exercised.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Adults and Health Committee is recommended to:

1. Authorises the Executive Director of Adults, Health and Integration, in consultation with Children Services and Corporate Services, to award and enter into a contract to deliver core systems for case management, financial payments, online services.

Background

- 5 The current systems used by the Social Care Service across Adults and Children's are provided by System C the parent company of Liquidlogic and modules formerly provided by Oxford Computer Consultants (OCC). These systems have been in place since 2014 and have evolved in terms of user reach and functionality throughout the contract lifespan. The system has been reviewed at least every 2 years with reference to the current supplier market to ensure that the solution is best value for money for the council.
- 6 Feedback on systems and strategy has taken place with key service leads and stakeholders to identify current and future requirements relating to functionality, system access, and innovative technology including AI.
- 7 Recurring themes were assisting with front-door enquiries, demand management to reduce cost, and use of AI.
- 8 The proposed solution is the industry leading and is best placed for the council to meet its statutory function.
The proposed solution will help support the many IT initiatives that are included in the Transformation Plan (such as the AI developments).

Consultation and Engagement

- 9 Senior strategic and operational managers have been consulted and engaged with, gathering views and opinions on the current systems in place.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 10 Core systems are an essential requirement for service operations and to achieve its strategic aims for providing online services to residents.
- 11 The recommended system has been selected to achieve maximum functionality at minimum cost given the Council's financial position.
- 12 The requirements of Adult and Children services can be met in full by System C.
- 13 The recommended system is available on an existing procurement framework.
- 14 The recommended system compared with the current provision provides advantages and disadvantages as follows below.

Gains:	
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Removed reliance on the local Kelly House data centre.	ICT switch to a fully hosted service (Azure + ContrOCC)
Care package electronic sourcing interface between eBrokerage module and case management.	eBrokerage module integration provided at no additional cost.
Improvements to capability for clients to see financial information online.	Client Finance Portal billing lite integration provided at no additional cost.
No longer a requirement for local ICT services operational support for case management finance system (ContrOCC)	Migration of case management finance system (ContrOCC) module to fully hosted service.
Losses:	
Volunteer module de-scoped.	AMI module – Software to support volunteer recruitment (no longer required, due to software process mismatch).

Other Options Considered

- 15 Open procurement (for example, full OJEU process).
- 16 This is likely to result in higher costs than direct award for current provision due to the effort required by suppliers in the bidding process.
- 17 The cost of changing system supplier would incur significant additional costs to the Council due to the level of resource, data migration activity, and design / configuration as a direct result of transitioning to a new system.
- 18 Doing nothing would prevent services carrying out their statutory obligations.
- 19 Summary below of other options considered.

Option	Impact	Risk
[Recommended] Direct award via a procurement framework	Minimal	Minimal
Open procurement	Additional time, effort, and cost.	System transition leads to service disruption affecting quality of service and service user outcomes. Delays and escalating costs.
Do nothing	Cheshire East has an essential requirement for robust case management and	Complete breakdown of operational delivery in Adult and Children services.

	financial systems to meet its statutory functions and support the most vulnerable residents across our borough.	
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Implications and Comments

Monitoring Officer/Legal

- 20 The proposed procurement via an existing procurement framework is a compliant route to procure the proposed system.
- 21 The anticipated total value of a new contract over 8 years (including average indexation of 3% for years 2-8), is £4.047m and this is included within the current Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Section 151 Officer/Finance

- 22 Within the terms of the current contractual arrangement there is provision for an annual price increase of no more than the rate of RPI at a given census date. An arrangement on the same basis would be usual and expected under each of the options identified within this report.
- 23 The budget for these systems sits within the ICT budgets within the Corporate services. Any impacts on the annual costs linked to this re-procurement will be included in the corporate services MTFS.

Policy

- 24 No Policy implications based on current recommended approach. Links to current service policies and practices.
- 25 This paper supports the below corporate plan prioritise.

An open and enabling organisation Listen, learn and respond to our residents, promoting opportunities for a two-way conversation. Support and develop our workforce to be confident, motivated, innovative, resilient and empowered	A council which empowers and cares about people Work together with residents and partners to support people and communities to be strong and resilient Reduce health inequalities across the borough	A thriving and sustainable place Welcoming, safe and clean neighbourhoods
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	<p>Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation</p> <p>Be the best Corporate Parents to our children in care</p> <p>Support all children to have the best start in life</p> <p>Increase opportunities for all children and young adults with additional needs</p> <p>Ensure all children have a high quality, enjoyable education that enables them to achieve their full potential</p> <p>Reduce the reliance on long term care by improving services closer to home and providing more extra care facilities, including dementia services</p>	
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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

26 There are no equality implications of this report and its recommendations/decisions.

Human Resources

27 There are no human resources implications of this report and its recommendations/decisions.

Risk Management

28 Financial and operational risk to Council if the recommendation is not taken due to system disruption and likely significantly increased costs.

Rural Communities

- 29 There are no implications to rural communities of this report and its recommendations/decisions here.

Children and Young People including Cared for Children, care leavers and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- 30 This decision has a direct link to the support and case management that the Council provides for children and young people. An efficient system across Adults and Children's Social Care is critical in supporting a positive journey with the council to residents in receipt of services.
- 31 An industry leading system solution ensures that cheshire east staff and partners have the most efficient and modern case management support to do their job, at their best.

Public Health

- 32 *The public health implications of this report and its recommendations /decisions are likely to have:*
- *a positive overall impact on the health and wellbeing of Cheshire East residents.*

Climate Change

- 33 The recommendations will help the council to reduce its carbon footprint and achieve environmental sustainability by reducing energy consumption by staff and partners. The system helps support remote and flexible working, reducing travel across the county.

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Jonathan Sayer, Project Manager Jonathan.sayer@cheshireeast.gov.uk
Appendices:	None
Background Papers:	Adults DMT Core Systems ACPH Re-proc Decision 23.09.2024 CLT Briefing Core Systems ACPH Re-proc Decision 30.10.2024