

Supporting Report Reference Officer Decision To Renew The Northgate Revenues and Benefits and Housing Services Technology Solution

Date: 15/04/19

Executive Summary:

This Officer report details the decision to renew the contract with Northgate Information Solutions, reference the supply of the systems required to administer Revenues & Benefits and Housing.

The cost of the renewal is £195,500.00 per annum. The procurement route is a direct award through the UK Government Crown Commercial Services framework which is in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy framework.

Reasons For The Decision:

Tendring District Council is increasingly reliant upon a small number of key corporate information technology systems to deliver its statutory services, including; the Northgate System(s), Idox property based solution(s), Agresso financial solution, the Capita E payment solution, Microsoft office.

Within the public service sector there are a relatively small number of niche information technology service providers. For example, within the Revenues (Council Tax) and Housing Benefits technology area there are only three solution providers; Northgate Information Solutions, Civica Open Solutions and Capita Academy solution.

The Council has been utilising the Northgate Revenues and Benefits and Housing system for nearly twenty years. Consequently, the services and users have considerable expertise and the Council has established detailed reporting and first and second line support arrangements to keep the services operational and working as efficiently as possible.

Consequently, changing solutions would be extremely complex, would take 6-9 months to plan and deliver, and would be extremely costly in terms of re-training some two hundred daily users and expert support staff. Realistically, both services affected would be running inefficiently for a period of months and with the Council's 'lean' operational running this would undoubtedly result in a work backlog with a significant detrimental effect upon Tendring's most vulnerable residents.

The new agreement includes the hosting of the infrastructure within the Northgate cloud which complies with our Digital Transformation project of moving to an overall cloud based solution.

The UK Government Crown Commercial Services framework allows for direct award where the local authority already uses the supplier. Prices from the existing supplier have therefore been obtained via the framework, which are broadly similar to the existing costs paid by the council and include additional functionality.

It is therefore proposed to renew the Northgate System(s) Support contract directly through the Crown Commercial Services Data and Application Solutions (DAS) procurement framework for 4 years.

Financial Summary:

The new four year contract will be paid for from within existing Revenues and Benefits Service and Housing Service budgets.

The contract will cost £195,500 (one hundred and ninety five thousand and five hundred pounds) per annum for 4 years.

Legal:

This proposed investment is in accordance with the Council's Budget and Policy framework.

The procurement route will be through the UK government Data and Application Solutions (DAS) Crown Commercial Services framework which is fully compliant with the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement regulations and can be used in accordance with the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules.

End