

# Wider Area Network 3 Year Extension

**REPORT TO;** Robert Ling, Assistant Director Technology & Change Management, Central Services

**DECISION DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**SUPPORTING ANNEX;** NA

## PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

This document recommends the contract for the provision of a Wide Area Network Solution for NYCC Schools is extended for a further period of 3 years agreed by NYNet and NYCC Legal Services. The extension shall commence 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 and end 31 March 2025 following the variation signed on 30<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

## BACKGROUND TO SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATION

The contract for Wider Area Network was put in place in 2014 for the provision of broadband connectivity in North Yorkshire schools. NYES Digital have delivered broadband services to Schools since 1998, via various county contracts, all backed up with dedicated schools funding (DSG). This has allowed NYCC to deliver various technology to connect schools, some in hard to reach areas. The services have been delivered across the council's wider area network (WAN).

NYES Digital have a remit to make a profit and deliver commercially viable services, and one part of that is through contracts with 3<sup>rd</sup> party suppliers. Broadband is seen as a product that is an important part of their service catalogue and they can then sell other support services off the back of it. NYES Digital need a reliable partner in this area as Schools move their IT services into the cloud which allows education beyond the school walls.

Nynet was established in 2007 with its aim to improve connectivity and broadband services in the North of England to the Public and Private Sectors.

NYnet deliver their services using a wider area network (WAN). They are constrained to North Yorkshire however, their relationship with Open Reach does allow them access to other areas to deliver off net services to Schools which allows us some options to sell out of county. NYnet have also secured grant funding, which is allowing them to deliver a Dark Fibre Network in North Yorkshire, giving NYCC Schools the best services possible service from any supplier, plus funding from the DfE to deliver the best service possible in rural areas using the Open Reach network.

NYnet is able to build WAN and collaboration networks for Schools, and this allows NYES Digital to add additional services – i.e. centralised services for Multi Academy Trusts (MAT's).

NYES Digital's ambitions is to deliver services wider than North Yorkshire and a service which is cost effective especially for primary schools. Feedback from the majority of primary schools show an overall opinion is that cost is the most important driving factor, and it's less about the functionality and SLA's. We lost 150 Schools in the last round due to pricing not being in line with the market, and the assumption from NYnet that Schools would be loyal to the authority, was not the case. We now have a

chance with this extension to get some of these Schools back, and deliver the product at a cost that's in line with the market. NYnet have reduced their costs on the connected Schools by £200k per annum. We would hope that the new pricing will bring some of the Schools that left back to us.

At present the network has 207 Schools connected however 340 could use the NYnet network without any significant investment in connectivity costs. We will work the NYES RM's to retain the 207 schools and also reach out to the Schools that left the service last time. All Schools that we can reach via the network will be sent a quote via their NYES RM. So far quotes have been sent to 200 schools and at present 209 circuits have been sold with NYES Digital sat alongside them to answer any technical questions that may arise. SLA Online will be used to process the order from the School, with the agreement that they will sign up to the service for three years. Once the order is placed via SLA Online, Schools ICT will receive notification of said purchase and a weekly report is then sent to NYnet will all purchased packages.

NYCC Legal Services have been involved from the beginning and have confirmed and signed a variation stating the below terms

*“Before 1st April 2022 the Council may require NYnet to provide the Solution for a further term of three (3) years commencing on 1st April 2022. Such extension shall be subject to such increase in the Charges as the Parties may agree by reference to the movement in pricing in respect of products supplied to NYnet by third party suppliers and, in respect of the Rental Component and other overhead related charges, the increase in RPIx since the last review of such rates.”*

## **LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE**

The framework in place works as a legal and compliant route to market. By signing off on the agreed extension period of a further 3 years, we remain legally compliant and expect the suppliers to continue provision of their services.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Authority continue with the contract in place for a further 3 year extension. 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.