North Yorkshire Council

Executive Member Meeting
13 December 2023

Library Management System Procurement

Report of the Corporate Director

1.0   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To gain approval of the Outline Business Case to move to a procurement for a new Library Management System.

2.0   SUMMARY

2.1   The current Library Management System is due for renewal and the contract cannot be extended. The system manages the front facing and back office functions of the Library Service. The service is seeking approval to go to an Open Procurement to purchase a new contract compliant Library Management System.

3.0   BACKGROUND

3.1   The current Library Management System has been in place since 2015. The system provides management of stock (purchasing, catalogue) and borrower records (membership), transactions (issues, returns, renewals and reservations), and manages related finance payments (fees and charges). It is also the front-facing public side of the service (public web-based catalogue) supporting 240,000 customers and offers self-service including account management and notifications. The Library Management System (LMS) also links to other systems and applications including the PC booking system, self-service kiosks, the North Yorkshire Library App, an automated stock management system, a marketing system, online resources and digital library. The LMS manages circa 3.5m transactions per annum and 1.2m data records (stock and borrowers). Removal of any one of these transactions/tasks would require replacing with manual paper-based systems resulting in significantly increased costs. In addition, it would no longer be possible to offer self-serve access resulting in reputational damage and potentially significant impact on use of the service. The Library Service is a statutory service and in North Yorkshire was remodelled in 2017 to include much greater involvement from volunteers, who deliver services from 31 community libraries and assist with service delivery at 5 hybrid and 6 core libraries using the current web based Library Management System (LMS). The service has one mobile library that visits 20 rural locations.

See appendix A for Outline Business Case

4.0   SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE

4.1   The current LMS contract is with Educational Software Solutions (ESS). This contract has been in place since 2015 originally with Capita and transferred following the company being sold to ESS in 2020, so using the full 7 years term. To avoid additional pressures on capacity during the Local Government Review implementation period a further 2-year extension, with optional 3rd year, was agreed and approved in 2022 via a direct award through the KCS Software Products & Associated Services 2 Framework Y20011. This timeline indicates that a new contract needs to be in place by September 2024 to allow for implementation so means

utilising the optional 3rd year of the current extension contract with an end date of 31 March 2025 with a 90-day notice period.

5.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

5.1 The Council Plan for North Yorkshire has made a commitment to:

- Building on North Yorkshire's capital, strong local economy, and resilient communities by providing access to information, education and leisure opportunities.
- Enhance people's skills knowledge and confidence by offering a range of learning resources
- Strengthening the organisation by improving efficiency, effectiveness, and quality of service delivery through the use of modern technology.

The library service and the use of a Library Management System has a clear role in supporting the Council Plan in these areas.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1

	Description of Option	Benefits	Risks	Costs – these are likely to be high-level estimated at OBC stage	Recommended
1	Do Nothing	Known system No Training required	Contract has ended Not able to extend any further	Continue at circa £54,000 pa	No
2	Regional Consortium	Potential reduction in cost Shared risk	Timescales too tight as Consortium is not yet in a position to make any changes. Long implementation. Increased number of stakeholders. Reduction in ability to have a service that works for NYC customer base and service delivery model.	Unknown	No
3	Identified Procurement Frameworks	No need for Open tender process	No current existing framework that meets needs for Library Management System	Unknown	No
4	Retain and Improve	Mostly known system Minimal training required	Time required to build is extensive Sufficient resource not available	Unknown	No
5	Open Market	Wide selection of suppliers.	Potential increase in costs.	Between £33,000 and £70,000 for running costs.	Yes

| | | Potential reduction in cost. Improved user experience for staff and customers. Increased likelihood of meeting requirements. Likely improved functionality and capability. Compliant with Public Contracts Regulations 2015 | Training requirements may be complex. New and unknown system. | One off implementation costs between £20,000 and £55,000. Identified through Discovery Days. | |

Option 5 is the preferred route for replacing the current Library Management System.
The main reasons are:

- Current solution has had performance issues and very limited development over the length of the contract and the current supplier has no roadmap for the future.
- Opportunity to move to a fully cloud-based system.
- To ensure compliance with Public Contract Regulations 2015

See Appendix B for Options Appraisal

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The expectation is that the current annual budget (£54,000pa) will continue to meet the costs of the Library Management System. There is a request for Capital funds for a potential £40,000 to support one off implementation costs on the first year, as the annual budget will not meet this extra funding requirement. Considerations relating to price fluctuations will be managed through fixed pricing for the initial term and then terms and conditions will cap the inflation cost. It is assumed that any inflationary increases not managed through the fixed pricing will be met through the annual budget setting inflation process.

Finance Template see Appendix C

8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 To avoid additional pressures on capacity during the Local Government Review implementation period a 2-year extension, with optional 3rd year, was agreed and approved in 2022 via a direct award through the KCS Software Products & Associated Services 2 Framework Y20011. This extension has some specific risk areas relating to responsibility for liability and order of precedence, therefore no further extension can be utilised, and legal advice is to re-procure in order to meet Public Contract Regulations 2015.

9.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 An Equality Impact Assessment screening tool has been completed and is attached at Appendix D. It is confirmed that a full Equality Impact Assessment will be required for the new Library Management System.

10.0   CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

10.1   A Climate Change Impact Assessment screening document has been completed and agreed that a full assessment is not required. See Appendix E

11.0   PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

11.1   The current provider Education Software Solutions has only been able to provide limited system development during the current contract. There are concerns that the current supplier has no roadmap for development and are not well placed to be responsive to meet future needs.

12.0   POLICY IMPLICATIONS

12.1   A Data Protection Impact Assessment Screening has been undertaken and agreed that a full Data Protection Impact Assessment will need to be undertaken for the new Library Management System to comply with information security. See Appendix F

13.0   RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

13.1   The main risk is that if we do not have a contractually compliant system that is fit for purpose by 31st March 2025 this will leave us open to potential data loss and impact on our ability to meet our statutory responsibilities to offer a comprehensive and efficient library service.

14.0   HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

14.1   Identified through the risk workshop was the potential impact on staff and volunteers. There are many volunteers who will require training. Staff will need to be deployed to provide training to volunteers prior to Go Live. This will impact the service and will need to be carefully managed.

15.0   ICT IMPLICATIONS

15.1   IT implications have been identified regarding the integrations with the add on services to the main Library Management System. There is a significant IT resource requirement through the implementation stage to ensure robust testing is undertaken to ensure customers, staff and volunteers have a positive experience of any changes. This resource has been identified as part of the Options Appraisal and provisionally agreed.

16.0   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1   Current system contract ends in March 2025 and there is no option for extension.
Open procurement offers the opportunity to procure a system that will meet both current and future needs and offer an improved experience for staff, volunteers and customers.

17.0   RECOMMENDATION(S)

i)   To agree an open procurement for the Library Management System

ii)   That following a successful procurement exercise the decision to implement will be taken by Executive Member and Director

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APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Outline Business Case
Appendix B – Options Appraisal
Appendix C – Finance Template
Appendix D – Equalities Impact Assessment Screening Tool
Appendix E – Climate Change Impact Assessment Screening Tool
Appendix F – Data Protection Impact Assessment Screening Tool

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29th November 2023

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Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.