ITEM No …7………..

REPORT TO: CITY GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE – 4 DECEMBER 2023

REPORT ON: SECONDARY SCHOOL SERVERS

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT NO: 340-2023

1.0   PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1   To consider the purchase of new servers for secondary schools.

2.0   RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee:

(a) agrees to the Council purchasing 8 new servers for secondary schools; and

(b) remits the Head of Customer Services & IT to purchase new servers for secondary schools, following a compliant procurement process as detailed in the report.

3.0   FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1   Purchase cost is estimated to be £120,000 and includes 5 years of warranty support. This cost will be met from existing IT capital budget.

3.2   Staffing costs to support the deployment of the servers to be met from existing Customer Services and IT staffing budgets.

4.0   BACKGROUND

4.1   This report supports the Council's IT Strategy which was approved at Policy and Resources Committee on 18 February 2019 (Report 81-2019). The Councils IT strategy sets out to deliver digital services, mobile and flexibly accessible services through cost effective solutions.

4.2   The current server hardware in each of the eight secondary schools is end of life and approaching the end of manufacturer support. These servers provide essential IT services for each school and need to be replaced. There is increased risk of the old hardware failing if they are not replaced. The cost of extending support is not deemed to be cost-effective.

4.3   Purchasing new server hardware will provide improved performance and more capacity for future requirements. The hardware will be fully supported and risk from failures will be reduced.

4.4   New servers will be more energy efficient and provide a more flexible platform for the IT services within the schools. The schools will be able to take advantage of the latest hardware features to improve security and provide a future-proof platform.

4.5   The future strategy for cloud technologies in schools will still require a server in the school for the foreseeable future. This will support the variety of current and future requirements for digital learning. It is common to have what is called a hybrid cloud model, which supports on-premise and cloud based technologies.

4.6   A tender process will be carried out using NHS Digital Workplaces framework, with a quality and cost evaluation. Subject to the lead times for the delivery of the hardware it is anticipated that the servers will be installed by April 2024.

5.0 SOURCING STRATEGY SUMMARY

5.1   In order to drive maximum benefits from the contract, the Council as contract lead will conduct a mini-competition within the NHS Digital Workplaces framework agreement.

5.2   The Council's aim is to extract best value from this contract.

5.3   The evaluation methodology will be based on a Price and Quality split of 80% price and 20% quality. The Quality elements to be measured are as follows:

Experience delivering similar contracts on schedule (50%)
After Sales Service, including technical ability and staffing (50%)

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1   There are four standard risks in any procurement and for public sector regulated procurements, a fifth is added, that of the procurement exercise itself breaching the public contract regulations and leaving the Council open to a legal challenge:

Key Risks			
Description of Risk	Probability (L/M/H)	Impact on DCC (L/M/H)	Actions required to manage Risk
Commercial Risk – That either the price objectives are not achieved up front or there are other costs that arise during the contract and diminish the overall benefits.	Low	Low	Tender Spec very clear expectations
Technical Risk – This concerns the difficulty in being able to specify the desired outcome and on the market being unable to deliver to the specification	Low	Low	Tender Spec very clear expectations
Performance Risk – This concerns the ability of suppliers to perform consistently over the life of the contract to deliver the planned benefits	Low	Low	Contract will contain a maintenance clause mainly covered by warranty.
Contractual Risk – Being able to remedy the 's shortcomings in the contractor's performance without severely damaging the contract and about avoiding reliance on the contracted supplier as the contract develops.	Low	Low	Tender Spec very clear expectations
Procurement Risk – where a procurement is found unsound in law, through the public procurement rules	Low	Low	Tender Spec very clear expectations
Overall Contract Risk			

7.0 CONCLUSION

7.1   The approval of this report will allow the tender process to be carried out to replace the old server hardware, which is end of life. Purchase of the new servers will provide improved performance and more capacity for future requirements. The hardware will be fully supported and risk from failures will be reduced.

8.0   POLICY IMPLICATIONS

8.1   This report has been subject to the Pre-IIA Screening Tool and does not make any recommendations for change to strategy, policy, procedures, services or funding and so has not been subject to an Integrated Impact Assessment. An appropriate senior manager has reviewed and agreed with this assessment.

9.0   CONSULTATIONS

9.1   The Council Leadership Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

10   BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1   None.

JACQUI KOPEL
HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES AND IT

ROBERT EMMOTT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES   DATE: 4 DECEMBER 2023