

Public Document Pack

Officer Decisions

Thursday, 28th March, 2024
10.00 am

AGENDA

- 1. Award of contract for Unified Communication telephony Solution**
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- 2. Procurement to identify a provider to deliver the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service for Blackburn with Darwen**
5 - 8

Date Published: 28th March 2024
Denise Park, Chief Executive

Agenda Item 1

RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE

DELEGATED POWERS OUTLINED IN THE CONSTITUTION



DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION TAKEN BY:	Director CE
DELEGATED BY:	Council (date of delegation)
IN CONSULTATION WITH:	Choose an item.
PORTFOLIO AREA:	Digital and Customer Services

SUBJECT: Award of contract for Unified Communication telephony Solution

1. DECISION

To award the contract for a Unified Communication telephony solution to Cinos Ltd for a three year period with options to extend for up to another four years.

2. REASON FOR DECISION

A report was approved by the Executive Member for Digital and Customer services on the 8th September 2023 to commence procurement for a Unified Communication telephony system. The current Skype for business system being used is going end of life giving the Council no option but to replace this system.

The procurement was undertaken in accordance with the strategy that was approved by the Executive Member with a tender being launched through Find a Tender Service under a restricted procedure. This was a two-stage approach with a total of 20 companies responding to the pre-qualification stage which accessed their past experience of delivering the services, these were then narrowed down to 6 companies who progressed through to the tender stage. From the 6 companies 4 responses were received which were evaluated as below;

	Cinos Ltd.	Supplier B	Supplier C	Supplier D
Quality (45%)	36	23.25	22	21.25
Social Value (15%)	0.6	5.4	9	15
Cost of ownership (40%)	40	31.99	0	0
Total	76.6	60.64	31	36.25

Tenders were evaluated using a method known as MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender) with the recommendation from the panel that the contract be awarded to Cinos Ltd as they had the highest score.

The proposed Unified Communications solution will offer a consistent set of products to manage all of the Council's requirements in one single system.

The Council also still uses a number of PSTN lines (traditional phone lines) these are used predominantly for lift lines, alarm lines etc. These lines need to be replaced by December 2025 due to the service being withdrawn by BT Openreach, the tender also included an option for the winning provider to work with us for alternative digital telephony solutions to replace these.

3. BACKGROUND

The Council currently uses Skype for business for external calling and Microsoft Teams for mainly internal processes, having two systems causes confusion with staff and results in staff receiving calls across both platforms.

4. KEY ISSUES AND RISKS

There are currently too many ways of contacting staff internally and due to the lack of a seamless cohesion of communication solutions means you can have multiple calls ringing in across the various platforms, this is something our staff want simplifying.

The PSTN switch off in the borough is set for December 2025, the Council needs to have put in new solutions to replace these prior to that date.

The current Skype for business solution is going end of life in January 2024 with extended support at an additional cost available until December 2025.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The department already holds a revenue budget for unified communications of £120k per annum and a capital budget of £338k.

The capital costs for the implementation quoted by the supplier are £76k with annual revenue costs of £28k. Though there will be other work required by other providers from this budget to meet the business outcomes defined.

There are a number of options priced within the tender documents which require further discussions to see if the Council will take these elements which will increase the contract costs. Remote site survivability – Option to allow sites to operate in a limited capacity should the connections fail.

Analytics and call accounting software.
Replacement common area phones.

Consideration will also be taken in relation to support of the Microsoft Teams software in terms of tendering for a support partner or whether this would be best covered in house with an additional member of staff.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The procurement process used to tender this contract complied with the requirements of the

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There will be resource implications to roll out the new solution for the IT department which will be factored into existing work plans.

8. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

For the procurement route a number of framework options were considered but these were rejected in favour of a restricted tender process due to there being 3 suppliers in the borough that had the capability to deliver the services. Of these 2 applied for the opportunity with 1 progressing to the tender stage.

9. CONSULTATIONS

None with this report.

10. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of the officer with delegation and any Member who has been consulted, and note of any dispensation granted should be recorded below:

VERSION:	1
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CONTACT OFFICER:	Peter Hughes
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DATE:	20/03/2024
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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:	Executive Member Decision – Procurement of Unified Communication Telephony Solution – 08/09/2023
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Agenda Item 2

**RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER
DELEGATED AUTHORITY FROM
EXECUTIVE/COUNCIL/COMMITTEE**

**DELEGATED POWERS OUTLINED IN
THE CONSTITUTION**



DELEGATED OFFICER DECISION TAKEN BY:	Strategic Director of Children & Education (DCS)
DELEGATED BY:	Choose an item. (date of delegation)
IN CONSULTATION WITH:	Executive Member
PORTFOLIO AREA:	Children and Education

SUBJECT: Procurement to identify a provider to deliver the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service for Blackburn with Darwen

1. DECISION

The delegated officer Joanne Siddle, Strategic Director of Children & Education, in accordance with section 2.6 of the Council's Contract Procurement Procedure Rules agrees:

To approve the proposed strategy for the procurement and the commencement of a tendering and procurement activity to offer this service to the wider market, with revised contractual and commissioning arrangements to be in place from the 1st August 2024. This contract will be for a provider to offer the SENDIASS in accordance with the service specification. The contract will be awarded for 3 years with an option to extend for up to 2 year's subject to satisfactory delivery which will be monitored via robust contract review processes.

To extend the current contract to 31st July 2024 in order to allow time for a full tender process to be undertaken.

2. REASON FOR DECISION

The intention to undertake a tendering exercise on the Council's CHEST system is to identify a suitable provider to provide a SENDIASS commission.

3. BACKGROUND

The aim of the SENDIASS is to help to promote independence and self- advocacy for children, young people and parents. The service provides free impartial, confidential and accurate information, advice and support regarding education, health and social care for children, young people and their parents on matters relating to Special Educational Needs and Disability. The service promotes partnerships between parent and carers, children, education and family services, schools and other agencies. The aim of the service is to empower, enable and encourage parents to take an informed and active part in their child's education, and for young people to be involved in decisions about their own education and futures.

The service must ensure its services are accessible, with a base in Blackburn. A key element of the service will be responsive to the needs of all users and provide information on the local authority's processes for resolving disagreements, its complaints procedures and support children, young people and parents in arranging or attending early disagreement resolution meetings.

In line with national Minimum Standards, the current Blackburn with Darwen SENDIASS is an outsourced service. As the current contract ended on the 31st of March 2023, the current Provider was issued an extension letter to continue delivering the service until the 31st March 2024. Contractually there is no option to extend the contract beyond this date.

4. KEY ISSUES AND RISKS

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council is committed to commissioning high quality services which are outcome focused and deliver value for money. The Council want to work collaboratively with a provider who will deliver a service and work closely with the local Parent Carer Forum and other representative user groups (such as Youth Forums) to ensure that the views and experiences of children, young people and parents inform local policy, strategy and practice.

The tender documentation (and subsequent contract / specifications) will incorporate details to ensure that any successful provider will adhere to our quality standards and where applicable, the service will be expected to work in line with the Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership, multi agency safeguarding policies, and be cooperative with all statutory bodies, partners of the council and legal representatives. All staff must be inducted and trained in safeguarding in line with the expectations set out by Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership, regulatory bodies and sector/industry standards.

The procurement process will be an Open Tender process which will be carried out via The Chest with the procurement opportunity being available to all suppliers. Due diligence checks will be carried out to ensure all providers meet the minimum accreditation and ethical requirements. The tender will be evaluated with 8 quality questions which will provide 100% of the total evaluation criteria with word limits stated within each question. In order to minimise risk, pricing will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis as this is the maximum budget available. The evaluation panel will be made up of representatives from the children's commissioning team, contracting and procurement and carers.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The allocation of funding in relation to this tender and future contract arrangements has been kept in line with budget allocations for the service.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council will pay the successful provider up to £56,000 per year, on a block contract.

Total cost for contract	1 st July 2024 to 31 st March 2025	1 st April 2025 to 31 st March 2026	1 st April 2026 to 31 st March 2027	1 st April 2027 to 31 st March 2028	1 st April 2028 to 31 st March 2029
Up to £266,000	Up to £42000	Up to £56,000	Up to £56,000	Up to £56,000	Up to £56,000

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Under the Children and Families Act (2014), it is a legal requirement that all Local Authorities have a SENDIASS Service to operate in accordance with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice (2015) and the National Quality Standards for impartial Information Advice and Support Services.

7. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Childrens services will work in partnership with the provider to ensure the Special Educational Needs and Disability Information, Advice and Support Service is delivered in Blackburn and Darwen.

8. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

This commission is required to deliver a statutory service; if the service is not recommissioned the Council will not be able to meet its statutory requirements.

9. CONSULTATIONS

The views of parent carer forums, children and young people will be central to the successful development and delivery of the commissioned service and will be invited to be part of the evaluation process for the tender.

10. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

All Declarations of Interest of the officer with delegation and any Member who has been consulted, and note of any dispensation granted should be recorded below:

VERSION: 1

CONTACT OFFICER:

DATE:

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

