

# WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL CABINET

19 September 2023

**Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education:  
Councillor Fiona Baker**

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| <b>Report Title</b> | <b>Procurement and Implementation of Education Services Case Management System</b> |
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## List of Approvers

|                                      |  |            |
|--------------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>Monitoring Officer</b>            | Catherine Whitehead  | 23/08/2023 |
| <b>Chief Finance Officer (S.151)</b> | Martin Henry   | 23/08/2023 |
| <b>Other Director</b>                | Stuart Lackenby, Executive Director of People Services<br>Ben Pearson, Assistant Director Education<br>Gus De Silva, Head of Procurement<br>Chris Wales, Chief Information Officer | 23/08/2023 |
| <b>Head of Communications</b>        | Becky Hutson   | 23/08/2023 |

## List of Appendices

None

### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. The current contract with Capita One to provide a Case Management System (CMS) for Education Services ends in March 2024, the Council therefore requires approval to proceed with the procurement of an Education Services CMS for West Northamptonshire Council (WNC).

## **2. Executive Summary**

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- 2.1. WNC requires effective and efficient technology solutions for case management across Education Services, to enable the service to deliver against the Improved Life Chances council priority, ensuring children are given the best start in life and vulnerable children are supported and protected.
- 2.2. Education Services in WNC require a CMS which can be configured to suit the Council's business needs and can evolve over time with minimal disruption and cost.
- 2.3. The current system in use is Capita One Education which was procured before local government reorganisation and is contracted for use until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. There is therefore a risk that from April 2024 WNC could not fulfil statutory requirements relating to the provision of Education Services in West Northamptonshire because there would be no system in place to enable this.
- 2.4. This report outlines actions that can be taken to mitigate the above risk and costs associated with procuring and implementing a new Case Management System contract.

## **3. Recommendations**

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- 3.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
  - a) Agrees to proceed with the procurement of a Case Management System for Education Services in WNC, at an estimated contract cost, including licences, hosting, and annual fee costs, of approximately £280,000 per annum for two years, as outlined in Section 7.
  - b) Approves the use of KCS Managed Services Businesses Solutions (Y20023)/ an appropriate framework to purchase the system to ensure compliance with the relevant procurement requirements.
  - c) Delegates authority to the Lead Member for Children, Families, Education and Skills, in liaison with the Executive Director of People Services, to take any further decisions and actions required to implement the Case Management System and award contracts in relation to this.

## **4. Reason for Recommendations**

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- 4.1 Enable compliance with procurement and contract procedure rules.
- 4.2 The framework identified allows continuity of existing goods/services from an awarded supplier.
- 4.3 Allows further time to procure and implement a long-term CMS that is fit for purpose, robust and future-proof.
- 4.4 Addresses the risk in relation to timescales, as it is not feasible to conduct a full procurement and implementation plan for a replacement CMS before March 2024.
- 4.5 Enables continued delivery against the Improved Life Chances council priority area.

- 4.6 To ensure staff are confident and supported in the use of the CMS.
- 4.7 To ensure schools and families continue to be supported with minimal disruption.

## **5. Report Background**

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- 5.1 During August 2020 Northamptonshire County Council awarded the current contract to Capita Business Services (Capita) for the provision of an Education Services Case Management System (Capita One Education SaaS). The term of the contract ran to March 2021 with extension options until March 2024.
- 5.2 In December 2020 the contract was amended to novate the contract to North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) with WNC listed as an Affiliate as of April 2021 and extended to March 2024.
- 5.3 At this time work commenced to split the databases into NNC and WNC instances, ahead of the Northamptonshire Structural Changes Order 2019 replacing County, Borough, and District Councils with two new Unitary Councils, and moved to a Cloud hosted solution in keeping with the Council's Digital, Technology, and Innovation (DTI) strategy.
- 5.4 During December 2022, engagement has commenced with Education Services, Procurement, Legal and DTI to address the needs of the service to ensure a suitable CMS continues to be in place after March 2024. Currently the CMS supports the delivery of statutory and non-statutory duties of the following staff and teams:
- School Admissions and Place Planning
    - Appeals
  - Education Health & Care Team
  - SEND Support Service
  - Sensory Impairment Service
  - Virtual School
  - School Attendance Support Service
    - Attendance
    - Attainment
    - Penalty Notices
    - Exclusions
    - Elective Home Education
    - Children Missing in Education
    - Children in Entertainment & Employment
    - Education for Children Out of School (e.g., those with medical conditions that prevent school attendance)
  - Educational Psychology Service
  - Early Education & Childcare Advisory Services
  - Family Information Services/Directory
  - Free School Meals
  - Home to School Transport
  - Governors & Clerks

## 6. Issues and Choices

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6.1 Other alternatives considered include:

6.2 To have no CMS for Education Services: This would not be a viable option that could be considered due to the delivery of statutory duties enabled by this system.

6.3 To explore alternative existing systems: There are no other case management software applications in use within the Council that could be utilised to meet the requirements of Education Services.

## 7. Implications

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### 7.1 Resources and Financial

7.1.1 It is proposed that the new contract is awarded for one year with the ability to extend for a further year at the end of the contract period.

7.1.2 Current spend has been taken from invoicing documentation and is summarised below:

| <b>Annual Running Costs</b>       | <b>Joint</b>       | <b>WNC</b>         |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Capita One Education Subscription | £454,394.47        | £227,197.24        |
| Training Instance                 | £12,599.50         | £6,299.75          |
| <b>Total</b>                      | <b>£466,993.97</b> | <b>£233,496.99</b> |

7.1.3 The budget for the Education CMS is held by the Digital Technology and Innovation (DTI) Service.

7.1.4 Costs are projected to increase due to inflationary reasons; the table below outlines an estimated contract cost:

| <b>Year 1</b> | <b>Year 2</b> | <b>Overall Estimated Cost</b> |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| £280,000.00   | £280,000.00   | <b>£560,000.00</b>            |

7.1.5 There are no anticipated implications on Capital budgets.

### 7.2 Legal

7.2.1 The current system contract was awarded under the Managed Services for Business Framework Agreement - Y16018 for the timeframe of 10th August 2020 to 31st March 2021. In December 2020 Northamptonshire County Council exercised the right to extend this to March 2024. This is the maximum extension allowable, and there is no further contractual entitlement to extend the term.

7.2.2 The Council has the power to procure the facilities and services pursuant to Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (GPOC) and section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 (power to do things conducive or incidental to functions).

7.2.3 The estimated value of the contract means that any procurement will be subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council's Contract Procedure rules. The Council's intention is to procure a Case Management System from an existing framework. This will provide a legally compliant route to tendering the requirement and provides an opportunity to reduce the time to conclude the tender process.

### 7.3 Risk

7.3.1 The current contract end date does not allow for the Council to conduct an open procurement process and implement a new CMS. The recommendation proposed allows for continuity of current provision with minimal disruption to services and allows for further time to complete a procurement process for a long-term CMS solution.

7.3.2 There is a significant risk of legal challenge from other providers of case management systems, however it should be noted that a further procurement process would commence in the interim period for a long-term CMS solution.

7.3.3 The costs included in this report are based on estimations and there is the possibility that there are increased costs for the ongoing licence costs however until the procurement activities commence this cannot be confirmed.

### 7.4 Consultation and Communications

7.4.1 In developing the proposals, the Council has consulted with Education Services colleagues as the primary users of the current CMS. There has also been engagement with the Digital, Technology and Innovation Service and Business Intelligence Service. A communications plan is being developed to ensure all stakeholders will be kept informed and engaged at key stages of project implementation.

### 7.5 Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny

7.5.1 This decision has not been considered by the Scrutiny Committee.

### 7.6 Climate Impact

7.6.1 Once a solution has been selected specific impacts can be assessed. However, one of the potential benefits of a CMS is a retention if not reduction in levels of staff travel, post and associated printing that occurs within the services, potentially leading to a positive impact in this area.

### 7.7 Community Impact

7.7.1 Helping to ensure children and young people are fully engaged with their Education can lead to positive effects on communities. Timely interventions that are informed and enabled through data collated in an effective CMS will prevent escalating issues for families and a negative impact on local communities.

## **8. Background Papers**

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8.1 There are no background papers