

## Education Systems Programme

To: Strategy and Resources Committee

Meeting Date: 27 January 2022

From: Director of Education

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2022/015

Outcome: The Strategy and Resources Committee is being asked to approve the proposed funding for the Education Systems Programme which will implement a replacement system for Capita One, the contract for which is due to expire and cannot be extended. A fit-for-purpose Education system is critical for continued compliance with statutory duties and obligations for our Education Services.

Expected outcomes are a new system, or systems, that meet the needs of the Education Service, and licensing savings and efficiencies within the Service which will enable the release of capacity so staff can focus on support for children, young people and their families rather than on administration.

Recommendation: The Strategy and Resources Committee is asked to:

- a) Approve the funding of £2.5m for the Education Systems Programme. This would be payable in two financial years: £1.4m in 2022/23 and £1.1m in 2023/24.
- b) Give permission to proceed with the procurement of the required system(s).
- c) Agree to delegate the decision to award these contracts to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.

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Member contacts:

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# 1. Background

- 1.1 The current Management Information System for Education Services is Capita One. This is the central data repository for recording, storing, and reporting on all children and young people's information and used by the majority of Education Services within the Local Authority. It is the key means of information sharing across all Education Services with the Local Authority. Please note that this is the internal system used by the Local Authority and not the SIMS System used by schools which individual schools choose.
- 1.2 The ambition for the future is to have a system that can link together all the relevant records related to a child from the teams within Education. Where required, it will also link these records to records from teams within Social Care to facilitate up-to-date information sharing. This could be achieved either by using the same system or by having integrated IT systems. This is crucial for the purposes of safeguarding and supporting the education of those children and young people who most need our help.
- 1.3 The current contract with Capita is due to expire in March 2023. The intention is to re-tender, identify and upgrade/implement a robust and extensive system to support new Education Services work processes.
- 1.4 This will ensure continued compliance with the Children's Act 1989, the Education Act 1996 and subsequent related Acts and regulations. Some of the statutory duties the Capita System currently supports are: 'Provision of information', ensuring support for children with Special Educational Needs, 'making arrangements to identify' school-age children who are not attending, safeguarding, and promoting the educational achievement of looked after children.<sup>1</sup> However, these, and many others, could be done more efficiently and effectively with a more extensive and better integrated system(s) based upon the current demands on the Education Directorate. For example, by continuing to provide and even improve the data available to the Directorate, the Education Services will be better placed to promote the educational achievement not just of looked after children but all children in Education.
- 1.5 A new system(s) will be procured to facilitate information sharing; to remove manual data entry; to improve data quality; and to provide secure electronic communications with parents, carers, young people, schools and professionals, and others working in and with Education Services. The introduction of self-service, automation and the ability to pass work onto others securely within and across services, will reduce the administrative burden on officers and release more time for staff, putting children, young people and parents/carers at the heart of our operations.
- 1.6 Through the procurement of this system(s), a financial review and cost analysis will be undertaken to ensure accurate costings and spend are reported to Capital Programme Board.

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<sup>1</sup> The Education Act outlines the Local Authority's duty to make 'provision of information' including compiling it and making reports and returns to the Secretary of State, especially relating to children with Special Educational Needs. In addition, the Act requires the Local Authority 'to make arrangements to identify (as far as it is possible to do so) the identities of children in their area' who are of compulsory school age but not attending. Similarly, the Children's Act 1989 requires the Local Authority 'to safeguard and promote the welfare of a child looked after by them [...] and] in particular [has] a duty to promote the child's educational achievement.'

## 2. Main Issues

- 2.1 Overall the Education Systems Programme will address the complexities of the current system, improving our ability to support children, young people and their families.
- 2.2 Following a review of all the information flows in the Education Directorate there is a strong case to ensure that the IT systems used are not only robust and efficient but integrated to allow sharing of relevant information, especially for the support of vulnerable children and those with Special Educational Needs. The successful implementation of Liquid Logic into Children's Services is a recent example of the effectiveness of an integrated approach benefitting children and helping the Local Authority to make the best decisions about how to respond when children are referred for support.
- 2.3 Working with colleagues in Procurement and Legal we have identified that full competitive tender is the best approach to ensure regulatory compliance, value for money and a high-quality product for the Local Authority. A 'soft market test', to identify the ability of the market to meet our needs, confirmed that multiple suppliers exist who can supply a suitable product. Preparatory work has taken place on the business and technical specification for this award so we are confident that it can be achieved in the timeframe proposed by the programme.
- 2.4 The detailed costs and anticipated savings are set out in the tables below. These are the costs of procuring and implementing a new system(s) for Education based on the estimated costs from suppliers who responded to the soft market test and the cost of implementation based on the Local Authority's experience of implementing a new system for Children's Services. The total request for capital funding is £2.5m. Subject to the Committee's agreement this will be added to the capital programme.

<b>Capital Costs '000</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/25</b>	<b>25/26</b>	<b>26/27</b>
Resource cost: For external expert programme management, technical, finance and business analysts and data migration specialists	£ 606	£ 524			
Additional cost: Other costs such as backfill of posts, integration of systems, such as those between Transport & Finance, and Legal costs	£ 317	£ 317			
Software cost: Procurement of core modules to support key elements of Education Services such as Passenger Transport, SEND, Admissions, Attendance, Children Missing in Education, Children in Entertainment, Governors and Exclusions	£ 414	£ 104			
Implementation cost: Supplier implementation costs covering their costs for data migration, configuration, training, and project management	£ 48	£ 144			
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>£ 1,385</b>	<b>£ 1,089</b>			

<b>Revenue '000</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/25</b>	<b>25/26</b>	<b>26/27</b>
Capita One (Software Only)	£ 413	£ 386			
New System*		£ 172 (estimate not a full year)	£ 343	£ 343	£ 343

<b>Savings '000</b>	<b>22/23</b>	<b>23/24</b>	<b>24/25</b>	<b>25/26</b>	<b>26/27</b>
Efficiencies (Estimate)**		£ 223	£ 223	£ 223	£ 223
Potential Licence Savings		£ 70	£ 70	£ 70	£ 70
<b>Total Savings</b>		<b>£ 293</b>	<b>£ 293</b>	<b>£ 293</b>	<b>£ 293</b>

\*These are estimated figures based on costs from suppliers who responded to the Soft Market Test

\*\*These estimated savings are based on the identification of efficiencies in the Statutory Assessment Processes for the Special Educational Needs Service only. It is anticipated that further efficiencies will be identified during the Programme.

Please note that these figures were updated with Finance in the New Year.

### 3. Alignment with corporate priorities

#### 3.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Increased opportunity for self-service through secure on-line portals helping to bring parents, carers and young people into the heart of the decision-making process
- Improved ability to support families early on through improved communication and information sharing
- For those children and young people whose needs are greater the improved data sharing between services will mean we can be more effective in the help we offer

#### 3.2 A good quality of life for everyone

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Improved ability for parents and carers to find the information they need easily and in a format that suits them best
- Higher quality data being shared between services that will benefit everyone

#### 3.3 Helping our children learn, develop and live life to the full

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Contributing to improving the quality of education for all
- Improved decision-making
- An IT system that supports Officers from different teams/services to work together to support Children, Young People and their families
- Improved communication between Schools and educational specialists and the Local Authority

#### 3.4 Cambridgeshire: a well-connected, safe, clean, green environment

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Reducing the production of paper

#### 3.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

The following bullet points set out details of implications identified by officers:

- Providing a system that will alert Officers to needs such as safeguarding, educational and behavioural needs and other areas of support
- Improving the ability of the Education Service to interact more directly with Social Care

### 4. Significant Implications

#### 4.1 Resource Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Capital and revenue costs for Cambridgeshire County Council: 22/23 -£1.4m, 23/24 - £1.1m
- Possible Licence Savings over 5 years at a minimum of: £280k
- Delivering value for money: Increased efficiency and effectiveness on interventions and delivery of services. Improved quality of service through redeployment of staff. Positive impact on Local Authority performance. Improved compliance with statutory duties.

- Implications for property assets: Increased option for indefinite remote working for many aspects of Education Services

#### 4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Please refer to section 2. All IT systems purchased by the programme have or will go through a full tender process supported by the procurement and legal teams already attending its governance boards to ensure all council procedure and contract rules are followed.

#### 4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Please refer to section 2. For compliance with statutory duties and regulations it is essential for the authority to share, manage and maintain data and information related to children within its jurisdiction across all its services and, where relevant, in relation to social care.
- Failure to share relevant information effectively across Education services and Social Care can lead to potential safeguarding risks, including those of the most serious nature. An effective system will also help to ensure effective Multi-Agency work to protect vulnerable children.
- Were the authority to cease to use the current system and fail to replace it, there would be risks of reputational damage.
- There would be risks of GDPR non-compliance and an increased risk of data breaches in the absence of a robust system.
- Without an effective system, there would be an increased risk of staff turnover due to frustration over a lack of accurate information and the requirement to check data multiple times.
- There are risks of financial loss through manual errors in financial data entry were there not to be a well-designed system in place.

#### 4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The aim of the new system(s) is to provide improved access to services by all communities particularly its use of portals enabling people to self-serve and to increase access to specific communities, including but not limited to disabled people, those with Special Educational Needs, travellers, health partners, parents, carers and young people. The service will, however, retain the option for postal communications.
- The Covid pandemic has resulted in a much higher demand for remote access from service users, the new system(s) will help to meet this need.

#### 4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- The system will provide improved communication with schools, parents, carers, social workers, and education specialists
- Improved timeliness of information exchanged with Schools will improve statutory compliance and help with intervention where this is required.

- 4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement  
There are no significant implications within this category.
- 4.7 Public Health Implications  
There are no significant implications within this category.
- 4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications  
The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:
- All projects within this programme will complete a climate change impact assessment at each stage.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes  
Name of Financial Officer: Helen Boutell/Tom Kelly

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement? Yes  
Name of Officer: Henry Swan

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law? Yes  
Name of Legal Officer: Natalie Moulton and Pathfinders Christine Ajayi

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes  
Name of Officer: Jonathan Lewis

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications? Yes  
Name of Officer: Simon Cobby

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? No  
Name of Officer: Not applicable

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health? No  
Name of Officer: Not applicable

- 4.9 If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer? No  
Name of Officer: Not applicable

## 5. Source documents

- 5.1 None.