

Procurement of laptop supply and Multifunction Device (MFD) contracts

To: Strategy and Resources Committee

Meeting Date: 21st September 2021

From: Sam Smith Assistant Director of IT & Digital Services

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2021/024

Outcome: This report sets out the background to competitively reprocure two “Call-off” contracts. A call-off contract is a purchase order which enables bulk orders over a period of time. This is a form of framework agreement. One for the provision of laptop devices and associated equipment for Cambridgeshire County Council. The second is to procure and award a new contract for a period of up to 5 years for the provision of Multifunction Devices (MFDs). MFDs provide printing, photocopying and scanning functionality in CCC offices.

The outcome, if agreed, is a guaranteed supply of both types of devices and a complete refresh of the current fleet for Cambridgeshire County Council staff and Members in line with corporate strategies.

Recommendation: The Strategy and Resources Committee is asked to:

- A) Agree to the procurement of two call-off contracts for an initial period of three years from October 2021 to October 2024, with options to extend for up to a further two years.
- B) Agree to delegate the award of these contracts to the Section 151 Officer in consultation with the Chair of the Strategy and Resources Committee.

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1. Background

Laptops

- 1.1 Cambridgeshire County Council supports remote working for the majority of its staff. To enable this staff are issued a standard laptop device that will work from any location with wireless Internet access.
- 1.2 Cambridgeshire County Council currently has 3,924 laptops deployed to staff across the council; the majority of these were purchased as part of a shared supply contract with Northamptonshire County Council. That contract ended in 2019 and, rather than procure another call-off contract as would normally be the case, a decision was made to hold on to these assets and for any additional items, or replacement models, to be purchased on an ad-hoc basis. This was pending the re-patriation of the IT service from LGSS to the County Council in 2020 when we would be in a better position to determine our future need.
- 1.3 Remote working is fundamental to our ways of working. This has been facilitated by the provision of laptops which have enabled Cambridgeshire County Council to move to flexible working which in turn has greatly reduced the pressure on office space.
- 1.4 Remote working has been vital during the Covid 19 pandemic. As most staff had already been provided with laptops we were able to react very quickly to the need to work from home during the 2020 lockdowns, therefore maintaining productivity levels and allowing continuity of services to the public.
- 1.5 Whilst no savings are expected from the overall procurement by procuring a fixed cost contract, we will be able to better forecast costs ahead of time and to better coordinate the replacement of laptops as they reach the end of their useful lifecycle as part of an effective asset management strategy.
- 1.6 The IT department will look to advertise this procurement alongside Peterborough City Council in order to try and drive further discounts on the joint level of spend through procuring a higher volume of devices.
- 1.7 The total new contract value is expected to be £2.6m.

MFDs

- 1.8 Cambridgeshire County Council entered a contract with Canon UK for the provision of its MFD devices in 2012. This was retendered in 2016 and remained with Canon UK but is due to end on the 25th of October 2021, pending a decision from Crown Commercial Services for the replacement framework.
- 1.9 As per normal practice there is now a requirement to replace the previous contract in line with standard procurement management.
- 1.10 The current contract covers the leasing and support for the MFDs, toner refills and the print management software which allows secure printing and the freedom to print from any device via a staff ID card.

- 1.11 The print management software is currently hosted onsite from the CCC Datacentre. As part of the new procurement, we would look to move this to a cloud solution in line with the agreed IT strategy.
- 1.12 Currently the Council operates a policy where any team can order an MFD should they choose to do so. This has resulted in the organisation having 180 machines individually leased to it, with the largest concentration of machines being located within the old Shire Hall. The issue of the print strategy for Cambridgeshire County Council is being addressed within the Council and we would look to support that strategy with this procurement.
- 1.13 The procured solution will be as flexible as possible. It will continue to facilitate roaming and secure printing while better supporting people working remotely with printing to non-CCC network MFDs and scanning directly into a user or team's Microsoft 365 folders.
- 1.14 Pre-pandemic printing costs had dropped to £190,000 a year due to the older devices no longer commanding a full rental charge. These devices will need replacing; however, we hope to continue to achieve best value for the authority with a better print strategy and devices better designed for the changing business environment.
- 1.15 Whilst this procurement does request the refresh of a number of devices, we will work with the services to reduce this number as much as possible and investigate how we can use electronic systems to greatly lessen the need for printing in general.

2. Main Issues

Laptops

- 2.1 Of the 3,924 laptop devices deployed to staff, 900 are over five years of age leading to increased failure rates and higher service charges.
- 2.2 Dell have recently identified one of the common older models in use within Cambridgeshire County Council as having serious battery issues which will reduce its effective life expectancy.
- 2.3 We are currently seeing global component shortages affecting stock levels for all suppliers. This makes it increasingly difficult for small, ad-hoc purchases to be an effective on-going solution to our needs. This approach has resulted in device shortages and longer waiting times for CCC staff which we are keen to address.
- 2.4 With this procurement we hope to create a strategic partnership with a supplier to secure a regular supply of devices in line with the Council's needs.

MFDs

- 2.5 The average age for the devices on the current contract is five years, while this has provided us with savings in the short term, they are increasingly likely to need repair once offices reopen.

- 2.6 The majority of the devices were purchased based on higher office occupation, with the move to remote working, many can be replaced with smaller, less expensive devices and a single large device in areas where there are currently multiple printers.
- 2.7 The current print management system only works with Canon devices and so locks us into a single manufacturer; a move to a vendor neutral system would allow us to select the best value models for each situation, regardless of manufacturer.
- 2.8 Replacing devices as and when required is leading to an increased variance in lease end-dates making it harder to co-term the contracts.

3. Alignment with corporate priorities

3.1 Communities at the heart of everything we do

There are no significant implications for this priority although having effective, reliable tools for staff to use across the Council is fundamental to our ability to deliver services to our communities.

3.2 A good quality of life for everyone

There are no significant implications for this priority although having effective, reliable tools for staff to use across the Council is fundamental to our ability to deliver services to our communities.

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

There are no significant implications for this priority.

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

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.5 Protecting and caring for those who need us

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. Significant Implications

4.1 Resource Implications

IT are working with Finance throughout both procurements. The aim is for this change to using a 'call-off' contract for our devices to be cost-neutral. Any cost implications will be communicated via the business planning process

For the best fit solutions, we will require dedicated resource from within the Council specially to complete the print strategy

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

The Cambridgeshire procurement team has been engaged throughout and we will be using a recognised local government framework for both procurements.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

Advice has been received from LGSS Law in support of this procurement.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

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 on Priority Areas

4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Neutral

4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Neutral

4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.

Neutral

4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Neutral

- We are currently looking at making minimal packaging on delivery part of the tender process
- Priority will be given to suppliers who have signed the pledge to be net-zero by 2050

4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability, and management:

Neutral

4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Neutral

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Neutral

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Helen Boutell

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: Fiona McMillan

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?
Not applicable

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

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?
Not applicable

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?
Not applicable

If a Key decision, have any Environment and Climate Change implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer? Yes
Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

5. Source documents

5.1 There are no source documents.