

North Tyneside Council Report to Cabinet 11 May 2015

ITEM 6(b)

Title: Re-procurement of
social care information
system

Portfolio(s): Adult Social Care;
Children, Young People and
Learning

Cabinet Member(s): Councillor Lesley
Spillard,
Councillor Ian
Grayson

Report from Service Area: Adult Social Care / Commissioning and Investment

Responsible Officer: Jacqui Old, Head of Adult Social Care Tel: 0191 643 7317
Mark Longstaff, Head of Commissioning and Investment Tel: 0191 643 8089

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek formal approval from Cabinet, in accordance with Contract Standing Order 8(4), for the procurement of a new social care information system, the total contract value of which will exceed £500,000.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet approve the procurement of the social care information system and delegate authority to the Head of Commissioning and Investment in consultation with the Head of Adult Social Care, the Head of Children, Young People and Learning, the Head of Law and Governance and the Strategic Manager Finance to oversee the procurement of the system.

1.3 Forward Plan:

Twenty eight days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published 9th March 2015

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report relates to the following priorities in the 2014/18 Our North Tyneside Plan:

Our People will:

- be listened to by services that respond better and faster to their needs.
- be supported to achieve their full potential, especially our children and young people.
- be supported to live healthier and longer lives.
- be cared for and kept safe if they become vulnerable.

1.5 Information:

1.5.1 Background

1.5.2 The current social care case management system, Northgate Children's Case Management (CCM)/Adults Integrated System (AIS), was procured some 15 years ago. There was a further procurement exercise in 2005 in response to government requirements for children's case management functionality, but the underlying database remained the same. The system supports a number of statutory processes and reporting/recording requirements across both service areas, including child protection and looked after processes, early help assessments, and is used extensively across the entire adult social care service. Almost every module within the functional range has been implemented to date, and covers all assessment and care management, safeguarding, budget management and provider payments. The system currently makes in excess of £50m worth of payments per annum to externally commissioned providers.

1.5.3 Over the past 10 years there has been a major shift away from paper based client records to an ambition all data being held electronically. During this time the ICT market has developed dramatically, with a move from traditional legacy systems to more flexible platforms utilising mobile technology, web based applications and cloud space. As this has happened, more sophisticated case management systems have been developed and new vendors have entered a market previously dominated by 2-3 main players.

1.5.4 Over the same period of time, the environment in which the Authority operates and the pressures and challenges facing its services, have undergone major change. The Creating a Brighter Future (CBF) programme has been created to deliver priority outcomes whilst responding to these challenges.

The CBF programme will deliver a major culture change and new way of working that will:

- encourage our customers to be more independent;
- better manage demand for services so people access the right services at the right time; and
- focus everything it does to delivering its priorities

This change will need to be underpinned by information systems that support greater customer independence (e.g. self-service portals) and allow more efficient, targeted use of worker time (e.g. user of mobile devices). There is a need for systems to effectively support early intervention and help services, as well as 'core' social care services. This requires modern systems which must be easy to use and must support online access for customers, mobile working, and better data integration.

- 1.5.5 To this end, a briefing to the Senior Leadership Team in June 2014 outlined the following vision: “A flexible platform which supports the entire social care journey, enables customer self service, supports agile working, integration and provides robust financial and commissioning accountability.”

In practical terms, the requirement is for a system that supports national requirements and CBF priorities through the following key elements:

- **Web:** the system needs to support customer independence through self-service portals that allow customers to check eligibility for services and calculate financial contributions, thus reducing demand on officers.

This element will support the following priorities of the cared for, safeguarded and healthy project:

- b) For those who need support, making it easy to get help quickly and making sure this support represents value for public money.
- d) Self help - making sure our residents have the information and support they need to take responsibility and control over their own health and wellbeing.

It will also support the requirement in the Children and Families Act 2014 for a web-based Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Local Offer, with information on the services available, how decisions are made, and the support available to access services. There is potential to have a web-based offer which is co-ordinated across Adults and Children’s Services, and is able to draw information from the contract management system. The Local Offer is currently delivered via the existing service directory, plus a ‘read-only’ information page which meets the minimum requirement, but does not deliver any enquiry or personalisation functionality.

- **Mobile / agile working:** In order to maximise the time that frontline workers spend with clients, there is a need to minimise ‘desk time’ and time spent on journeys to and from the office base. However this must not be at the expense of good recording practice, which is vital for safeguarding and for monitoring the effectiveness of interventions. Quality of recording is also a key focus of Ofsted inspections. Both Adults and Children’s Services have carried out mobile working pilots with frontline workers, and both groups of workers reported time savings, and anticipated that time saved would be much greater with a case management system that is designed to work with mobile devices.

This element will support the following priorities of the cared for, safeguarded and healthy project:

- a) Redirecting services to help prevent more people from needing support in the first place or delaying the need for this (through more effective use of worker time for early help services).
 - c) Making sure we keep everyone in North Tyneside safe and protect the vulnerable (through better use of worker time and making it easier to quickly keep records up to date).
- **Integration:** Integrated commissioning and joined-up, streamlined services need to be supported by integrated information systems. This includes the ability to share structured information appropriately with partners such as the NHS, and integration with other relevant Council systems, such as the education system and the Electronic Document Record Management System.

There is an identified need for the Authority to reduce and streamline the number of systems it uses, so that there is one recognised source for each data item, and each data item can be presented to the user in the context of the relevant business process. This requires flexible, efficient integration tools and a supplier that has a good understanding of the relevant data standards..

This element will support the following priorities of the cared for, safeguarded and healthy project:

- b) For those who need support, making it easy to get help quickly and making sure this support represents value for public money (through making it easier for practitioners to see which services are already working with a client and reducing the need for people to tell their story over again).
- c) Making sure we keep everyone in North Tyneside safe and protect the vulnerable (through reduced duplication, improved data quality and access to a 'single version of the truth').

- **Contract management / quality management:** There is currently no single system for bringing together core data about commissioned service providers and how the Authority monitors their performance. The current model is based on multiple spreadsheets which require manual updating as and when changes are made. The intention is to procure a contract management/quality monitoring system and some of the case management applications in the market provide this functionality on the same platform. Practically, this will bring together customer activity (assessment, support planning) with commissioning and financial data. This will provide joined up intelligence to track a customer's journey through the system from a contact as far as a payment to a provider and show how that provider is performing. Although initially considered for Adult Services, a wider solution which could support the integrated commissioning function is being considered.

This element will support the following priorities of the cared for, safeguarded and healthy project:

- b) For those who need support, making it easy to get help quickly and making sure this support represents value for public money.
- d) Self help - making sure our residents have the information and support they need to take responsibility and control over their own health and wellbeing.

1.5.6 The current case management system does not support the above Authority's priorities. Some of the reasons for this are:

- **Technology:** the system is built on old technology and does not support key elements of the CBF priorities. For instance, the current system cannot be used effectively on a touch screen device, and does not effectively support agile working.
- **Functionality/usability:** users report that the current system is difficult to navigate and recording processes do not mirror business processes, so worker time is not used as effectively as it could be. Further, it is not easy to change the screens available to users, so even fairly minor changes have to be carried out by ICT services. Outputs (including documents that are used with families) are not user-friendly, and cannot be easily amended to make them simpler to use and understand. There are systems on the market which allow much greater flexibility, and can be locally reconfigured to match current and changing requirements.

- **Quality:** A great deal of officer time is spent on testing upgrades to the software and then liaising with the supplier to resolve faults.
- **Value for money:** There are systems on the market which provide more up to date functionality at lower cost, including purpose-built mobile apps and integration with other key systems.

1.5.7 User feedback, through user groups and user survey, indicates that there is an appetite for change. Satisfaction amongst users of the children's system was at 59% when last measured, and social workers moving from other authorities report using systems that are more efficient and user-friendly in other authorities. In 2011, in response to concerns about usability of the system, a user group for children's social work was formed. This group developed an improvement plan based on pursuing improvements with the supplier and progressing local workarounds where possible. In January 2014 it was agreed that all options short of a new procurement exercise had now been explored, and that the preferred option was to explore procurement of a new case management system.

1.5.8 The Authority must comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and has a legal obligation to undertake a procurement process for any supplies or services contracts where the total value exceeds European thresholds. The Authority is also required by Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 to have Standing Orders in relation to its contracts. Standing Orders ensure openness, integrity, accountability and probity of the process and that value for money is being achieved. It also gives confidence that the Authority is fulfilling its fiduciary and legal responsibilities. In accordance with Standing Orders where the value of the contract is estimated to be over £50,000 a tendering procedure is required. The contract for the social care case management system exceeds both the European and the Authority's internal threshold, and therefore, to ensure compliance, should be subject to open competition.

In addition to this the current contract was awarded in February 2000 and has not been subject to competition since that time. Therefore in order to benefit from the advances in technology it would be prudent to test the market to ensure the Authority is getting the best solution available whilst minimising ongoing costs

1.5.9 The current maintenance contract expires in April 2017. It is anticipated that the process of procurement and implementation of a new system will take between 18 months and 2 years. The work will be kept in step with wider strategic technology developments across the Authority.

1.5.10 Funding for system procurement has already been approved as part of the Authority's 2015-2019 Investment Plan. The Authority has carried out soft market testing, to estimate the cost of a new system. Annual maintenance for software products is typically 20% of the purchase cost, and it is estimated that the ongoing maintenance cost of a more up to date system would be less than current maintenance costs.

1.6 Decision options:

Option 1

Approve the procurement of the social care system.

Option 2

Maintain the existing system.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

Option 1 is recommended for the following reasons:

- In order to comply with procurement requirements, and to ensure best value for money, the contract should be subject to open competition.
- Estimates based on soft market testing indicate that it would be possible to obtain a modern system, which better supports the Creating a Brighter Future priorities as outlined above, for a level of annual maintenance lower than or similar to the maintenance cost of the current system.
- Extensive soft market testing has included speaking to other local authorities regarding their current position/future plans, site visits to see live systems in use and demonstrations from system suppliers. This research has indicated that moving to one of the current market leading systems could reduce ongoing support and maintenance.
- Feedback from users indicates that many workers would welcome a change of system, particularly if this introduces better mobile working options, ease of use and improved documentation for working with clients.

1.8 Contact officers:

James McIntyre, ICT Manager, Adult Social Care, 0191 643 7009

Jan Hawley, Information Systems and Governance Manager, Commissioning and Investment, 0191 643 8130

Alison Campbell, Senior Business Partner, 0191 643 7038

1.9 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- [Investment Plan 2015-19](#)
- [Social Care – Utilising Technology to Deliver Change – Briefing to SLT, June 2014](#)
- [Technology for Social Care – Briefing to Corporate Assurance Group, March 2014](#)

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The estimated purchase cost of the system has been provided for in the approved 2015-2019 Investment Plan (Project CO064 Community Capacity). It is anticipated that the ongoing annual support and maintenance cost of a replacement system will be less than or in line with current spend.

2.2 Legal

The Council must comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and has a legal obligation to undertake a procurement process for any supplies or services contracts where the total value exceeds European thresholds.. The Authority is also required by Section 135 of the Local Government Act 1972 to have Standing Orders in relation to its contracts. In accordance with Standing Orders where the value of the contract is estimated to be over £50,000 a tendering procedure is required.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

All groups of stakeholders were invited to attend consultation workshops which will directly inform the procurement specification. Representatives have also attended soft market testing.

Consultation has taken place via the relevant system user groups.

Reports have been taken to senior officer groups, including SLT and the Corporate Assurance Group.

The specification process has been agreed with and is being managed by Cofely.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

Engagement with suppliers will be managed by the Procurement Service in line with relevant legislative requirements.

2.4 Human rights

There are no direct human rights implications arising from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no direct equalities and diversity implications arising from this report.

2.6 Risk management

Formal project management arrangements will be in place, and risks will be reported and managed through the project board.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no direct environment and sustainability implications arising from this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive X
- Head(s) of Service X
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) X
- Chief Finance Officer X
- Monitoring Officer X
- Head of Corporate Strategy X