

## Record of Decision made by an Officer

<b>Report Title:</b>	<b>New IT system for Planning and Planning Enforcement</b>
<b>Officer:</b>	Alex Robinson – Executive Head for Place
<b>Status:</b>	Non-Exempt
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Appendices:</b>	None

## Officer Decision:

To sign the contract for the provision of a new IT system provided by Arcus for Planning. The new Arcus system will be replacing the Legacy Acolaid and Lalpac systems, which are hosted as part of the Capita 5C's contract which is due to end in September 2025

## Authority to make Decision:

Cabinet (20<sup>th</sup> December 2023) approved the following:

1. Award a contract to Arcus Global Limited to provide the replacement software for the Council's Planning Service for a period of five years at a cost of no more than £245,000.

As part of the above decision, authority was also given as per the below which this decision is now exercising that authority:

1. To delegate authority to the Executive Head of Place in consultation with the Monitoring Officer and Section 151 officer to finalise and enter into a contract with the preferred supplier.

## Consultation:

As part of the decision making process, Cabinet reviewed the business case for the proposed awarding of the contract. Prior to the Cabinet decision a full procurement exercise was run in order to select the preferred bidder.

## Reasons for the Decision:

The Council needs to ensure replacement systems are in place before Capita's hosting contract ends, to ensure high profile and critical public services continue to be delivered.

A business case was prepared with respect to the proposed changes and this was reviewed and considered by Cabinet.

Following a full open tender process exercise the Council proposed and subsequently selected ARCUS GLOBAL LIMITED to deliver two separate systems – a Generic Case Management system to support Environmental Health, Licensing and Grants and the Arcus Platform to support the Council's Planning Service.

## Options considered:

Council prepared a Full Business Case (FBC) based on the Office of Government Commerce Five Case Model for Business Cases:

**Option 1** – Do nothing and let the contracts run out / automatically renew. Acolaid is an aging product and allowing it to expire/renew is delaying the inevitable replacement of a server-based system the council has used since 1999. The decision would also incur a substantial future exit cost and onboarding/data migration and support/hosting cost from both the current Infrastructure provider, Capita, and a future Infrastructure provider at the end of the 5C's contract. In addition, the Council would incur BAU write in full costs to server and maintenance costs to support this arrangement under Capita at £120,842 per annum until September 2025. Under this option it is likely that the service would continue to experience operational difficulties and the quality of the product deteriorating with the Council needing to purchase additional updates at significant cost given the product is a legacy system with no further development being carried out by the provider. Its continued use is likely to result in an unreliable service which will damage organisational performance and outcomes for customers.

The costs of this option over the contract period are estimated at £1,730,000. Coupled with the issues this option is likely to have on service delivery this option is not favoured. Unless the Council takes action Option 1 is the default position once the Capita contract comes to an end.

**Option 2** – Council builds its own software solution. The FBC has considered the option of the Council developing its own inhouse system from scratch. However, the Council does not have the in-house skills or capacity to develop a bespoke software system and this is estimated to cost £2,693,000 over the next five years.

This option has been ruled out as the Council does not have the capacity or knowledge to create this or maintain this going forward as well as requiring a support resource dependency that may not be replaceable within the market. Moreover, a bespoke system will rule out any future cross authority working that may be required.

**Option 3** – procure replacement software package from provider. This involves approaching a number of specialist software and systems providers to deliver the service. The FBC sets out the benefit of utilising specialist and experienced software providers to provide proven software for the service. This is against a backdrop of the significant risk of reputational damage to the Council if it is unable to smoothly transition from one system to another and to deliver front line services continuously.

**Financial:**

The costs are as articulated in the business cases and are within the budgetary framework set.

A contract to Arcus Global Limited to provide the replacement software for the Council's Planning Service for a period of five years at a cost of no more than £245,000.

**EXEMPT/NON EXEMPT:**

N/A

**DECISION AUTHORISED BY:****Officer:**

Alex Robinson

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024**Consultee:**

Steve Pink

3<sup>rd</sup> April 2024