

18 December 2023**Agenda Item: 3****REPORT OF THE HEAD OF TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL ICT****PROCUREMENT OF EXTERNAL SPECIALIST ICT RESOURCE****Purpose of the Report`**

1. This report seeks approval of Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources to enter into a contract for external specialist planning, technical and forensic support.

Information

2. Some information contained in this report is not for publication by virtue of paragraph 7 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as it contains information relating to any action taken or to be taken in connection with the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime. Having regard to all the circumstances, on balance the public interest in disclosing the information does not outweigh the reasons for exemption because the information would add a limited amount to the public understanding of the issues and could undermine the Council's position and resilience. The relevant information is contained in a separate exempt appendix.
3. The specialist external ICT resource being sought will strengthen the Council's position in key areas and will enable the existing in-house ICT officers to concentrate on the day-to-day business.

Other Options Considered

4. To cover the key areas of focus through existing in-house staffing resource but this would prevent the sharing of national expertise and best practice and also potentially impact upon the ICT support available to Council officers and elected Members when required.

Reasons for Recommendations

5. To award a three-year contract to supplement the Council's in-house ICT expertise and support.

Statutory and Policy Implications

6. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty,

safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability, and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

7. The estimated cost of this three-year contract is £180,000 - £200,000 (between £60K and £67K annually).
8. Over the last 3 years vacancy underspends have exceeded this amount and this situation is forecast to continue for the foreseeable future. Therefore, the spend will seek to be contained within the underspends associated with staffing.

Data Protection and Information Governance

9. A summary Data Protection Impact Assessment will be completed at the commencement of the procurement exercise.

Smarter Working Implications

10. In the event of a cyber-attack, the assistance of a suitably skilled third party will enable recovery to normal working and minimise the impacts of the loss of business systems on staff, services and citizens.

Implications for Residents

11. The impacts of previous cyber-attacks on Councils have had significant consequences for local residents, largely as a result of prolonged disruption to their Council's services. Where Council's have been responsible for benefits payments or property and planning responsibilities, delayed payments and failure to process searches and planning applications have resulted in hardship and additional costs for citizens, and the risk that their personal information has been exposed on the dark net could be significant for years to come. The support that can be obtained from a Cyber Incident Response Retainer would not remove the risk of such impacts on our citizens, however the impacts would be minimised through faster paced response and recovery.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources approves the proposal to procure specialist ICT support on a three-year contract, for the specific issues areas detailed within the exempt appendix.

Paul Martin
Head of Technology & Digital (ICT)

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Paul Martin, Head of Technology & Digital ICT, 0115 9775722, paul.martin@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (KK 28/11/2023)

20. The Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources has delegated responsibility under FIN.6 for ICT and under FIN.4 for corporate procurement. The proposal in this report is therefore within the remit of the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources.

Financial Comments (PAA29 14/12/2023)

21. The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 7 to 8. The cost of the three-year Cyber Incident Response Retainer contract is to be met from a combination of underspends on staffing, storage and maintenance as well as savings arising from the decommissioning of systems.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All