EXECUTIVE DECISION – 4 MAY 2022

OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE DELIVERY OF IMT SERVICES

COMMENTS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

At its meeting on 28 April 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board considered the report and unanimously agreed to support the recommendations to the Executive.

In response to questions from members of the Board, the following points were confirmed:

- Good governance was important to ensure effective use of money and avoid duplicating the purchase of cloud services by different departments, to manage data under GDPR and other mandatory requirements that come with a gov.uk namespace, and for working in a technical environment. There was a history of individual departments purchasing a cloud service that they required, which then created issues when the IMT team wanted to buy that service for wider use across the Council and had to obtain authority to administer that service. This was happening less now, but there were still some incidences of this occurring. The Board acknowledged that this could still be a risk when there was commissioning work being undertaken in different departments and recognised that the Council aimed to have this centralised. The Board requested that a report be brought back to a future meeting on this issue before the Service Integration and Management (SIaM) service was fully developed.
- A full options appraisal for the non IMT services currently being delivered by Serco, namely HR Admin, Payroll, Exchequer, Adult Social Care Finance and the Customer Service Centre, would be considered by the Board at its meeting on 26 May and then the Executive on 7 June. The IMT options appraisal had been started before the other areas as it had been anticipated that this would involve more complex procurement and higher volumes of procurement. However, the market engagement had indicated that the IMT procurement would be less complex than initially anticipated.
- Cloud services were the only way forward for the Council to ensure it received the best security for its services. The large investments by bigger organisations in state of the art security meant that there would be quicker responses to any cyber attacks and the ability to detect and react to any problems more quickly than any individual organisation. Cloud systems had so far proven to be very resilient to cyber attacks.
- The modern desktop management (MDM) programme, which was in the process of being rolled out across the Council, would see device management move to cloud services. A later phase of the MDM programme would see a change in the agents which would check who was undertaking any actions on a device, whether the action looked risky, and would report back in real time to a security operations centre. This

information would then be analysed for any risks and instructions could then be sent back very quickly to the agents to stop it operating. The real time interaction of security systems and how they joined up provided a high level of assurance and the Council required this enterprise standard of security to resist the sort of attacks it would be subjected to.

- During the market analysis, there were multiple examples of organisations who could deliver more than one specialism which combined into the needs for device management, support desk and device security, or build subcontracts into the big technical vendors who tend not to deal directly with organisations like the Council. There was a homogenisation of the market into key technical organisations such as Google, Amazon and Microsoft.

- The Council had now moved all its services into Microsoft Azure hosting, and these host environments were identical for millions of subscribers due to being global scale systems. The only uniqueness to these environments was where the Council was operating separate bits of software and doing precise pieces of configuration.

- The procurement exercise would be designed to enable the Council to create a range of options and procure specialisms independently if that would be in the best interest for the Council.

- It was anticipated that there would be around three or four providers in the future. Having more providers would involve more management around governance and assuring their performance. Future levers on the performance of the providers could include expanding on the current service level agreements and key performance indicators as there would be additional capability to analyse more data from cloud services. It was expected that the measurements for performance would improve.

- The SIaM service would make it appear to the Council that there was only one process in place. This was a well established practice which was also used elsewhere.

- The IMT service would contract considerably and look very different in five years time, as it would become more about configuration programming and building business solutions rather than physical engineering. The Council had already started to work in this way and had used SIaM techniques with Serco to make significant improvements over the last few years.

- There was reasonable confidence that recruitment could be supplemented by using consultancy services when necessary. The main concern was recruiting to the technical specialisms, although this issue would reduce over time as there would be less need for high end technical engineers as these people would be working for the cloud services. The only high end technical engineers that would be required in the future would be for access networks and wireless networks as the big infrastructures would be deconstructed over the coming years.

- New senior management capability would be created in the IMT team to oversee the inhouse SIaM service. These could potentially be recruited from existing staff who were working on the account but employed by Serco. There was currently some competition for these skills, but the Council already had contractors working for the

IMT team with these skills. There were still people wanting to work for the public sector despite the pay being lower than in the private sector. It was recognised that recruitment could be a challenge but it was not seen as a substantial risk factor.

- The Executive Councillor for People Management, Legal and Corporate Property highlighted that there were tools which could be put in place to improve recruitment. This included short term payments, packages including company cars and relocation packages. The benefits of living and working in Lincolnshire, such as home working and lower housing costs, were also promoted to help attract the best people to the Council.

- Contractors would be able to recruit staff based on their own pay and conditions, and could therefore pay the going rate for different positions.

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