

<b>EDUCATION SYSTEMS PROGRAMME – AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF AN EDUCATION IT SYSTEM</b>
<b>COUNCILLOR JAMIL, DEPUTY LEADER AND CABINET MEMBER FOR FINANCE AND CORPORATE GOVERNANCE</b>
<b>SEPTEMBER 2024</b>
<b>Deadline date: SEPTEMBER 2024</b>

Cabinet portfolio holder:	Councillor Jamil, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Governance
Responsible Director:	John Gregg, Executive Director for Children’s Services
Is this a Key Decision?	YES Key decision reference: KEY/12AUGUST24/01
Is this decision eligible for call-in?	YES
Does this Public report have any annex that contains exempt information?	NO
Is this a project and if so has it been registered on POWA?	YES POWA reference P&C ITDS82

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Cabinet Member is recommended to:

1. Approve Peterborough City Council awarding a contract to Liquidlogic Ltd for the provision of its Education IT System from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024 for a period of 5 years (with the option to extend for a further 2 years). The estimated value of the total 7-year contract period is approximately £1,047,605 (CPI included, VAT is not included).
2. Delegate authority to the Service Director - Education to decide whether to invoke the extension period for the contract following the initial contract term and in accordance with the contract provisions.

**1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT**

1.1 This report is for the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Governance to consider exercising delegated authority under paragraph 3.4.8 of Part 3 of the constitution in accordance with the terms of their portfolio at paragraph (g).

**2. TIMESCALES**

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	<b>NO</b>	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	<b>N/A</b>
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**3. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES**

3.1 Peterborough City Council (PCC) currently uses different systems and processes to meet their statutory obligations for Education which are not integrated. This includes Capita One, Synergy and NCC Wizard for Early Years funding. This prevents a single view of the child and appropriate sharing of information within services that can help to safeguard children and young people. The existing IT contract for the current system expires at the end of March 2025 (to be extended to the end of March 2026 to allow the new system to be implemented).

The proposed supplier of the new education system currently provides PCC’s Childrens Social Care and Early Help system and will therefore give the added benefits of a single view of a child without the need for external integrations.

This procurement includes the following Education services:

- Admissions and Admissions Appeals
- Alternative education provision
- Attendance
- Chaperones
- Children’s centres
- Children in employment
- Children in entertainment
- Children missing education
- Early years and childcare
- Early years providers
- Education, employment and training
- Elective home education
- Family Information Service
- Governors
- Integrated youth services
- Reduced timetables
- Safeguarding
- Schools finance

- School Improvement
- Inclusion
- Sensory impairment
- Virtual schools
- Welfare benefits

Challenges identified with the current systems include:

- The input of census data is a significant administrative task which is frequently behind schedule and a lack of integration means this data is not shared automatically with Admissions or the SEND service.
- Responses to external bodies, such as Ofsted, can be a significant administrative burden
- Technical challenges
- Large amounts of manual data entry
- Poor integration of systems (including the DfE eligibility checker), which can cause duplicate entries/transcription errors
- Poor data quality, meaning data cleansing is required
- Lack of timely engagement with children and families in some services
- Management reporting is cumbersome and very time consuming in some services
- A silo effect in many services who would benefit from a single view of the child to better inform decision-making

The proposal is to introduce a new single integrated Education System which addresses current limitations and to migrate existing data to it. This should reduce the need to rekey data, freeing up staff time to improve service in other areas. A key requirement of the new system is two-way communication with parents/carers/young people through a parent portal, with professionals through a professionals' portal and with schools/settings through a provider/school portal. This will improve communication with the community as citizens will be able to 'self-serve' many of their enquiries/requests as well as significantly reduce the administrative burden on staff who will not need to rekey information currently provided via post and email. The use of these portals will be encouraged but those unable or unwilling to access them will continue to be able to interact with Education Services using post, email or telephone.

## **Procurement Process**

A joint procurement has been undertaken by PCC and Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). The Procurement lead is CCC, with PCC and CCC legal representatives instructed throughout the process. The joint procurement will culminate in PCC and CCC entering into separate contracts with the successful supplier.

To aid this exercise, the programme undertook a soft market test to improve understanding of the capabilities and costs of currently available systems and refine requirements in advance of a tendering process.

Working with the procurement team, an initial exercise to procure through the G-Cloud 13 framework was carried out, which resulted in the selection of a single supplier. After taking

legal advice, this exercise was abandoned due to potential non-compliance with the framework's direct award process. . A subsequent open procedure procurement was progressed and an Invitation to Tender (ITT) issued to the market, which resulted in tenders from two suppliers. The tenders were evaluated according to the criteria defined in the ITT involving staff from across the Education service and a supplier selected who best met all the functional and technical requirements. However, the Council determined not to proceed with the procurement for reasons that it was not expedient and in the public interest to carry the award procedure to its conclusion.

PCC procurement were instructed to lead the procurement of PCC's required solution (CCC to conduct their own procurement), hence PCC has procured the Council's requirement using the Crown Commercial Service's Vertical Application Solutions' Framework Agreement RM6259 to directly award the contract to Liquidlogic. This supplier has been evaluated as providing the best fit for PCC's requirements.

### Corporate Priorities

As well as ensuring the council discharges its statutory duties, this recommendation links to the following Corporate Priorities for Peterborough City Council:

#### *Environment*

Carbon Impact Assessment completed. The outcome of this change is likely to have an neither neutral or positive carbon impact. Impact cannot be certain or quantified at this early stage, however as the project develops opportunities to benchmark any changes will be monitored.

Below are the key points from the Carbon Impact Assessment approved by the Transport and Environment Team:

- 'The Programme aims to improve the processes and systems supporting the services mentioned above which will include the replacement of the existing systems (Capita One), hosted on physical servers in the councils Datacentres, with a cloud-based solution. This will have a positive effect on the Councils energy utilisation, once Capita One has been de-commissioned.
- Statement on any waste - Decommissioned servers will be recycled.'

#### *Prevention, Independence & Resilience*

Effective sharing of information between Education Services, Health and Social Care will support the council's aim to act as a 'corporate parent' for its most vulnerable children and young people as well as providing a single view of the child for all children in Peterborough in order to best support them. Similarly, early intervention for children and young people will support the council's aim to improve attainment in line with the national average.

#### *Sustainable Future City Council*

- *How we Work*

By freeing up staff time from manual data entry and admin task, they will be able to provide a higher quality service to Peterborough residents.

- *How we Serve*

The availability of Parent, School and Setting portals as well as traditional means of communication will improve communication with the communities we serve based on their needs rather than our structures. With 24-hour access to information parents and young people will be able to self-serve at a time convenient to them as well as increasing transparency.

#### **4. CONSULTATION**

- 4.1 The programme was initiated by the joint Director for Education at the time, who chaired the Education Systems Programme Board in consultation with the Education management team and representatives of IT and Digital Services, BI, Procurement, Finance and Legal. Since the decoupling of the two councils, a new Programme Manager has been appointed who will establish a new Board to include the Interim Director of Education and Heads of Service as required.

#### **5. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT**

- 5.1 The anticipated outcome is the award of the contract to Liquidlogic.

#### **6. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 6.1 PCC currently use different systems and processes to meet their statutory obligations for Education, including Capita One, Access Group Synergy and NCC Wizard. The move to Liquidlogic would put the child record in a single system across the Education service, reducing the risks around data being in more than one place. In addition, the database is shared with the Children's Social Care system, improving the opportunities to have a single view of the child.

The proposed solution offers advanced technical solutions including two-way digital engagement for schools/providers, professionals and parents.

#### **7. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 7.1 Do nothing: this would leave the Education services using existing systems, with the limitations described above. This option has been rejected because:
- The opportunity to have a single view of the child would be missed and the potential for reducing administrative burdens
  - An integrated single new system can improve safeguarding through appropriate information sharing
  - A new system will remove data duplication and reduce the risk of data protection incidents
  - The current contract cannot be extended indefinitely
  - The current system is not cloud-based, incurring significant additional server-associated costs.
  - The net savings from introducing the new system are already built into the MTFs from 24/25 and this saving would be at risk if the new system is not implemented. These savings are based solely on the software itself and do not include the other benefits that will be achieved by the introduction of the new system.

#### **8. IMPLICATIONS**

##### **Financial Implications**

- 8.1 The proposed contract will run for 5 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years. The supplier has offered a single annual service charge with no initial implementation charges.

The charges are expected to increase by the CPI each year from Year 2, assumed to be 5%. This gives a total spend of £715,519 (VAT not included) over the five years of the contract or £1,047,605 if extended to seven years.

The PCC capital/revenue spend is phased as follows:

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Funding stream	Capital	Revenue	Revenue	Revenue	Revenue	Revenue	Revenue
Cost (£)	141,101	133,272	139,936	146,932	154,279	161,993	170,092

These costs are funded from existing revenue and approved capital budgets. The Year 1 charges are a revenue cost but are to be funded from the Transformation reserve allocated to this capital project. Future revenue costs are covered by the existing Education software budget in revenue.

### **Legal Implications**

- 8.2 The procurement has been conducted in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations (PCR) 2015.

A direct award has been conducted in accordance with the Crown Commercial Service's Vertical Application Solutions' Framework Agreement RM6259.

### **Equalities Implications**

- 8.3 Compliance with the Council's framework for Equality Impact Assessment in order to assess effects that this project may have on groups or individuals in respect to the equality categories.

### **Carbon Impact Assessment**

- 8.4 Carbon Impact Assessment completed and outcome shared within section 3 – Corporate Priorities – Environment.

## **9. DECLARATIONS / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS GRANTED**

- 9.1 *None.*

## **10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

- 10.1 *None.*

## **11. APPENDICES**

- 11.1 *None.*