

Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Community & Corporate Services

***Tuesday, 14 May 2024 at 3.00 pm or on the rise of Cabinet
whichever is later.***

Room 1 - County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND

If you wish to view proceedings, please click on this [Live Stream Link](#).
However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective at the end of the working day on 21 May 2024 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public



Martin Reeves
Chief Executive

May 2024

Committee Officer: ***committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk***

Note: *Date of next meeting: 18 June 2024 (if required)*

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. Declarations of Interest

See guidance below.

2. Questions from County Councillors

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. Petitions and Public Address

Members of the public who wish to speak at this meeting can attend the meeting in person or 'virtually' through an online connection.

Requests to speak must be submitted by no later than 9am four working days before the meeting. Requests to speak should be sent to committeesdemocraticservices@oxfordshire.gov.uk .

If you are speaking 'virtually', you may submit a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails, then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9 am 2 working days before the meeting. Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

EXEMPT ITEM

In the event that any Member or Officer wishes to discuss the information set out in the appendix to Agenda Item 4, the Cabinet Member will be invited to resolve to exclude the public for the consideration of the appendix by passing a resolution in the following terms:

"that the public be excluded during the consideration of the appendix since it is likely that if they were present during that discussion there would be a disclosure of "exempt" information as described in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 and specified below the item in the Agenda".

NOTE: The report does not contain exempt information and is available to the public

THE APPENDIX TO THE ITEM NAMED HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC AND SHOULD BE REGARDED AS 'CONFIDENTIAL' BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS ENTITLED TO RECEIVE THEM.

4. Re procurement of CCaaS platform (Pages 1 - 10)

Cabinet Member: Corporate & Community Services

Forward Plan Ref: 2024/087

Contact: Clare Martin, Quality & Performance Manager

clare.martin@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Report by Executive Director of Resources

The information in this case is exempt in that it falls within the following prescribed categories:

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

and since it is considered that, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The appendix containing exempt information under the above paragraph is attached.

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to

- a) **Authorise the procurement and delivery of a suitable supplier to provide the council a Contact Centre as a Service (CCaaS) platform that can expand and contract as necessary; and**
- b) **Delegate authority to the Director IT Innovation and Digital Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer and the Head of Procurement, to award a contract following the conclusion of the procurement exercise.**

Councillors declaring interests

General duty

You must declare any disclosable pecuniary interests when the meeting reaches the item on the agenda headed 'Declarations of Interest' or as soon as it becomes apparent to you.

What is a disclosable pecuniary interest?

Disclosable pecuniary interests relate to your employment; sponsorship (i.e. payment for expenses incurred by you in carrying out your duties as a councillor or towards your election expenses); contracts; land in the Council's area; licenses for land in the Council's area; corporate tenancies; and securities. These declarations must be recorded in each councillor's Register of Interests which is publicly available on the Council's website.

Disclosable pecuniary interests that must be declared are not only those of the member her or himself but also those member's spouse, civil partner or person they are living with as husband or wife or as if they were civil partners.

Declaring an interest

Where any matter disclosed in your Register of Interests is being considered at a meeting, you must declare that you have an interest. You should also disclose the nature as well as the existence of the interest. If you have a disclosable pecuniary interest, after having declared it at the meeting you must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Members' Code of Conduct and public perception

Even if you do not have a disclosable pecuniary interest in a matter, the Members' Code of Conduct says that a member 'must serve only the public interest and must never improperly confer an advantage or disadvantage on any person including yourself' and that 'you must not place yourself in situations where your honesty and integrity may be questioned'.

Members Code – Other registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to the financial interest or wellbeing of one of your other registerable interests then you must declare an interest. You must not participate in discussion or voting on the item and you must withdraw from the meeting whilst the matter is discussed.

Wellbeing can be described as a condition of contentedness, healthiness and happiness; anything that could be said to affect a person's quality of life, either positively or negatively, is likely to affect their wellbeing.

Other registrable interests include:

- a) Any unpaid directorships

- b) Any body of which you are a member or are in a position of general control or management and to which you are nominated or appointed by your authority.
- c) Any body (i) exercising functions of a public nature (ii) directed to charitable purposes or (iii) one of whose principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union) of which you are a member or in a position of general control or management.

Members Code – Non-registrable interests

Where a matter arises at a meeting which directly relates to your financial interest or wellbeing (and does not fall under disclosable pecuniary interests), or the financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate, you must declare the interest.

Where a matter arises at a meeting which affects your own financial interest or wellbeing, a financial interest or wellbeing of a relative or close associate or a financial interest or wellbeing of a body included under other registrable interests, then you must declare the interest.

In order to determine whether you can remain in the meeting after disclosing your interest the following test should be applied:

Where a matter affects the financial interest or well-being:

- a) to a greater extent than it affects the financial interests of the majority of inhabitants of the ward affected by the decision and;
- b) a reasonable member of the public knowing all the facts would believe that it would affect your view of the wider public interest.

You may speak on the matter only if members of the public are also allowed to speak at the meeting. Otherwise you must not take part in any discussion or vote on the matter and must not remain in the room unless you have been granted a dispensation.

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Divisions Affected – County Wide

CABINET MEMBER for COMMUNITY & CORPORATE SERVICES

14 May 2024

CCaaS Procurement

Report by Executive Director of Resources

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to**
 - a) Authorise the procurement and delivery of a suitable supplier to provide the council a Contact Centre as a Service (CCaaS) platform that can expand and contract as necessary; and
 - b) Delegate authority to the Director IT Innovation and Digital Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal and Deputy Monitoring Officer and the Head of Procurement, to award a contract following the conclusion of the procurement exercise.

Executive Summary

2. In the financial year to April 2023, our Customer Service Centre handled 11,412 walk-ins at County Hall, 125,046 inbound and 68,841 outbound calls, 131,991 emails and 15,346 customer facing queries. The outbound calls are made manually, i.e. not using an auto-dialler, to follow up on customer queries.
3. The council uses a call management system, also known as a CCaaS platform, that is used currently by Customer Service Centre (CSC), MASH and ICT, to manage the flow of calls from members of the public (or OCC staff) to the appropriate team within the council. For the most part, the methods of communication are restricted to either voice or email. A CCaaS platform is fundamental to the efficient and effective running of a contact centre.
4. The existing cloud solution requires review and improvement and our configuration, dashboards and reporting are limited. In consequence, there are poor data outputs which in turn hinders good business decision making and the business improvements that could be implemented.
5. In line with the emerging Customer Experience Strategy, there is a desire to provide more communication channels which must be accessed in a single software interface. This means that, in future, the members of the public will

have many more methods of communicating with the council, and the council will have a solution that will

- (a) allow new and improved ways of getting calls and contacts to the right team first time/every time,
 - (b) Improve response times and efficiency,
 - (c) to allow staff to communicate using the same channel that the call or contact is received,
 - (d) improved reporting,
 - (e) improved holistic view of the customer,
 - (f) improved dashboards,
 - (g) effective management of calls and contacts,
 - (h) effective decision making,
 - (i) improvements to the service offered by Microsoft Teams.
 - (j) Enable first contact resolution
 - (k) support the desire to 'Improve the Customer Experience'
6. The existing contract is due to expire on 15 November 2024. The transition from existing commercial arrangements may require both contracts to run in parallel to ensure operational continuity for the progression of Customer enquiries and this will be subject to further consideration by officers. The critical nature of the solution also drives the procurement strategy of obtaining a Contract of reasonable duration, with options for extension. i.e. repeated disruption of re-tendering is minimised whilst changes in business operations and/or technology can be considered through break clauses.
7. For clarity, the importance to not only the CSC, MASH and ICT of a CCaaS solution cannot be underestimated. The telephony platform is the primary route into the council for our customers and there is an imperative to have an operational and fully fledged way of customers contacting the council through a single platform.
8. This project is governed under the 'Improving the Customer Experience' transformation programme and ultimately, the CCaaS product will be one vital cog in the wider customer model that is being developed that will enable Oxfordshire County Council to deliver more innovative solutions leading to wider change across the organisation.

Exempt Information

9. There is exempt information relating to this report where disclosure would distort the proper process of open competition and would prejudice the position of the authority in the process of the transaction and the Council's standing generally in relation to such transactions in future, to the detriment of the Council's ability properly to discharge its fiduciary and other duties as a public authority.

Summary of scope of a CCaaS Procurement

10. It is likely to involve an IT software solution from a third party, that is Cross-Cutting and impacting a range of internal service users and external customers

who contact the Council. This contract must be able to be flexed up and down as the Council's needs change over the course of the contract.

11. The solution must be able to provide Customer Service Assistants (CSAs) with all the information that is required when handling a case, regardless of the channel used to initiate the call.
12. The solution must be compatible with the Council's:
 - current telephony infrastructure and integrate with Microsoft Teams, M365, Outlook, Microsoft Co-Pilot, and other Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies;
 - desktop provision;
 - adherence with all industry standard headsets and call related devices;
 - existing Pay360 Call Secure software to take card payments at the outset of the contract, but as this may change over time, it must also be compatible with other standard PAY applications and
 - other products that emerge over time.
13. The solution must be capable of delivering an Omni-channel function whereby the ability to handle contacts from multiple channels including telephony, email, web chat, video call, SMS, AI, or social media is handled within a single platform with enhanced reporting. This level of functionality or 'channel choice' will need to be aligned to the current work being undertaken on the production of a future customer operating model and may expand / retract.
14. The solution will include technologies that allows straight forward configuration using voice recognition software that can use "flagged" words to immediately route the call to the correct officer or specialist service and be capable of handling simple and repetitive requests without human intervention.
15. The supplier must provide a comprehensive training package which is available for the duration of the contract to support the development of a changing workforce within the service.
16. To allow forecasting of contact demand and scheduling of appropriately skilled staff, a workforce management application is desirable.
17. The solution must:
 - provide robust disaster recovery and business continuity processes and measures;
 - meet the Council's security and data protection requirements;
 - meet the ICT Strategy which has a "cloud first" principle for hosting of the solution and any related data.
18. The above aspects of scope represent a high-level aspiration and does not provide a comprehensive list of the requirements. Detailed specifications will be delivered in the Procurement exercise to follow, after the approval of the Cabinet member has been granted.

Corporate Policies and Priorities

19. Vision: Our customer service is your experience ... Your satisfaction is our success...
20. Key Principles from the draft Customer Experience Strategy
 - Having a 'customer first' approach across the Council
 - Having a better understanding of our customers and what they want from us
 - Improving customers' access to our services
 - Designing an excellent Customer Experience from beginning to end
 - Listening to, and learning from customer feedback
21. The Local Digital Declaration signed by the Council on 6th March 2020 supports the government initiative as a commitment to:
 - design services that best meet the needs of citizens
 - challenge the technology market to offer the flexible tools and services
 - protect citizens' privacy and security
 - deliver better value for money.

Financial Implications

22. The existing contract value is circa £180,000 per annum. The Total Cost of ownership for the full lifetime for a contract term of up to seven years is £1,260,000 which would be subject to several breakout clauses, for example - at one, three and five years.
23. As part of the procurement, we will push to reduce these costs to get best value for the council, while maintaining all the requirements and flexibility.
24. Budget provision for the new solution has been forecast from Capital Budget to cover implementation/transition costs and ongoing service costs will be taken from operational budgets that are already included in the medium-term forecast.

Comments checked by:

Name, Title, email (Finance) – Prem Salhan, Interim Strategic Finance Business Partner, prem.salhan@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Legal and Procurement Implications

25. The value of the contract is such that the procurement will need to be undertaken in accordance with the council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR).
26. It is intended that, in order to comply with the PCR, the procurement will be undertaken either by way of an open competition or a mini-competition under a PCR compliant framework agreement. This selection of route to market is

determined by best fit, best value, least risk, and ease/timing of delivery. An open approach offers the maximum access to providers operating in this market sector, commercial flexibility, and associated terms.

27. Legal Services will prepare the necessary contract documentation.
28. The council will be relying on its general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 in procuring and contracting for this service

Comments checked by:

Name, Title, email (Legal) Jayne Pringle, Head of Law & LBP (Contracts & Conveyancing), legal.contractsteam@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Name, Title, email (Procurement) Martin Hall, ICT Category Manager (Provision Cycle Hub), martin.hall@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staff Implications

29. There will be no changes to the staff complement that would be impacted by this procurement at the onset of the contract.
30. However, the solution will provide a toolset fundamental to the delivery of the Customer Service Centre to provide improvements and enhanced ways to communicate with our customers and residents of Oxfordshire to manage transactions and Council business. This may deliver organisational resource benefits.

Equality & Inclusion Implications

31. Stated in our Fairer priorities in the Strategic Plan 2023-2025 - Inequality commitment - We will support digital inclusion initiatives that give our residents the skills and connectivity to access our services and provide alternative options for those who cannot access our services digitally.
32. Despite the increasing digitisation of services, a significant portion of our community still faces barriers to accessing online resources and support. Whether due to lack of internet connectivity, limited digital literacy, or financial constraints, digital exclusion exacerbates inequalities and undermines efforts to provide inclusive service delivery. We aim to ensure everyone has the same access and consistent service when contacting us whether they are using technology or not and our recent digital inclusion strategy reflects this.

Sustainability Implications

33. The procurement will be run in line with the Council's Social Value Policy.

Risk Management

34. The CSC enables the customer (be they residents, businesses, or visitors of Oxfordshire) to access several Council services, many of which are statutory in nature, such as the initial gateway to Adult Social Care. The absence of a CCaaS platform will hinder customers to access these services in a timely and efficient manner. We are seeking to mitigate this risk, as far as possible, by considering a number of options which will offer either a full service from the outset or a partial service for a limited period of time while additional functionality is configured and delivered in a scheduled approach. The former option is the preferred.

Lorna Baxter, Executive Director of Resources

Annex: Appendix 1 – Financial analysis (Exempt)

Background papers: Nil.

Contact Officer: Tim Spiers
Director Digital and IT
07394204244
Tim.spiers@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Mark Haynes
Director of Customer and Culture
07586479051
Mark.haynes@oxfordshire.gov.uk

May 2024

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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