

Divisions Affected – N/A

CABINET MEMBER FOR COMMUNITY & CORPORATE SERVICES

21 November 2023

Zscaler Internet and Application Security and Access

Report by Director of Finance

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to**
 - a) authorise the procurement of a suitable supplier to provide Zscaler Cyber Protection; and
 - b) delegate authority to the Director IT Innovation and Digital Services to award either a 1- or 3-year contract following the conclusion of the procurement exercise.

Executive Summary

2. As part of the IT health check and subsequent strategy developed in 2019 (and signed off by cabinet), the council uses Zscaler ZIA and ZPA to allow officers to securely access the internet, OCC applications and internal resource.
3. In the 2019-24 IT strategy OCC committed to using Zero Trust as the preferred method for connectivity allowing the removal of the Wide Area Network and to use cheaper but faster internet services. Zscaler is the enabler that allowed OCC to achieve this.
4. The 5-year contract will expire on 26 December 2023. The key decision required is to proceed with a new contract for 1 or 3 years.
5. A shorter contract is being planned as the technology that Zscaler provide is becoming more mature and other vendors have entered the market.
6. Following an independent Gartner review, an exercise will be undertaken to consider changing vendor for a more cost-effective contract. However, if this cannot be secured then the decision will be made to procure for 3 years.

Summary of scope of Zscaler

7. Zscaler ZIA is installed on every OCC end user device (Laptops and Desktops) and directs all internet traffic to the Zscaler cloud. The cloud platform then checks the traffic, ensures it's secure, not going to anything that could pose a cyber security risk or any site that OCC deem inappropriate. It also scans traffic returning to the device and ensures its does not contain malicious code.

8. Zscaler ZPA is also installed on every end user device and allows the officer to connect to only the applications they are entitled to. This removes the risk of lateral movement on the network which hackers or bad actors use to compromise traditional environments.
9. The use of ZIA and ZPA has increased OCC's security posture and mitigates many cyber security issues faced by traditional environments and is fast becoming the industry standard.

Financial Implications

10. The cost of a three-year contract would be circa £1.4m and a single year £0.5m which is included in the medium-term financial plan for the ITID Service cost centre R41000.

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Legal Implications

11. The value of the contract (whether for 1 or 3 years) 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.
12. It is intended that, in order to comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, the procurement will be undertaken by way of a mini-competition under a framework agreement established by Kent Commercial Services.
13. Legal Services will prepare the necessary contract documentation.

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November 2023