

**Community Wealth Building  
Town Hall  
Upper Street, Islington N1 2UD**

**Key Decision Report: Corporate Director Community Wealth Building**

<b>Officer Key Decision</b>	<b>Date: 14<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b>	<b>Ward(s): All</b>
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**The appendix to this report is not for publication**

**SUBJECT: Contract Award for a new IT System for Planning and Development**

**1. Synopsis**

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the award of a contract in respect of an IT System for Planning and Development.
- 1.2 The Planning and Development Division including Development Management and Building Control (the 'Service') require an integrated system to:
  - ensure relevant statutory requirements are met;
  - enable greater efficiencies for the Service;
  - deliver agreed financial savings in 2023/24;
  - facilitate an improved service to residents and applicants to be provided; and
  - allow for mobile working, essential to officers who are working out on site.

**2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 To approve the contract award of a new IT System for Planning and Development to Agile Applications Limited as a call-off contract pursuant to the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) G-Cloud 12 (RM1557) framework agreement from 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022 for a period of 24 months with the option to extend for a further two periods of 12 months each.



### **3. Date the decision is to be taken:**

14th September 2022

### **4. Background:**

#### **4.1 Nature of the Service**

4.1.1 Planning and Development require an IT applications service to support the delivery of the Development Management, Planning Enforcement and Building Control statutory functions. An integrated online service is required to handle all the planning and building control applications for the council. This must be capable of adapting to legislative and procedural changes to the Development Management and Building Control processes.

4.1.2 The approved procurement strategy set out the reasons why the Service need to award an online service with software as a service. Those reasons included business continuity, system functionality, performance dashboard information, mobile working, user self-service, reduced reliance on on-site servers and £150,000 of savings in 2023-4.

4.1.3 The Service deals with over 4,000 planning applications and applications for pre-application advice each year, and each application creates potential for multiple and complex interactions with applicants and consultees. Allowing applicants to self-serve by uploading information, make online payments and respond to officer enquiries would result in efficiencies. The implementation of the new system will be undertaken in parallel with organisational changed and service improvement within both the Development Management and Building Control Services.

#### **4.2 Estimated Value**

4.2.1 The value of the contract is £285k over the four-year period of the contract. This figure includes implementation fees, training, professional services, integration with other council systems, tests to ensure the new system is implemented correctly and meets the users' requirements, and licencing/subscription fees for maintenance and support

4.2.2 Change, potential enhancements, and migration contingency has been considered, consequently the total cost value could approach key decision limit.

4.2.3 Moving from two on-premises supported systems to cloud hosted systems will increase hosting, support and maintenance costs, but the overall total cost of ownership will decrease, as the council will not need to maintain on-premises servers, databases, software and associated in-house technical and support resources to maintain these systems. Hosted and cloud services will also provide enhanced resilience, performance, and accessibility of systems.



### 4.3. **Timetable**

- 4.3.1 The current support and maintenance contracts expire at the end of March 2023. It is proposed to use quarter 3/4 of financial year 2022/23 for implementation. This will enable the delivery of the required savings in 2023-4.

### 4.4 **Options appraisal**

- 4.4.1 An options appraisal was included within the procurement strategy, which set out the relative merits of doing nothing, insourcing, carrying out a competitive tender and procuring a call-off contract pursuant to an established framework agreement.
- 4.4.2 The decision was taken to procure using the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) G-Cloud 12 framework as this was the most timely, efficient and cost-effective route to market identified in this case but this requires an award of contract by 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

### 4.5 **Key Considerations**

- 4.5.1 Market rates in the IT industry are on average above the London Living Wage and the appointed contractor will be required to confirm that anyone working on the contract will be paid the London Living Wage.
- 4.5.2 The recommended provider will contribute to social value in the borough over the duration of the contract. The exact nature of this will be discussed in partnership with the provider as part of contract finalisation.
- 4.5.3 The council's IT applications roadmap is to move away from maintaining on premise IT infrastructure in favour of systems that are hosted by suppliers and/or provided as a service that includes system hosting known as SaaS (Software as a Service).
- 4.5.4 There is no anticipated TUPE, pensions and staffing implications, arising directly from the award of this new contract.

### 4.6 **Evaluation**

- 4.6.1 The procurement was undertaken in accordance with the G-Cloud 12 framework agreement. Bidders were assessed using the MEAT evaluation criteria (most economically advantageous tender) which allows the tendering body to consider best functional fit, quality and whole life cost accordingly. The evaluation was undertaken by council officers. No conflicts of interests were declared by the evaluation panel.
- 4.6.2 The criteria were outlined within the procurement strategy. The criteria include:
- Whole life cost - the cost effectiveness, price and running costs of the service.
  - Technical merit and functional fit - coverage, network capacity and performance as specified in relevant service levels.



- After sales service management - help desk, account management function and assurance of supply of a range of services including social value.
- Non-functional characteristics - for example, supplier terms, help with onboarding and offboarding, scalability, reliability and automatic disaster recovery.

4.6.3 The recommended provider offers the best functionality, security and strategic fit for the council when assessed against the criteria. The recommended provider will deliver extra efficiencies and process benefits that the Service needs over the contract period:

- Enable automation of internal processes;
- Deliver an enhanced online digital offer to residents;
- Quicker processing more cost effectively for the community; and
- Support enhanced case management, business intelligence and document management solutions.

## 4.7 **Business Risks**

4.7.1 The key business risks associated with this award and implementation include:

- the need to have an effective system in place to deliver the Service requirements;
- Ensuring that there is no disruption to service users and that the risk of a statutory challenge due to the non-availability of planning applications is managed;
- prioritisation of specialist resources for implementation;
- ensuring ongoing business and legislative needs are satisfied;
- collating and migrating all necessary data between systems;
- Compliance with the agreed timetable to deliver service efficiencies and savings;
- Ongoing compliance with legislation including Building Control Safety Act 2022.

4.7.2 The project team has put in place mechanisms for the continuous monitoring and management of key business risks and will continue to ensure effective management of contract performance when the future contract is determined.

4.8 The Employment Relations Act 1999 (Blacklist) Regulations 2010 explicitly prohibit the compilation, use, sale or supply of blacklists containing details of trade union members and their activities. Following a motion to full Council on 26 March 2013, all tenderers will be required to complete an anti-blacklisting declaration. Where an organisation is unable to declare that they have never blacklisted, they will be required to evidence that they have 'self-cleansed'. The Council will not award a contract to organisations found guilty of blacklisting unless they have demonstrated 'self-cleansing' and taken adequate measures to remedy past actions and prevent re-occurrences.

4.9 The following relevant information is required:

Relevant information	Information/section in report
1 Nature of the service	An IT application service is required to handle all planning and building control applications for the council and provide a statutory public register of these applications. See Paragraph 4.1.
2 Estimated value	£285k in total for a 2+1+1 year contract. Change, potential enhancements, and migration contingency allowed to take overall cost close to key decision limit. See Paragraph 4.2.
3 Timetable	New call-off contract pursuant to G-Cloud 12 framework agreement commencing 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2022. See paragraph 4.3.
4 Options appraisal	As outlined within the report. See Paragraph 4.4.
5 Key Considerations	As outlined within the report. See Paragraph 4.5.
6 Award criteria	As per G-Cloud 12. See Paragraph 4.6
7 Any business risks associated with entering the contract	As outlined within the report. See Paragraph 4.7.
8 Any other relevant financial, legal or other considerations.	As outlined within the report. See Paragraph 5.

## 5. Implications

### 5.1 Financial implications:

As part of the overall council cloud first strategy, this project will be moving the current planning and building control applications from on-premises servers to a single cloud-based application.

This migration will be supported by a transformation budget of £410k that will pay for the project costs and first year's maintenance.

The ongoing costs of the new single managed service will be invoiced to IDS and be funded by combining the existing IDS and CWB budgets to held by CWB against which IDS will recover these contract and other related costs.

As requested at CPB an annex, Annex 2, with more detailed cost estimates has been added.



## **5.2 Legal Implications:**

This report seeks approval for the award of this contract to Agile. The proposed contract will be for an initial period of two years with an option to extend by two additional periods of one year each, so the maximum contract term is four (4) years.

The estimated total contract value over the maximum term of four years is £285k.

The procurement strategy has used the Crown Commercial Service G-Cloud 12 Framework Agreement which provides cloud-based computing services such as hosting, software and cloud support. This framework was procured in compliance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (as amended) (PCR). The duration of the framework is from 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 until 27<sup>th</sup> September 2022. It is available for use by Islington Council.

The procurement route of using the Crown Commercial Service G-Cloud 12 Framework Agreement is a compliant route to market. The contract may be awarded to Agile in accordance with the rules set down in the Framework Agreement subject to the tender providing value for money for the council.

## **5.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:**

This supports the council's Circular Economy Action Plan and commitment to net zero carbon, moving away from purchasing IT hardware and having to dispose of physical kit when it is end of life, and reducing its use of power to run technical hardware onsite by opting for hosted solutions.

## **5.4 Equality Impact Assessment Tool:**

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

An EQIA Equality Impact Assessment screening process has been completed and as the Assure system is a back-office system it will have little impact on residents. The screening tool associated with a review with our online operations team accessibility colleagues verified that no further adjustment beyond the normal council accessibility standards (ie. WCAG 2.1 AAA accessibility standards for systems and the output of those systems) would be needed.



The contract award to Agile will include this standard and be implemented as part of this contract award.

**6. Reasons for the decision:**

- 6.1 The procurement was undertaken in accordance with the Crown Commercial Services G-Cloud 12 framework agreement. **Agile Applications Limited** have been assessed as offering the most economically advantageous tender to the Council.

**7. Record of the decision:**

- 7.1 I have today decided to take the decision set out in section 2 of this report for the reasons set out above.

**Signed by:**

Stephen Biggs  
Corporate Director – Community Wealth  
Building

Date:

**Appendices**

- Exempt appendix – commercially sensitive

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