

Report to Cabinet
14 October 2020
Report of Director of strategy, communications and culture
Subject IT Contract for Digital Development Platform (Outsystems)

Item

11

KEY DECISION

Purpose

To seek approval for the award of a new contract for the provision of a digital development platform to replace the current LGSS service

Recommendation

To delegate authority to the director of strategy and culture in consultation with the cabinet member for resources to award a contract for the ongoing provision of a digital development platform, ensuring continuation of existing services and the opportunity to expand and build on the council's digital strategy.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority People living well

Financial implications

There is an existing agreement with LGSS, dating from the Partnering and Delegation Agreement (PDA) period, permitting the council shared use of the LGSS Outsystems platform. This costs the council £48,100 for the period 1/4/2020 to 31/3/2021. A Norwich City council specific platform has been estimated at £158,000 pa for a period of 4 years.

Annual costs for the new environment will be funded from existing budgets, £110,000 from the IT Transformation budget and £48,000 offset against income received from Norfolk County Council to manage parking permits and enforcement on their behalf.

The new agreement includes exclusive access to the Outsystems expert teams and library of existing solutions (and all future solutions) at no additional cost.

Ward/s: All Wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Kendrick - Resources

Contact officers

Nikki Rotsos, Director of strategy and culture 01603 212211

Paul Gooch, Contract support and applications manager, IT Services 01603 987580

Background documents

None

Report

Background

- 1) The Outsystems platform was originally selected as a strategic choice of digital development platform by LGSS while the Partnering and Delegation Agreement (PDA) with the council was still in place.
- 2) Subsequently, the council chose to begin development of our own digital solutions using the LGSS platform.
- 3) This development activity was carried out by Norwich-based IT Services staff who, following the termination of the PDA, have since transferred into the council.
- 4) The digital solutions already in productive use by the council are the online parking permit application and renewal process, including the 'virtual' permit facility, as well as the Food and Safety Team's hygiene inspections app.
- 5) The online permit application and renewal process is a fully digital end-to-end process including automated checking of entitlement and up-front payment, with the only intervention from council staff being the final approval of the application
- 6) The inspection app allows the team to complete their inspection and submit the report all from their tablet devices whilst on the food premises. This results in the inspection outcome being update on back-office systems automatically and a fully compiled report generated, ready for the inspector's final approval before being issued.
- 7) Multiple opportunities for transformation and efficiencies have already been identified both to support the council's existing transformational ambitions and as part of the evaluation of the services returning to the council from the Norse joint venture companies. Examples of these include:
 - a. Developing a 'Golden Record' of customer details to allow staff to have access to complete, accurate and up to date information about customers at all times
 - b. Reliable and secure access to systems, data and processes whether in the office, at home or working 'in the field'.
 - c. Automated checking and system updating for changes in circumstances, especially a change of address.
 - d.
- 8) A combination of the termination of the PDA and the scheduled disintegration of LGSS has resulted in a situation whereby the existing Outsystems platform will cease to be available to the council, either to continue using these for existing services or to develop new digital solutions.
- 9) The one-year agreement with LGSS allows continued shared access to and use of the LGSS Outsystems platform until the end of March 2021.

- 10) There is no option to continue using the LGSS platform after that date. An alternative is required to ensure existing services continue to be available to citizens and staff, and that the council has digital development capacity going forward.
- 11) A solutions architect has been engaged to evaluate the digital development options available to the council and has concluded that Outsystems continues to be the most suitable option available.
- 12) The architect has highlighted that establishing a specific Outsystems platform for the council:
 - a. Addresses the need to ensure existing services continue to be available to staff and customers without interruption
 - b. Reduces the complexity and risk of the exit from the LGSS platform
 - c. Increases the opportunities for new solutions to be developed quickly
 - d. Ensures exclusive ownership and management a digital development platform for the council
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Procurement Process

- 14) The expiry of the current agreement with LGSS requires an alternative solution.
- 15) It is possible to use the government's G-Cloud, online procurement framework to set up the council's own dedicated platform and associated items.

Timescales

- 16) Delegated authority will allow the new procurement to replace the current agreement with LGSS, due to expire at the end of March 2021.
- 17) Establishing the new platform and migrating existing developments from there to the new platform will be completed within a timescale of 2-3 months
- 18) The migration, assuming delegated approval is granted, will be scheduled to be complete by the end of December 2020

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	14 October 2020
Director / Head of service	Nikki Rotsos, Director of strategy and culture
Report subject:	IT contract renewal – Outsystems (digital development platform)
Date assessed:	6 October 2020

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Increase in support costs
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Online permit renewal/application process continues. Opportunity for more and similar developments
ICT services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Consistency of platform for ongoing development
Economic development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment

Positive

Any alternative solution would prove more costly both in terms of actual cost (software, re-training, re-writing existing solutions) and the diversion from continued development arising from the choice of an alternative. By remaining with Outsystems, the risk associated with the change and potentially interruption to existing services, is avoided.

We will be able to take copies of the other code stored in the existing LGSS platform, avoiding the need to generate these ourselves.

In engaging directly with the supplier, we have direct access to experts, forums and the wider (thriving) user community, previously only available via LGSS.

The time and effort already invested in becoming experts in the use of the software will not have been wasted. The knowledge and experience will be used to increase the rate of new developments, delivering more and better solutions for the council

Negative

Overall, this will result in an increased cost to the authority for the provision of the same platform/software, but there is little alternative given the short term of the arrangement with LGSS and unavoidable cessation of the existing service. We have been offered the newest pricing options from the supplier that are more favourable than those currently being paid to them by LGSS

Neutral

Issues

None