

Report to:	Cabinet	Date: 05 March 2025
Subject:	Unit 4 System Upgrade & Transformation Strategic Partner Contract Award	
Report of	Cabinet Member for Finance and Transformation	

Summary

1. This report is a follow on from the Unit 4 Contract Award Report approved by Cabinet on 25 September 2025 and Unit 4 System Upgrade & Transformation Report approved by Cabinet on 12 February 2025.
2. As stated in the September Cabinet report, the move to a new cloud-based Unit 4 ERP Financial Management System is a key part of the Council's transformation and improvement journey, building on improvements already made through the adoption of Let's do it principles and implementation of the digital strategy, including the roll-out of Microsoft 365 council wide, the upgrade of I-Trent and rationalisation of applications and migration. Some of the anticipated benefits will both directly support and enable the transformation of the finance service as well as providing much more efficient and effective ways of working across the whole council.
3. Following approval by Cabinet on 12 February 2025 to proceed with the full transformation delivery option required to deliver the implementation of the Unit 4 cloud-based ERP Financial Management System and the transformation programme.
4. Due to the existing system being unsupported after 2026, a key milestone will be a 'go live' date of 1 April 2026 for the new financial year 2026/27, with some of the new Unit 4 modules being implemented post 'go live'.
5. There now remains just over 12 months to undertake the design, build, testing & implementation phases, given these tight timelines a key task is to secure the immediate appointment of a Strategic Partner to provide the necessary resource and commence the activity for a successful implementation.
6. Due to the tight timelines, a Strategic Partner will be appointed through the Crown Commercial Services (CCS) G-Cloud 14 Lot 3 framework (RM1557.14), to provide the necessary specialist technical and service transformation support throughout the life of the project.
7. Following a search on the CCS G-Cloud 14 framework three suppliers were long listed.

8. In January 2025 officers held engagement sessions with the three respective suppliers, that resulted in two of the suppliers being shortlisted for evaluation.
9. The evaluation stage of the G-Cloud 14 procurement process, using the Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) criteria to select the supplier has now been completed and this report is seeking approval to award the contract to the successful supplier.

Recommendation(s)

10. Cabinet is asked to:

- Approve the award of the Strategic Partner to the successful supplier.
- Approve the one-off capital investment cost to be incepted into the capital programme, to be funded from a combination of earmarked reserves and/or capital receipts

Reasons for recommendation(s)

11. The current Financial Management System is nearing the end of its lifecycle, which limits efforts to modernise. Challenges include fragmented financial processes, reliance on manual tasks, and a lack of self-service options for staff and suppliers. There are also number of inherent risks and compliance concerns regarding the existing system alongside high reliance on manually based financial transaction activities which is affecting the efficiency of the finance service and the wider organisation.
12. As stated in the September Cabinet report, Unit 4 have informed clients that the current on-premises version of Unit 4, which the council operates will be unsupported after 2026 and therefore this creates a burning platform to change and modernise the Financial Management System, but also an opportunity to drive through financial transformation programme throughout the Council.

Alternative options considered and rejected

13. None

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Links with the Corporate Priorities:

14.

Equality Impact and Considerations:

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15.

Environmental Impact and Considerations:

16.

Assessment and Mitigation of Risk:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation

Legal Implications:

17. The recommended route is compliant with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 and the Council Contract Procedure Rules.
18. The Framework provides that all call-off contracts awarded through the framework will be for an initial period of up to 36 months, with the option to extend by up to 12 months. The Council must therefore reserve the right to extend in the initial terms of the contract, whilst noting that under Regulation 32 (6) its exercise is only available in exceptional circumstances
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Financial Implications:

19. The financial implications are set out in Part B of the agenda which is deemed to be exempt from publication.
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Appendices:

Background papers:

Please list any background documents to this report and include a hyperlink where possible.

Please include a glossary of terms, abbreviations and acronyms used in this report.

Term	Meaning