

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Richard Long TD

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

20/00119

For publication [Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]

Key decision: YES / NO

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- a) result in savings or expenditure which is significant having regard to the budget for the service or function (currently defined by the Council as in excess of £1,000,000); or
- b) be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:
 - the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;
 - significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

To award a contract to Capita ESS for 5 (3+2) years for the provision of SIMS to LA maintained schools in Kent

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to:

- (i) award a contract to Capita ESS for 5 (3+2) years for the provision of SIMS to LA maintained schools in Kent, attached as appendix A.
- (ii) Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, to take relevant actions, as necessary to implement this decision.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background

- 1.1 Every school has a management information system (MIS) that handles key attendance and performance data on its pupils. It supports the day to day running of the school and produces statutory returns throughout the school year such as the school census. Most schools manage their finance and budget within the same system.
- 1.2 The current SIMS contract has been in place since 01/04/2014, and ends on 31/03/2021, so a new contract needs to be in place for 01/04/2021.
- 1.3 Most Kent schools use SIMS, though they are free to use whatever software they like (some academy chains have adopted alternative school software).
- 1.4 The contract is solely for maintained schools, as it is a Local Authority (LA) contract. If

schools convert to academy status, they are no longer LA schools, and at that point they are obliged to move to SIMS standard pricing. For this reason, the cost per year changes due to the number of maintained schools in the LA.

- 1.5 The majority of schools on the current contract are supported and hosted by Cantium Business Solutions (previously EiS), but this is not a requirement of the contract, and is a separate contractual agreement between the school and Cantium, and is not part of this contract proposal.
- 1.6 The SIMS Management Information System from Capita ESS is the market leading schools information management system and is used by 22,000 schools.
- 2. Financial Implications
 - 2.1 The total contract value over five years, is £2,191,919.98, which is the full contract period (an initial term of 3 Years with 1 x 2-Year extension option)
- 3. Legal implications
 - 3.1 Contract award will be made using direct award against the Kent Commercial Services Y20011 framework, which is in line with the framework terms and conditions.
- 4. Equalities implications
 - 4.1 EqIA screening has indicated this to be low risk, as there is no change to the information that is recorded, the way it is recorded, or the software on which it is held

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Children’s and Young People Cabinet Committee consider the decision on (date)

The Children’s and Young People’s Cabinet Committee will consider the proposal on 15 January 2021

Stakeholder engagement took place in October and November 2019. Schools that currently use SIMS provided by the Local Authority were surveyed by the Analytics team within Strategic Commissioning.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

Resources in Kent schools are very stretched currently, and may be for the foreseeable future due to Covid-19, so it is vital that schools can be managed efficiently and smoothly. System stability is vital at a time when Kent schools are so focused on the impact of the pandemic on its pupils, to ensure children are supported and safeguarded. These systems support the accurate recording and monitoring of pupil sickness and absence.

Re-procuring with SIMS ensures ongoing system functionality and stability for Kent’s LA Maintained schools, which supports Kent to fulfil its statutory duties around education provision and safeguarding of pupils.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None

.....
signed

.....
date