

**From: Matt Dunkley CBE, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education**

**To: Sue Chandler, Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services**

**Subject: Liquidlogic Contract for Integrated Children's Services and Disabled Children's Services**

**Decision Number and Title: 20/00123 - Liquidlogic Contract for Integrated Children's Services and Disabled Children's Services**

Key decision; yes– for the reasons that:

- It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions
- It involves expenditure or savings of maximum £1m – including if over several phases

Classification: **Unrestricted version**

**Past Pathway of report:** N/A

**Future Pathway of report:** Cabinet Member decision

**Electoral Division:** list the electoral division/s, and local Member/s affected:

*Identify Members using this link:*

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/mgMemberIndex.aspx?bcr=1>

**Summary:**

Liquidlogic's LCS system (named Liberi in Kent), was implemented in 2013 and went live in December 2013. This replaced the previous Capita ICS system. The Liquidlogic suite has been added to extensively over the last six years and is used across all of children's social care, intensive early help, and disabled children's services.

The contract end date of the current contract is March 2021, so a new contract needs to be in place for April 2021.

It is recommended that Kent re-procures Liquidlogic's systems for Integrated Children's Services with a contract end date in line with the end date for the Mosaic system in Adults (to support a coordinated approach to future contract awards), and continues to host the system internally, but moves the hosting to the Microsoft Azure cloud, in line with KCC's cloud-first ICT strategy.

Re-procuring with Liquidlogic ensures ongoing system functionality and stability, which supports Kent to fulfil its statutory safeguarding duties.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services is asked to take the proposed decision to:

- I. award a contract to Liquidlogic for 7 (5+1+1) years for the provision of case management systems within Integrated Children's Services and Disabled Children's Services.
- II. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, to take relevant actions, as necessary to implement this decision.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Liquidlogic's LCS system (named Liberi in Kent), was implemented in 2013 and went live in December 2013. This replaced the previous Capita ICS system. The Liquidlogic suite has been added to extensively over the last six years and is used across all of children's social care, intensive early help, and disabled children's services, to include EHM and LAS.
- 1.2 The contract end date of the current contract is March 2021, so a new contract needs to be in place for April 2021. It is vital that the service has a system that will meet all of its needs and continue to deliver the ability to record high quality case records to inform decision making in our work with children and safeguarding, and fulfil a key safeguarding function.
- 1.3 In May 2020, Members of CYPE Cabinet Committee were consulted prior to the Cabinet Member for Integrated Services taking decision 20/00036, which agreed a contract extension to the current contract for the Liquidlogic system to supports practice recording and decision making across integrated children's services.

## **2. Use and Development of Liquidlogic systems in Kent**

- 2.1 The Liquidlogic system has been extended significantly to create a complete system solution across Integrated Children's Services. This has involved significant staff and financial resource over the last 7 years to invest in a system that fully supports safeguarding practice in Kent.
- 2.2 A series of workspaces have been added to Liberi to support specific areas of work that have their own key processes. These include the Legal, Missing, and Allegations workspaces. Kent is currently exploring whether a workspace would be a good solution for recording within the Total Placement Service.
- 2.3 In autumn 2015 Kent went live with the Early Help Module (EHM) following the creation of Early Help and Preventative Services. EHM and Liberi have a separate front end but share a database, and two years ago Kent implemented Linked Application Access (LAA) so users can move easily between different parts of the Liquidlogic suite without logging in more than once.
- 2.4 This expansion has continued with the Disabled Children's Service implementing LAS in 2017 (the Adults module) to record their work and cover

their statutory requirements. This covers the recording, reporting and statutory returns for the 18-25 cohort within the Disabled Children's Service.

- 2.5 The previous Foster Payments System was replaced by ContrOCC, a financial system (and associated portal) which is fully embedded within Liberi. This was initially to enable payments to foster carers but has since been expanded to pay providers for placement costs, and there is ongoing development and expansion in this area to reduce manual payment processes and increase efficiency. Kent also has the Adults ContrOCC system embedded within LAS to facilitate payments within the Disabled Children's Service. These are interdependent systems and if Liquidlogic is replaced then Kent must also replace ContrOCC. The ContrOCC costs are part of the Liquidlogic contract.
- 2.6 Following the successful implementation of EHM Kent then worked with Liquidlogic as a development partner to develop and build the Troubled Families module to Kent's specification in order to embed the requirements of the Troubled Families programme within its Early Help case recording, as it was embedded within practice. This development was integral to Kent's high performance on the Troubled Families programme and in successfully gaining Earned Autonomy status from the MHCLG.
- 2.7 Mobile apps were developed to work with Liberi and EHM to enable frontline workers to download key caseload information from the main system prior to family visits, enable input of key information offline, which can then be uploaded later once there is internet connectivity. These apps support flexible working for those staff that find them useful.
- 2.8 In the last year Kent has been working to improve the interface between its system and its partners, families and carers, through use of Liquidlogic's portals. The Delegation portal went live in June 2019, which replaced Virtual School Kent's ePEP system with schools. In October 2010 Kent implemented the Children's Portal which automates information flow into EHM at the Front Door when partners make Requests for Support for intensive early help and children's social work services. Kent has recently completed successful testing with the Front Door of SingleView, Liquidlogic's product for joining up information with other systems, and a full Front Door go-live is being planned.
- 2.9 Kent is currently scoping future portal and module developments and building a development timeline based on service priorities including contextual safeguarding, developing a partnership post adoption service for the RAA, modernising social care, and supporting CYPE's digital strategy. Many of these developments will take place during the next contract, and are in line with Liquidlogic's roadmap for system development.

### **3. System Reprocurement vs. System Replacement**

- 3.1 This section includes commercially sensitive information – Exempt - Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, refers.

### **4. System Hosting**

- 4.1 This section includes commercially sensitive information –. Exempt - Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, refers.

## **5. Contract Award and Hosting**

- 5.1 It is recommended that Kent reprocures Liquidlogic's systems for Integrated Children's Services with a contract end date in line with the end date for the Mosaic system in Adults, and continues to host the system internally, but moves the hosting to the Microsoft Azure cloud, in line with KCC's cloud-first ICT strategy.
- 5.2 System support remains in-house with experienced staff within Cantium, with overall system control retained by KCC.
- 5.3 It is easier to join data across KCC systems within the Microsoft Azure estate and to report from the system.
- 5.4 It is a trusted and cost-effective solution.
- 5.5 Whilst it continues to add an additional layer of problem-solving and communication with both Cantium and Liquidlogic if there are system performance issues, the partnership between Cantium and Liquidlogic is strong, and there have been no significant performance issues for the last year, due to the system optimisation that was carried out.
- 5.6 There is a medium risk for system down-time when it switches from current servers to Azure servers, but this risk reduced by the fact other KCC systems have been successfully migrated to the Microsoft Azure cloud already e.g. Core+ (the system used for tracking NEETs and Not Knowns, and for Children's Centres and Youth Hubs recording).

## **6. System Stability and Business Continuity**

- 6.1 Resources may be reduced, diverted, and refocused for the foreseeable future due to Covid-19 so it is vital to have continuity of system to ensure children can be safeguarded effectively. System stability is vital at a time when Kent is so focused on the impact of the pandemic on its vulnerable children.
- 6.2 By remaining with Liquidlogic and with internal hosting, the workforce remains well supported as both Cantium (technical support and infrastructure) and Management Information (training, system development, reporting, data quality, and statutory returns) know Liquidlogic systems well. Business continuity remains supported as there are tested technical solutions and backups in place for the current solution.

## **7. Financial Implications**

- 7.1 The total contract value over seven years is £1,115,356.76, which is the full contract period (an initial term of 5 years with 2 x 1-Year Extension options). The quoted total contract value does not include RPI, which will be applied cumulatively as per the market rates each year.

7.2 Further information contained in this section includes commercially sensitive information – Exempt - Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, refers.

## **8. Legal implications**

8.1 Contract award will be made using direct award against the CCS Framework, which is in line with the framework terms and conditions.

## **9. Equalities implications**

9.1 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.

## **10. Other corporate implications**

10.1 Re-procuring with Liquidlogic ensures ongoing system functionality and stability, which supports Kent to fulfil its statutory safeguarding duties.

10.2 It also ensures payments to commissioned providers and foster carers are made in line with statutory obligations.

## **11. Governance**

11.1 The Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education will be authorised to be the delegated officer to enter into the relevant contracts on behalf of the Council. As determined in 25. (d) of the County Council Constitution: Ensuring that all applicable obligations and responsibilities are complied with by the Directorate as well as internal and external commissioned providers.

## **12. Conclusions**

12.1 Kent seeks to continue its usage of Liquidlogic systems that have been developed since 2013, and to continue to host these systems internally whilst moving to the Microsoft Azure cloud.

12.2 Work will take place with the Strategic Technology Board to agree a corporate position on whether the focus should be for Kent to move towards a single supplier of social care case management systems, or on the increased use of application plug-ins (APIs) to join up existing systems.

## **13. Recommendation(s):**

13.1 The Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services is asked to take the proposed decision to:

- I. award a contract to Liquidlogic for 7 (5+1+1) years for the provision of case management systems within Integrated Children's Services and Disabled Children's Services.

II. Delegate authority to the Corporate Director for Children, Young People and Education, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Integrated Children's Services, to take relevant actions, as necessary to implement this decision.

#### **14. Background Documents**

14.1 None

#### **15. Contact details:**

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