

From: Peter Bole, Director Information & Communication Technology

To: Gary Cooke, Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services

Decision No: **14/00062**

Subject: **Procurement of School Management Information Software for Kent Maintained Schools and Educational Establishments**

Decision Type: Key - Expenditure of more than £1m over the life of the procurement.

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: N/A

Electoral Division: N/A

Summary: To seek agreement for the procurement of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software by Kent maintained schools and educational establishments for a period of up to seven years.

Recommendation(s):

That the Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services is asked to agree to the procurement of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software for a period of up to seven years in order;

To allow the use of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software by Kent maintained schools and establishments.

To allow those school to have use of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software at significantly reduced cost when compared to the individual school cost.

To remove any risk of the Council being challenged by suppliers under EU procurement rules for not having a suitable EU procurement in place which allows Kent maintained schools and establishments to use the Capita SIMS Management Information software.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following a joint EU compliant procurement with East Sussex, Surrey and Brighton and Hove Councils, the ICT Division would like to procure the Capita SIMS Management Information Software for Kent maintained schools and educational establishments to allow the use of the software by these schools and establishments for school information management purposes including the statutory returns required by the Department for Education.

Agreement is sought for this procurement which will allow the use of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software by Kent maintained schools and establishments for a period of up to seven years.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 By entering into this procurement Kent, on behalf of its maintained schools and educational establishments, will be enabling these schools and establishments to have benefit of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software at a significantly reduced rate of cost when compared with the charge that an individual school or establishment would incur (typically £4.00 per student per annum compared to £10.00 per student per annum).

Academies and Free Schools cannot be included in this new procurement arrangement as the software vendor does not allow such establishments to acquire the Capita SIMS Management Information Software through a Council's license. Academies and Free Schools would have to make their own licensing arrangements with the software vendor.

The expenditure incurred under this procurement is de-delegated from the schools delegated funding and is subject to the agreement of the Schools Funding Forum year on year.

The number of schools covered by the licence is reviewed annually on the 1 April to ensure that Kent is not paying for schools that have converted to academy status and if a school converts to an academy status part way through a financial year a credit can be claimed from the software vendor for the period from the academy's conversion date to the end of the financial year.

3. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

- 3.1 State how the proposed decision links with the Bold Steps for Kent

Although the Capita SIMS Management Information Software cannot in itself improve the education of pupils in Kent, it does include functionality which, when used by schools, allows the senior management teams in those schools to scrutinise their data in ways which will help inform and influence the teaching and learning of pupils in their care.

This could include looking at vulnerable groups of pupils e.g. those with special educational needs, those in care or those from disadvantaged backgrounds and allow schools to identify where educational interventions may help pupils improve educationally.

In much the same way the scrutinising of the data will help identify students who are gifted and talented so that they can be provided with suitable educational challenge and help schools to nurture these gifts and talents.

By using the functionality within the Capita SIMS Management Information Software schools will have tools which can be used to help improve the education of pupils in Kent and hopefully those pupils will in turn contribute to the Kent economy when their formal education is completed.

4. Capita SIMS Management Information Software

4.1 Relevant History

The Capita SIMS Management Information Software has a range of functionality that complements the whole range of data handling needs of schools and educational establishments from basic personal information through to school timetable construction, attendance, examinations administration etc.

The software also includes a comprehensive set of tools which will aid teaching and learning by allowing schools to keep records of a pupils educational attainment as well as a built in reporting solution for one off reports or creating pupil reports for parents and carers.

Another element to the software is that can be used to prepare and submit the various statutory returns required by the Department for Education and in the prescribed format dictated by the Department for Education.

In addition the software is already known to many Kent schools and educational establishments.

Another plus is that the software is already known to various Council support units e.g. Kent EiS, Kent Schools Personnel Service, Kent Schools Finance, who currently offer services to schools and academies based around the use of schools management information software.

4.2 Options Considered

Maintaining the status quo would leave the Council vulnerable to possible challenge by other school management information software providers due to not having a suitable procurement in place covering the use of management information software in schools.

Consideration was given to completing our own EU compliant procurement for a school management information software solution but by doing a joint procurement with East Sussex, Surrey and Brighton and Hove Councils the cost of the procurement has been reduced and improved pricing has been achieved for schools due to the economies of scale.

4.3 Legal Implications

Putting this procurement in place will allow schools the use of the software for a period of up to seven years and will remove any risk of the Council being challenged by suppliers under EU procurement rules for not having a suitable EU procurement in place which allows Kent maintained schools and establishments the use of the Capita SIMS software solution.

4.4 Equalities Implications

There are no equalities implications as a result of the suggested action.

4.5 Public Health Implications

There are no Public Health implications as a result of the suggested action.

4.6 Council's Property Portfolio

There are no implications to the Council's property portfolio.

4.7 Officer Scheme of Delegation

If the procurement is agreed it will need to be 'signed under seal' by the Council's legal team as the cumulative cost would exceed £1 million pounds over the life of the procurement.

5. Conclusions

5.1 If approval is given to this procurement, Kent maintained schools and educational establishments will be able to use the Capita SIMS software for the next seven years at a significantly reduced cost per pupil and any possibility of challenge to the Council will have been removed as a result of a suitable procurement not being in place for such provision.

6. Recommendation(s): (select relevant wording from below)

The Cabinet Member for Corporate and Democratic Services is asked to agree to the procurement of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software for a period of up to seven years in order;

To allow the use of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software in Kent maintained schools and establishments.

To allow those school to have use of the Capita SIMS Management Information Software at significantly reduced cost when compared to the individual school cost.

To remove any risk of the Council being challenged by suppliers under EU procurement rules for not having a suitable EU procurement in place which allows Kent maintained schools and establishments the continued use of the Capita SIMS software.

7. Background Documents

7.1 None.

8. Contact details

Report Author:

Ralph Gardner, Kent EIS SIMS Support Manager

Telephone Number: 03000 658953

Email: ralph.gardner@eis.kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director:

Peter Bole, Director of Information & Communication Technology

Telephone Number: 03000 410487

Email: peter.bole@kent.gov.uk