

## IDS Digital Schemes

Tel: 0113 3784339

Date: 13 March 2024

Report of: Interim Chief Digital Information Officer

Report to: Director of Strategy and Resources

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

### Brief summary

The IDS Digital Scheme is comprised of the following programmes:

- Essential Services Programme (ESP)
- Cloud, Applications and Compliance (CACP) Programme
- Digital Efficiencies Programme (DEP)

These were established to enable the Integrated Digital Service (IDS) to undertake a continuous annual programme of upgrade and refresh of Leeds City Council's extensive core ICT and Application infrastructure. As a general principle, IDS ensure that our ICT hardware and software are operated as long as feasibly possible before being replaced or upgraded. However, there are major elements of investment and refresh required over the coming year to deliver modern online technologies that will enable self-service digital channels and AI to deliver efficiencies.

In particular, the Council is in the process of undertaking a Cloud transformation programme which will move technology from on premise to the cloud. This will be a multi-year programme which will be reflected in the funding over that time as investments in on premise technologies reduce as we start consuming cloud technologies. We will continue to invest in 'Cyber/IG' processes and solutions to help ensure that the ongoing threat to our information and systems is minimised. We will continue to refresh our desktop estate to ensure we keep our overall infrastructure up to date, we will however invest into different technologies like mac or Google devices as required.

The report is to seek approval on the funding required to conduct a range of major essential IT infrastructure and application investment, refresh and upgrade initiatives over the next 12 months. This involves the procurement and installation of new hardware and software and the engagement of specialist internal and external resources to commission and implement. It does not include funding for work that is continuing from the previous financial year where there is agreed carried forward of funding.

When reviewing the scope of change initiatives relevant to the ESP Programme a significant amount of challenge has been applied. This has resulted in a number of initiatives being identified which have either been removed from the ESP scheme or their implementation delayed to future years. This action has reduced the funding ask for 24/25 in response to the current council's financial challenge.

## Recommendations

- a) Request that the Director of Strategy and Resources gives authority to incur expenditure of £10,665K on the 2024/25 programmes as outlined in this report, which includes the specialist resources (internal and external) to commission and implement these services.

### What is this report about?

- 1 There are approximately 11,000 users across multiple sites and now working from home locations. To support this, there are two primary data centres, hosting a significant range of infrastructure: servers, storage, networks, telephony and ancillary equipment etc. These data centres host over 300 critical and important business applications. This fundamental and extensive ICT infrastructure continually requires refreshing and upgrading.
- 2 The approach has always been that hardware and software will only be refreshed when we have extracted all the value from it and before supportability, poor performance and the potential consequential failure of critical business services becomes an issue.
- 3 Further to this IDS have now adopted a Cloud First principal, in line with the 'The one Government Cloud Strategy (OGCS)', to support the overall plans for Cloud transformation. As such investment in on premise hardware will only be undertaken if it is to meet a specific requirement which cannot be delivered in the Cloud.
- 4 The proposed programme of work outlined in this report for 2024/25 is part of an ongoing long-term programme of infrastructure maintenance and refresh, prioritised to ensure that the failure of business-critical services is minimised.
- 5 Reassuringly LCC generally spends significantly proportionally less than many of its Core City counterparts refreshing this core infrastructure.
- 6 It is also the case that this refresh brings additional benefits because software and hardware (in particular) improve significantly over time, and we therefore get a higher return on our investment in terms of functionality, performance and reliability etc.
- 7 Our commitment to the 'Cloud' and our 'Cloud First' strategy still applies. However, is still the case that over the next 5 years many of our critical legacy applications and also the legacy applications of our partner organisations will need to operate 'on premise' because they are not architected in a way that makes them suitable to operate in the 'Cloud'.
- 8 The Cloud, Applications and Compliance (CACCP) programme element of it will review the application stack and make recommendations on the approach to each application considering; refactor, re-platform, repurchase, rehost, relocate, retain, or retire.
- 9 Digitalisation of services will be undertaken from the citizen perspective with investment in modern online channels including chatbot, mobile app and an improved webform platform. This includes the replacement of the council's existing leeds.gov.uk website and over 150 subsites as well as the replacement of the Contact Centre's end of life telephony system with a modern Cloud offering.
- 10 The WIFI estate is end of life and therefore will be refreshed with a move to Meraki technologies over the next two years.
- 11 The risk of cyber threat is increasingly an issue across all organisations as the risk of serious damage to critical computer systems and the associated information they host continues to rise. There are frequent and high-profile cases of computer systems being compromised and sensitive information being stolen on a weekly basis and the organisations that commit these crimes are becoming smarter. The council also has significant obligations to comply with a range of security frameworks mandated across local government e.g., PSN (networks), PCI (credit card payments) and the new DPA (Data Protection Act) etc. The criteria for compliance with these frameworks are becoming more demanding and consequently the investment required in new cyber and IG tools, protection measures and assurance is significant.

- 12 Windows 10 support via Microsoft in the form of security updates has been extended – this allows IDS to maximise the return on investment against the current Windows 10 devices by delaying the move to Windows 11 from 24/25 to 25/26.
- 13 There is also an allocation of funding assigned to replace the significant number of aged laptop and desktop devices (5-7+ years) across the organisation on a break / fix basis.
- 14 To ensure mobile phones and tablets (android and iOS) are kept up to date with security patches and OS updates to keep up with the latest technology and software. This is to meet requirements for PSN.
- 15 To promote digital inclusion within LCC a significant funding allocation has been assigned to provision digital devices for up to 4000 users to support their access to digital services as the CBT Programme replaces core systems such as FMS, Payroll and HR to browser based access.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 16 The proposal allows IDS to undertake critical application, infrastructure and hardware upgrades and replacements to ensure the council's technology estate is up to date and compliant. It will reduce the risk of service failure by removing end of life technology.

### **How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?**

Health and Wellbeing       Inclusive Growth       Zero Carbon

- 17 This will provide up to date, secure and compliant hardware, software and infrastructure that supports all council staff. It will keep their key line of business systems secure and updated thus reducing the risk of cyber-attack and service failure.

### **What consultation and engagement has taken place?**

Wards affected: N/A

Have ward members been consulted?       Yes       No

- 18 Consultation between senior staff within IDS, central finance, and the deputy leader of the council, and this approach agreed.

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 19 This will involve existing internal resources working alongside specialist supplier resources and contractors.

### **What are the key risks and how are they being managed?**

- 20 If this work is not undertaken, there is a high risk of additional costs and business failure as we operate on old and in some cases unsupported ICT infrastructure and applications. The council is also at risk of financial penalties in the event of any major security breaches. These risks will be managed by ensuring robust contract and supplier management arrangements are in place to track and monitor that the technical solutions put in place will deliver the required outcomes.
- 21 These risks are articulated further in the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee Scrutiny Report, taken to the 12th February 2024 meeting.
- 22 There is a risk that there will be insufficient resource in IDS to complete the works as scoped in the three programmes. IDS has implemented a resource augmentation framework agreement and it is hoped using this contract will mitigate the risk.

## **What are the legal implications?**

- 23 The majority of the hardware, software and services required will be purchased through the Council's established preferred suppliers under existing contract arrangements. In the case of the replacement of the ageing telephony solution in the Contact Centre, this has been subject to a separate procurement exercise. The technologies concerned are consistent with the council's agreed technical strategies.
- 24 There will be procurement support managing the procurements of new contracts, assessment of current expenditure, planned expenditure and any unforeseen expenditure as well as supplier and contract performance.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

- 25 IDS has a legal requirement to ensure the council's network, infrastructure, hardware and software is safe, secure, compliant and fit for purpose and as such has to procure and implement solutions that support this requirement.

### **How will success be measured?**

- 26 Replacement of identified ageing and end of life applications and hardware with more modern and secure cloud offerings will ensure security and compliance requirements are met, fit for purpose systems are available and the risk of service failure mitigated.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

- 27 The work will commence in April 2024 and the Interim Chief Digital Information Officer is responsible for implementation.

## **Appendices**

- EDCI
- IDS Digital Design Principles

## **Background papers**

- None