

**Report of Business Partner**

**Report to Chief Digital and Information Officer**

**Date: 16<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

**Subject: The approval to waiver CPRs 8.1 and 8.2 and award a contract to Zoom Video Communications, Inc. for the provision of Zoom Licences.**

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

**Summary**

**1. Main issues**

- Due to the impacts of COVID 19 many service areas found communication using existing tools were not meeting the needs required. Issues with server capacity and performance were addressed, but many areas still felt that alternative video conferencing tools were needed to enable them to communicate with service users and partners more effectively.
- Gaps in conferencing functionality were identified and needed addressing in order to provide the ability to communicate with public and partners effectively.
- Decisions were made to initially invest in Zoom for Democratic services, and then further decisions were made to roll this offer out further to business areas who were struggling to meet the needs of the service. DIS initially purchased licences, but then passed on the financial responsibility to the other directorates, if the business case justification was there. As of 12/01/21 there are 733 business licences split between the directorates in Leeds City Council. This number is not expected to grow by a significant amount, as most requests have been fulfilled to ensure business continuity. The contract date commenced on the 15/07/2020 and is due to expire on the 15/07/2021.

## **2. Best Council Plan implications** (see the [latest version of the Best Council Plan](#))

- Working with Communities – the procurement of Zoom will allow a reliable conferencing platform to ensure the Council are able to meet effectively with Partners and Citizens of Leeds. It will enable the Council to meet its legal obligation to live stream meetings to the public.
- Work as a team for Leeds – the procurement of Zoom will allow effective collaboration between partners and citizens of Leeds.

## **3. Resource implications**

- Management of Application from an admin/desktop perspective.
- Contract amount for Zoom licences.

## **Recommendations**

- a) The Chief Digital and Information Officer is recommended to approve the waiver of Contracts Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 and award a contract to Zoom Video Communications, Inc., for the sum of £57000. This figure could increase depending on the amount of licenses required. Additional licences are co-termed within the current contract, and the licences are priced with a local authority discount. The contract commenced on the 15/07/2020 and will expire on the 15/07/2021.

### **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to explain the need to purchase additional video conferencing applications during the Covid19 pandemic.

### **2. Background information**

- 2.1 Throughout the Covid19 pandemic, many service areas found communication using existing tools were not meeting the needs required. Issues with server capacity and performance were addressed, but many areas still felt that alternative video conferencing tools were needed to enable them to communicate with service users and partners more effectively.
- 2.2 Elected Members also wanted to use Zoom to engage with the public and partners, as well as use the platform to live stream committee meetings.
  - 2.2.1 Decisions were made to initially invest in Zoom for Democratic services, and then further decisions were made to roll this offer out further to business areas who were struggling to meet the needs of the service. DIS initially purchased licences, but then passed on the financial responsibility to the other directorates, if the business case justification was there.
  - 2.2.2 Temporary procurement of Zoom has been used to fill the gap whilst M365 is rolled out to the organisation. Once M365 is rolled out further, including Teams as the corporate solution to conferencing, the use of the Zoom client will be phased out.

### **3. Main issues**

- 3.1 The reasons that a contact procedure rules waiver is required is that it did not prove value to run a tender exercise as the market for video conferencing is small. The vision of the Council as a Microsoft organisation was taken into consideration, but it was not possible to fully meet every business areas needs with the current offerings in place. Decisions were made to temporarily invest in alternative conferencing platforms as the M365 project progressed throughout the organisation. Once MS Teams and Office 365 is in place, the use of Zoom will be phased out, as the contract runs until July 2021. There are over 1000 users who have access to a conferencing platform that enables them to run effective meetings with the public, partners and elected members. It has also seen the introduction of robust live streaming of public facing meetings in a professional looking manner.
- 3.2 The account management has been done in house without much resource implications on technical and operational teams.
- 3.3 At the time of the original purchase of this software, a formal approval was not put in place. This report is to identify what we have purchased these licences and ongoing approval to purchase additional licences. The consequences of not approving the actions in this paper would be delays in service provision throughout the Council, potential of increased costs to running services remotely, potential for areas of the Council to not meet their SLAs in place with partners, in terms of delivery of training and content.

### **4. Corporate considerations**

#### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 No consultation or engagement took place, however consultation evidence is not needed to inform the decision in this report. As a result of the lockdown and instruction to work from home where possible, there were little alternatives other than to purchase a further conferencing offer that would enable the Council to meet statutory regulations on Local Authority meetings:
- 4.1.2 The relevant national authority may by regulations make provision relating to;
- 4.1.2.1 requirements to hold local authority meetings;
- 4.1.2.2 the times at or by which, periods within which, or frequency with which, local authority meetings are to be held;
- 4.1.2.3 the places at which local authority meetings are to be held;
- 4.1.2.4 the manner in which persons may attend, speak at, vote in, or otherwise participate in, local authority meetings;
- 4.1.2.5 public admission and access to local authority meetings;
- 4.1.2.6 The places at which, and manner in which, documents relating to local authority meetings are to be open to inspection by, or otherwise available to, members of the public.
- 4.1.3 (2) The provision which may be made by virtue of subsection (1)(d) includes in particular provision for persons to attend, speak at, vote in, or otherwise participate in, local authority meetings without all of the persons, or without any of the persons, being together in the same place.

- 4.1.4 The regulations may make provision only in relation to local authority meetings required to be held, or held, before 7 May 2021.
- 4.1.5 The power to make regulations under this section includes power;
  - 4.1.5.1 to disapply or modify any provision of an enactment or subordinate legislation;
  - 4.1.5.2 to make different provision for different purposes;
  - 4.1.5.3 to make consequential, supplementary, incidental, transitional or saving provision

## **1.1 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 1.2 Zoom applications and web pages are compliant with both Section 508 and WCAG 2.1 AA recommendations, with a few exceptions. Full details about how each product complies with each WCAG guideline can be found in the products' respective VPAT documents can be found at [www.zoom.us/accessibility](http://www.zoom.us/accessibility).

## **1.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

- 1.3.1 The award of this contract will allow better collaboration with the public and partners as well as allowing the Council to meet the regulations around access and live streaming of public facing meetings.

### Climate Emergency

- 1.3.2 The implementation of video conference facilities allows meetings to take place remotely, reducing the need for officers and Elected Members to travel to meeting locations.

## **1.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

- 1.4.1 The DIS Licences have been purchased via capital fund.
- 1.4.2 The award of this contract will allow better collaboration with the public and partners as well as allowing the Council to meet the regulations around access and live streaming of public facing meetings. It will also ensure that traded services SLAs that have been purchased by partner organisations can be fulfilled. It will enable remote service provision throughout the COVID19 pandemic.

## **1.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- 1.5.1 This decision is a Significant Operational Decision which is not subject to call in.

## **1.6 Risk management**

- 1.6.1 This report ensures we are meeting our obligation around being open and honest in terms of our decision making. If this spend isn't approved we wouldn't be able to purchase more licenses and this could lead to issues with business delivery throughout the Council.

## **2. Conclusions**

- 2.1 This report seeks the approval to award a contract to Zoom Video Communications, Inc. for the provision of video conferencing to enable remote service provision throughout the COVID19 pandemic.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 The Chief Digital and Information Officer is recommended to approve the waiver of Contracts Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 and award a contract to Zoom Video Communications, Inc., for the sum of £57000. This figure could increase depending on the amount of licenses required. Additional licences are co-termed within the current contract, and the licences are priced with a local authority discount. The contract commenced on the 15/07/2020 and will expire on the 15/07/2021.

### **4. Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

- 4.1 None.

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.