

# COP/11/12

**Policy & Scrutiny Committee**      Community and Older People

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## ASC Strategic IT procurement

## Purpose of Report

This is to make the committee aware of progress in the ASC Strategic IT procurement. This report includes information on: background to the procurement, what we are seeking to procure and its impact, and what the benefits will be for Essex citizens, for Essex County Council (ECC) and for our partners. We will also briefly outline next steps.

The committee should note that this procurement has not been finalised and as a result there are commercial confidentiality issues which limit what can be formally noted in this paper and discussed at the Committee.

## ASC Strategic IT – background

### Existing systems

Our current systems for delivering our statutory responsibilities in managing Adult Social Care casework and procuring care solutions are out of date. We utilise three systems, one of which is no longer fully supported by the software developers, and two systems that were designed and developed in house. None of the systems are suitable technically for further in-house development and would be very expensive to develop externally. In addition, there is a real risk that the systems will not function effectively in managing current and future levels of demand. In addition, the current IT systems do not have the required flexibilities to support the changes in business processes needed to meet emerging requirements from ECC's target operating model.

### Future developments

Not only do we need to replace our current systems, we also need to look to the future and at how our customers, Essex citizens, will want to access information and procure services.

There is currently little consolidated information available on the Internet about care services in Essex. The information that is available is difficult to find and rarely gives Essex citizens all of the information they would require to make informed choices about care services. Our call centre telephone service provides an invaluable service

to Essex citizens, but one that should be augmented by more web based offerings. Increasingly Essex citizens are using web based services to find out information about the services in their area and the options available to them.

Our current systems don't offer the level of information and interaction that Essex citizens have come to expect from web based services, e.g. we cannot provide real time information to Essex citizens about the level of funds that may be available to fund care services. In addition, this kind of channel shift from face to face and telephony services to more web based services are required to help deliver our target operating model.

Similarly, we need to consider who we need to partner with to deliver these services in future. We need flexible tools that allow us to commission other partners and sub-contractors to deliver services on our behalf.

Lastly, in order for ECC to become a more effective commissioning organisation, we need to know what care outcomes Essex citizens are seeking to achieve and what care services they are procuring. This is difficult to identify easily and consistently with our current systems.

#### *Sponsors*

The Sponsors for the project are Liz Chidgey the Executive Director for Adult Social Care and David Wilde the Chief Information Officer. This senior representation on the procurement ensures that it is aligned with the wider corporate IT modernisation programme and other strategic developments with ECC e.g. target operating model.

### **ASC Strategic IT – What are we procuring?**

ECC are seeking to contract with a 'prime supplier' to design, deliver, host, support and maintain technology for Adult Social Care and potentially Children's Social Care services. This will initially include:

	<b>Functionality</b>	<b>Impact</b>
1	Enhanced case management system for ECC staff and commissioned partners	No re-keying of information on systems that deliver and support the social care processes. Greater efficiency of operational case management.
2	On-line Information, Advice and Advocacy web site for Essex citizens	Allow citizens to find information relevant to their circumstances; as well as where they can discuss their situation with others who have similar needs and experiences.
3	Integrated booking system for ECC staff	No re-keying of information; a joined up solution with the case management system that will align care needs with service delivery. Greater operational efficiency.

	<b>Functionality</b>	<b>Impact</b>
4	On-line self-service web site for Essex citizens and Providers	Will allow Providers to show what services they are offering and allow Essex citizens to find, book and pay for care and care related services.
5	Enhanced information and data management, incorporating an electronic document and records management system.	Will allow ECC to identify and track trends within Adult Social Care, which will enable ECC to commission services more effectively in future. Better able to manage citizens' records, minimising duplicate records and to allow for the electronic storage of documents.
6	Mobile working tools, such as laptops and tablet devices.	Will allow workers and partners acting on our behalf to access and record information within the citizens' home. Allow for options and information of potential care solutions at the time of the visit.
7	Secure hosting, maintenance and support	Reduction in the amount of ECC owned technology assets. Ability for ECC to keep pace with changes in technology. Greater service availability.
8	Scheduling tools	Allow ECC to more effectively manage the availability of the social care workforce, including partners delivering services on our behalf.
9	Knowledgebase	A central store of information that allows a consistent and accurate set of information to be delivered to ECC staff, our partners and the citizens of Essex.

## **ASC Strategic IT – Other potential impacts**

### *Providers*

Providers of care services will want to know what care services Essex citizens are looking to buy and will want to provide services to meet that potential demand. Developing the systems we are procuring will open up potential new markets for Providers. In addition, there is potential for Providers to reduce their costs, which could encourage new entrants into the market. Establishing a searchable web site of Providers and services will also enable easier access into the market for small/medium enterprises which should encourage business growth and competition within Essex.

### *ECC*

Working with other partners, particularly in health, can be complicated with the differing IT systems being used. This procurement will give us the potential to allow the joining up of information and processes between ECC and other Local Authorities and NHS systems.

Procuring a 'prime supplier' and entering into a long-term relationship with the supplier enables ECC to better plan, develop and deliver future additional systems, or enhancements to systems in Adults Social Care. The procurement of a 'prime supplier' also allows us the flexibility to quickly procure similar IT systems for Children's Social Care services and places an onus on the 'prime supplier' to ensure the effective delivery of the systems.

#### *Essex Assist*

This project will be the technology enabler for delivery of the well-being benefits of Essex Assist (see separate Scrutiny paper) and this paper should be read in conjunction with the Essex Assist paper.

### **ASC Strategic IT – what are the potential benefits?**

Essex Citizens will benefit by:

- Enabling them to make more informed decisions about their care needs through being able to access better information and advice
- Providing them with more choice and control over how they can meet their care outcomes
- Improving independence by being able to self-serve on-line

ECC will benefit by:

- Minimising the risk and potential cost of systems failing to operate effectively
- Helping to deliver ECC's new target operating model
- Delivering simpler, more timely, and less costly changes to the system as business requirements change
- Improving efficiencies through having an integrated end to end system for Adult Social Care case management and brokerage processes which minimises re-keying and supports mobile and flexible working
- Providing us with the ability to commission and support third parties delivering aspects of the end-to-end service
- Using industry-standard interfaces for connection to partners systems
- Better access to information that will enable ECC to become a more effective commissioning organisation.

Providers will benefit by:

- Having access to new markets potentially increasing profit margins
- Increasing competition

### **ASC Strategic IT – progress to date and next steps**

We originally advertised for suppliers to contract with us in the Official Journal of European Union (OJEU) publication in which all significant tenders from public sector are published. Following initial awareness workshops with a number of interested suppliers, we formally selected two suppliers to start detailed negotiations on contracts, costs and solutions. These have been on-going for a number of months. If current procurement plans are maintained, we expect to get final tenders from the two suppliers in the next few weeks. These will be fully evaluated against a detailed set of criteria and – if appropriate - a recommendation will be made to contract with a particular supplier. This recommendation will then follow the normal ECC governance processes before a formal decision to contract is considered by Cabinet.