

Report of	Record of	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by Executive Member (Economic Development and Public Service Reform))	Executive Member Decision	12 th July 2023

Is this report confidential?	Yes This report contains commercially sensitive information.
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Is this decision key?	Yes This will be a key decision if the contract granted is for a 5 year period.
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Savings or expenditure amounting to greater than £100,000	Significant impact on 2 or more council wards
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Purpose of the Report

1. This report is to seek authority to grant Essensys Ltd a contract extension for the essential connectivity services at Strawberry Fields for a minimum term of 3 years, or maximum of 5 years.

Recommendations

2.
 - 1) To award a contract to Essensys for the essential ongoing connection, servicing, and software solutions for the primary and back-up circuit connection for a minimum term of 3 years.
 - 2) Connectivity and data are essential for service delivery at Strawberry Fields. This is built into the service charge that tenants pay monthly.
 - 3) Connectivity provisions form part of the ERDF funding obligations for the building.
 - 4) Should a 5 year contract be awarded, this would cover the longevity of the IT infrastructure which will need to be procured and replaced in 5-6 years' time.

Reasons for recommendations

3. To ensure that vital connectivity and data services are provided to the building and tenants of Strawberry Fields. This will ensure the Council adhere to the ERDF funding obligations which were set at on commencement of the project. Failure to deliver these essential services would be in breach of the tenants lease agreements as

connectivity provisions are stipulated in the service charge breakdown. Eventually, the data and connectivity infrastructure would need to be replaced, as it stands the kit on site is still optimal for the building requirements.

Other options considered and rejected

4. A new procurement for the connectivity services and overall data infrastructure. The Essensys equipment is closed protocol, only Essensys can provide data and connectivity through their equipment. If a new contract was procured, then all the infrastructure would require replacing, this would result in downtime of the systems and impact vital services delivered to the building and tenants of Strawberry Fields. It would not only cost the Council in lost revenue, replacing the infrastructure for an open protocol system at this time would come at a significant cost to the council, especially considering the current equipment has a minimum 5 year life span before replacement parts would be required.

Corporate priorities

5. The report relates to the following corporate priorities: (Please bold one)

Housing where residents can live well	A green and sustainable borough
An enterprising economy with vibrant local centres in urban and rural areas	Healthy, safe and engaged communities

Background to the report

6. Essensys won the tender to deliver connectivity services in 2019. Since then, Essensys have continued to deliver vital services to Strawberry Fields and the tenants that reside there. The purpose of the report is to establish a further contract award of either 3 years or 5 years to ensure these services remain.

Report

7. Since Strawberry Fields opened in October 2019, one of the key highlights of the building services offered to tenants is the superfast, reliable connectivity. As Strawberry Fields is a 'digital hub', many of the tenants who occupy space are reliant upon excellent connectivity and data services to aid their daily business function and operations. The current Essensys platform offers ongoing software support, alongside a range of services which benefit tenants and the building management. Strawberry Fields doesn't have a dedicated IT team who can support tenants and the building management, however, Essensys provide that support remotely and have an enterprise SLA in place to ensure tenants expectations are managed efficiently.

8. Essensys Services Currently in Contract

- Excellent SLA to exceed customer expectation
- Private cloud network to enhance security
- Dual connectivity provided; 1Gb primary (on a 10Gb bearer) and a 1Gb backup connection (on a 1Gb bearer)
- 1Gb bandwidth allocation
- Telephony services which are sold commercially with a mark up to tenants
- 10 Voice licences which are free of charge to the Council
- Essensys Operate feature at a reduced price

9. The current Essensys contract expires on 31st July 2023. EMD approval is sought to enable services to continue to be delivered to Strawberry Fields tenants.

Contract Proposal

10. 36-month term at £2,450 per month, with a 12 month break clause (total cost £88,200.00)
- Excellent SLA to exceed customer expectation
 - Private cloud network to enhance security
 - Dual connectivity provided; 1Gb primary (**on a 1Gb bearer**) and a 1Gb backup connection (on a 1Gb bearer) there is also automated failover which ensures no downtime in the event of the primary connection going down.
 - 1Gb bandwidth allocation
 - Telephony services which are sold with a mark up to tenants
 - 10 Voice licences which are free of charge to the Council
 - Reduced voice cost to £7.50 per licence
 - Essensys Operate* feature at a reduced price of £349
11. *Essensys 'Operate' is a separate feature which is utilised by the building staff to book meeting rooms, monitor usage and breakdown revenue which is generated solely by meeting room bookings.

Risk

12. If the contract is not signed Essensys could withdraw the service provided resulting in the building no longer being operational.

Comments of the Statutory Finance Officer

13. This section is to be completed by the Chief Finance Officer (s151) (or by the Deputy Section 151 Officer if not available) as it must also comment on the impact on all aspects of the total organisational budget.

Comments of the Monitoring Officer

14. This section is to be completed by the Monitoring Officer (or by the Deputy Monitoring Officer if not available) and will include any legal implications for the Council.

Report Author:	Email:	Telephone:	Date:
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Following careful consideration and assessment of the contents of this report, I approve the recommendation(s) contained in Paragraph 2 of the report in accordance with my delegated

power to make executive decisions.

Councillor
Executive Member for ** Dated

This decision will come into force and may be implemented five working days after its publication date, subject to being called in in accordance with the Council's Constitution.