CABINET

2 SEPTEMBER 2014

GATEWAY 1 PROJECT COMMENCEMENT: THE MEDWAY GRID FOR LEARNING

Portfolio Holders: Councillor Mike O'Brien, Children's Services (Lead Member)

Councillor Peter Hicks, Community Safety and Customer Contact

Report from: Barbara Peacock, Director of Children and Adults

Authors: Marc Dermody, Schools' ICT Commissioner

Peter Good, ICT Infrastructure Manager

SUMMARY

This report seeks permission to commence the procurement of the Medway Grid for Learning (MGfL) services.

The Medway Grid for Learning is a secure wide area network connecting school local area networks (LAN), enabling schools to access a number of services that they would otherwise need to purchase and manage independently.

The MGfL consists of several key services; service support, e-mail, webfiltering and anti-virus are provided under contract, originally procured from the South East Grid for Learning (SEGfL) framework. The current contract will end in March 2015 and therefore there is a necessity to re–procure these services.

This Gateway 1 report has been approved for submission to Cabinet after review and discussion at Directorate Management Team Meeting on July 14 2014 and the Procurement Board on 13 August 2014.

The Children & Adults Directorate Management Team has recommended that this procurement project be approved as a High Risk procurement project at Procurement Gateway 1. This is because there are service sensitivities.

---

1. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

1.1 The procurement of this requirement directly links into the following Strategic Council Obligations:

- **Medway Council Plan**

    This procurement requirement links into the Medway Council Plan through the delivery of a project that as well as providing value for money, supports the following commitment:

- We will champion strong leadership and high standards in schools so that all children can achieve their potential, and the gaps between the least advantaged and their peers are narrowed.

The MGfL services allow schools to communicate effectively within a secure environment and support the delivery of high quality teaching and learning.

- **Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP)**

This procurement will support the strategic priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan, This is the strategic partnership plan for the area seeking to ensure that all children and young people in Medway are:
- safe and cared for
- succeed in learning
- thrive

1.2 The procurement will enable Medway to provide services that support achievement of our safeguarding responsibilities whilst at the same time providing timely access to an appropriate range of learning resources.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The Medway Grid for Learning (MGfL) provides a wide range of services for its members inclusive of an Internet connection, website hosting, virus protection, first line support , e-mail services for staff and pupils, e-mail and web filtering, secure remote access and secure file transfer. Schools constantly use these critical services for day to day administration and to gain access to learning resources. This reprocurement is for four key services; first line support, e-mail, webfiltering and anti-virus.

2.2 **Funding/Engagement from External Sources**

2.2.1 MGFL should be self-sustaining provided that sufficient schools sign up, as the money due from the Council to the contractor will be provided by the schools to the Council.

2.3 **Parent Company Guarantee/Performance Bond Required**

2.3.1 A Parent Company Guarantee/Performance Bond will be required.

2.4 **Project Dependency**

2.4.1 The project has no dependencies.

3.   BUSINESS CASE

3.1   Procurement Project Outputs / Outcomes

As part of the successful delivery of this procurement requirement, the following procurement project outputs / outcomes within the table below have been identified as key and will be monitored as part of the procurement project delivery process.

Outputs / Outcomes	How will success be measured?	Who will measure success of outputs/ outcomes	When will success be measured?
1. Support services	A service desk that meets the needs of the school, with a issue resolution rate in line with contractual requirements and an audit trail so that schools can monitor progress and Medway can quality assure	Schools' ICT Commissioner and ICT Infrastructure Manager	Ongoing termly feedback and evaluations from MGfL members once the contract is in place. Also, at the end of each financial year the number of schools staying with the MGfL will indicate satisfaction with the service.
2. A secure E-mail exchange	Schools have access to a secure communication system where members are able to filter their own e-mails, and utilise shared calendars and mobile devices.	Schools' ICT Commissioner and ICT Infrastructure Manager	Ongoing termly feedback and evaluations from MGfL members once the contract is in place. Also, at the end of each financial year the number of schools staying with the MGfL will indicate satisfaction with the service
3. A Flexible and safe web filtering system	A secure web filtering system that allows members to change their filtering policy quickly to suit their teaching and learning needs. Schools are able to monitor sites visited by staff and pupils	Schools' ICT Commissioner and ICT Infrastructure Manager	Ongoing termly feedback and evaluations from MGfL members once the contract is in place. Also, at the end of each financial year the number of schools staying with the MGfL will indicate satisfaction with the service
4. A resilient anti-virus	An industrial standard anti-virus that is up to date and can capture the most recent security threats to a school network	Schools' ICT Commissioner and ICT Infrastructure Manager	Ongoing termly feedback and evaluations from MGfL members once the contract is in place. Also, at the end of each financial year the number of schools staying with the MGfL will indicate satisfaction with the service

3.2 Procurement Project Management

3.2.1 This procurement project will be resourced through the following project resources and skills. Headteachers will steer the vision and specification of the project. The Schools' ICT Commissioner and internal ICT staff will co-ordinate implementation with the successful contractor and will provide ongoing support of the services

3.3 Post Procurement Contract Management

3.3.1 The contract management of this procurement project post award will be resourced through the following contract management strategy. Monthly meetings will be held with the contractor during and after implementation. Client engagement will take place through the ICT Policy & Practice Steering Group meetings held three times a year with school representatives.

4. MARKET CONDITIONS & PROCUREMENT APPROACH

4.1 Market Conditions

4.1.1 The conditions to providing these services is competitive and like for like services are being provided both locally and nationally by a number of contractors.

4.1.2 Several contractors on the SEGfL framework can provide the main services E-mail, Web filtering and support desk with extra services that are exclusive to each contractor. There is also a service rail arrangement within this framework.

4.1.3 All these contractors have proven experience providing services to a number of Local Authorities and education sites whether that is within regional broadband consortia or to individual schools.

4.2 Procurement Process Proposed

4.2.1 The option of using an EU compliant framework has been considered and the South East Grid for Learning (SEGfL) Framework, developed through an OJEU process has been identified, through which Medway Council's procurement requirements can be satisfied. The SEGfL is a consortium of 3,000 schools and its key aims are that every school in the region should have broadband services that are both fit for purpose and sustainable. Within the SEGfL framework competition has already been established and this will reduce the time to completion. Lead times to implementation are significantly reduced, competition is ensured and it confirms the capability of the successful company. With the urgent requirement to improve standards achieved in our schools, it is important that the services are fit for purpose in meeting the requirements of schools.

4.3 Evaluation Criteria

4.3.1 The criteria will be based on the SEGfL framework; 70/30 ratio of quality and cost and will be evaluated through a tendering process in collaboration with schools. Consultation will be undertaken with schools to ensure that the specification meets their needs.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

5.1 Risk Categorisation

1. Risk Category: Service Delivery	Likelihood: D Low	Impact: II Critical
Outline Description: Loss of service due to connectivity issues		
Plans to Mitigate: Resilient back up network system is in place to minimize any downtime		

2. Risk Category: Financial	Likelihood: D Low	Impact: II Critical
Outline Description: The Medway Grid for Learning needs to retain buy in from schools to keep costs viable. If schools decide not to buy into the MGfL or leave, this will increase the overall costs to the other member schools and Medway Council.		
Plans to Mitigate: Involvement of schools in the development of the specification will ensure that the services meet their needs. Schools are well informed in relation to cost of service and the comparison with other providers or purchasing the services independently. Commitment to this contract by schools will be established well in advance of the start date April 2015. Historically the small number of schools that have left the MGfL service each year has been due to academy conversion and the school wanting more advanced services, the MGfL services have now been upgraded and all academies are given the opportunity to buy back into the services		

3. Risk Category: Sustainability	Likelihood: D Low	Impact: II Critical
Outline Description: The Medway Grid for Learning needs to retain buy in from schools to sustain expected levels of service.		
Plans to Mitigate: Specification of procurement will ensure that the service meets schools needs, and that costs will be balanced between quality and "best value" but also to invest in future upgrades to enhance the services		

4. Risk Category: Other/ICT	Likelihood: E Very Low	Impact: III Marginal
Outline Description: Services could fail to provide some anticipated features		
Plans to Mitigate: Ensure that the services to be delivered are thoroughly tested before providing them to schools		

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 Internal (Medway) Stakeholder Consultation

6.1.1 As part of this procurement project; internal stakeholders from Medway ICT and School Services, Quality & Commissioning need to consult prior to the commencement of the procurement project in order to direct the specification. This work has already begun between the Corporate ICT and the School Services Quality & Commissioning.

6.1.2 As part of this procurement project; internal stakeholders from Medway ICT and School Services, Quality & Commissioning Services need to consult during the procurement process in order to aid the evaluation process

6.1.3 As part of this procurement project; internal stakeholders from Medway ICT and School Services, Quality & Commissioning need to consult post procurement/tender award in order to manage the contract.

6.2 External Stakeholder Consultation

6.2.1 As part of this procurement project external stakeholder consultation is required before the commencement of the procurement project in order to develop the specification. This will be done through the ICT Policy & Practice Steering Group meetings and additional meetings set up for that purpose

6.2.2 As part of this procurement project external stakeholder consultation is required during the procurement process in order to aid the evaluation process.

6.2.3 As part of this procurement project external stakeholder consultation is required post procurement/tender award in order to aid the contract management process. Engagement will take place with ICT Policy & Practice Steering Group to gauge customer satisfaction.

7. SERVICE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Financial Implications

7.1.1 The procurement requirement and its associated delivery (as per the recommendations at Section 11) will be paid for by individual schools from their delegated budgets, funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant.

7.1.2 Further detail is contained within Section 2.1 Finance Analysis of the Exempt Appendix that accompanies this report.

7.2 Legal Implications

7.2.1 The contract value is above the financial threshold set out under the EU public procurement regime, and so the Public Contracts Regulations 2006 ("the Regulations") require that the works be advertised via an OJEU notice or that an existing framework agreement let through an OJEU compliant procurement process be used.

7.2.2 The procurement process proposed in this instance complies with the requirements of the Regulations and thus of the EU public procurement regime.

7.2.3 The proposed procedure gives a high degree of confidence that the Council's primary objectives for procurement are met, as required by Rule 1.2.1 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules ("the CPRs").

7.2.4 Any call-offs let under this framework agreement must be advertised on the Kent Business Portal to ensure compliance with rule 3.3 of the CPRs, which set out the advertising requirements for procurements of this type.

7.2.5 Upon approval of Gateway 3 all documentation must be forwarded to Legal Services to be formally completed with the Contract Completion Form signed by Category Management. This is to ensure the contract is properly logged on the Council's contract register.

7.3 Procurement Implications

7.3.1 The framework proposed by the Client has been let following an advertised EU process and is accessible to the Council. Procuring through the framework should ensure the Council's obligations under the EU Regulations are met.

7.4 ICT Implications

7.4.1 ICT implications will depend on whether or not the incumbent supplier is successful in retaining the contract. If successful, ICT involvement will be minimal in the transition and the existing contract management procedures will continue. In the event the contract is awarded elsewhere, the transfer would need to be project managed and therefore a project manager to undertake that task.

8. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Diversity & Equality
None

8.2 Social, Economic & Environmental Considerations

8.2.1 The services will reduce the need for printed documentation as communications can be viewed through mobile technology.

8.2.2 The procured services will reduce the number of hardware installations for possible independent services and this will also reduce electrical consumption.

9. OTHER INFORMATION

9.1 No other information

10. PROCUREMENT BOARD

10.1 The Procurement Board considered this report on 13 August 2014 and supported the recommendation set out below.

11.   RECOMMENDATION

11.1   Cabinet is requested to approve procurement of the MGfL services; first line support, e-mail, web filtering and antivirus using the SEGfL framework.

12.   SUGGESTED REASONS FOR DECISIONS

12.1   This is the preferred option because it offers significantly reduced lead times to implementation, competition is ensured and it confirms the capability of the successful company. With the urgent requirement to improve standards achieved in our schools, it is imperative that schools have the most up to date and cost effective services. It provides best value for money and the quickest route to implementation.

LEAD OFFICER CONTACT

Name	Marc Dermody	**Title**	Schools' ICT Commissioner
Department	School Services Quality & Commissioning	**Directorate**	Children and Adults
Extension	8558	**Email**	marc.dermody@medway.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None