Herefordshire Council

Decision maker:	Officer: Director economy, communities and corporate
Decision date:	16 June 2017
Title of report:	Network security product procurements
Report by:	Performance manager - Hoople

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not a key decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To approve the renewal of the current Web-filtering solution and the award of a contract for a new firewall solution for Herefordshire Council.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

(a) a new contract for the provision the software maintenance for the councils web filtering solution is awarded to Foursys for a period of one year at a cost of £46k; and

(b) approve the procurement of and award a contract for a new firewall solution, to include five year support, at a cost of £160k via Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Framework RM3733 Lot 3.

Alternative options

1   **Do Nothing-** This is not recommended as:

a. the web filtering solution will remain unsupported, which would leave the council's network vulnerable to external threats and access to unauthorised web content; and

b. the firewall devices are nearing manufacturer End of Life (EoL) status and would cease to be supported making the existing firewall solution more vulnerable to security threats and breaches.

Reasons for recommendations

2   Herefordshire council operate a data network that is heavily relied upon and widely used by the council, its partner organisations and customers. Due to the nature of the data and information transmitted across the network as well as the business functions supported by the network, maintaining a secure network is vital.

3   Network security is achieved via various means including firewalls, which protect the perimeter of the network and web filtering which protects from and cleanses unsolicited web content. This enables the council to maintain its obligations regarding the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the information it processes.

4   In addition, in order to gain access to the public services network (PSN) and to access and share data across the government connect services platform, the network must be configured to and comply with specific PSN standards.

5   As such, there is a requirement to ensure the councils firewall solution and webs filtering solution are appropriately configured, adequately maintained and adequately supported.

Key considerations

6   In anticipation of the end of life status of the current firewall solution for the council, Hoople ICT have undertaken a review of the security requirements for the council's data network.

7   The review included an assessment of the council's requirements as well as an assessment of alternative products in the market place.

8   This resulted in the following key outcomes:

a. it was identified that a number differing key functionality requirements were needed in order to provide adequate protection for the council in respect of the changes in cyber-attack types to include intrusion detection and intrusion prevention, malware protection and threat detection;

b. as the corporate remote access solution is dependent on the current firewall solution, it is anticipated that there will be a need for this functionality to continue as part of the replacement solution. All market-leading firewall suppliers provide remote access (a Virtual Private Network, or VPN) as part of their firewall product and this has been included within the specification;

c. web filtering is now included in all major firewall offerings and as such, there is an opportunity to revisit the current web filtering solution particularly around web filtering when away from council premises; and

d. due to the changes in respect of virus and malware attack types becoming more prevalent through email, it is felt that it is prudent to include secure email gateway solutions as part of this request.

9   It is therefore recommended that the licence maintenance contract for the web filtering solution is renewed for a period of twelve months, to explore the opportunity identified in paragraph 9c. This renewal will be funded using existing ICT revenue budgets for 17/18.

10   A competitive tender for a new firewall solution is further recommended to focus on four key requirements:

a. External firewall solution offering capabilities to include malware protection, intrusion detection and prevention, secure email gateway, web address filtering, VPN (remote access and site 2 site)

b. Internal firewall solution offering traditional packet filtering/access rule capabilities and malware protection (layered security)

c. Remote web address filtering for council staff whilst working away from corporate sites and not connected to the council's corporate network

d. Secure email gateway (optional) –for a secure email gateway product to help protect from email containing viruses, malware and ransomware

11   It is anticipated that the solution will include the provision of hardware as well as software products with five year product support being included. All costs including five year support will be wrapped in an upfront payment as part of the contract.

12   The firewall replacement project, up to £160k, is included in the scope and capital budget for the datacentre refresh programme. No ongoing revenue costs are anticipated.

Procurement Strategy

13   **Current web filtering solution-** Competitive quotes for the renewal have been obtained. The quotes received are represented in the table below:

	Web Filtering (12 months)
Supplier A	£51,350
Supplier B	£49,276
Supplier C	£49,581
Supplier D- Foursys	£46,000

Based on the above, it is recommended that the current web filtering solution is awarded to Foursys at a cost of £46,000 for twelve months.

14   **Firewall replacement procurement-** a general further competition is recommended

using Crown Commercial Services (CCS) Framework RM 3733 Lot 3. In using the framework standards terms and conditions apply that cannot be varied. The terms have been reviewed by the report writer and deemed acceptable for use.

15   On the 1 of June 2017 the invitation to tender (ITT) will be issued to all 22 suppliers on the framework lot and all bids received by the closing date of 7 July will be evaluated by an evaluation panel of three; notice of contract award is scheduled for 11 August 2017.

16   To determine the most economically advantageous bid, the bids will be evaluated on the basis of compliance (pass/ fail), quality (20%) and price (80%).

17   Following evaluation, a tender evaluation report will be put forward to the delegated officer recommending that the contract be awarded to the bidder who submits the highest scoring bid.

Community impact

18   The above renewals and the firewall solution procurement will ensure that Herefordshire Council continues to provide a reliable and secure data network for the information and data transferred and processed for council services, its partners and for the residents of Herefordshire.

Equality duty

19   The Public Sector Equality Duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying "due regard" in our decision making in the design of polices and in the delivery of services.

20   As this decision is in regards to "back office" functions we do not believe that it will have any impact on our equality duty.

Financial implications

21   £46k web filtering maintenance cost for a period of twelve months which will be funded using existing council revenue budgets for 17/18.

22   £160k of the capital budget for the datacentre consolidation project has been allocated to fund the firewall replacements.

Legal implications

23   In relation to the renewal of and the current web filtering solution:

- Although described in this report as 'renewal', it is effectively a new contract.

- This report demonstrates compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in the procurement of this contract.

24   The proposed procurement of the new firewall solution from Crown Commercial Services Framework RM3733 would comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. It is assumed the Council will

follow the rules of this framework carefully, including use of the relevant terms and conditions.

Risk management

25   There are no risks identified with the above recommendation.

Consultees

26   None

Appendices

N/A

Background papers

- None identified.