

## Operational Decision Record

<b>Publication Date</b> 17/10/23	<b>Decision Reference Number</b> 5039
<b>Decision Title</b>	
East Midlands Library Consortium (EMLib) Library Management System (LMS) Tender	
<b>Decision Value</b>	
The estimated value of this decision is £245,000.  The costs are made up of LMS hosting for a 10-year contract term, support and maintenance, implementation of a new system and project management costs. This will be funded via existing library revenue budgets.	
<b>Revenue or Capital Spend?</b>	
Revenue	
<b>Department</b>	
Libraries (Sports, Culture & Tourism)	
<b>Contact Officer (Name, job title, and contact details)</b>	
Nigel Hawkins, Head of Culture & Libraries <a href="mailto:Nigel.hawkins@nottinghamcity.gov.uk">Nigel.hawkins@nottinghamcity.gov.uk</a> / 07807191454 or 64969	
<b>Decision Taken</b>	
To proceed with the procurement of a new LMS for Nottingham City Libraries due to the current LMS contract ending in November 2024.	

## **Reasons for Decision and Background Information**

### **East Midlands Library Consortium**

Nottingham City Council is part of the East Midland Libraries (EMLib) Library Management System (LMS) Consortium, which is made of six library authorities who have committed by way of partnership agreement to sharing a joint LMS solution. The Head of Service from each member authority's library service makes up the EMLib consortium board.

EMLib Consortium members are:

- Derby City Council
- Derbyshire County Council
- Inspire
- Leicestershire County Council
- Nottingham City Council
- Rutland County Council

The consortium approach for purchasing a single LMS solution across multi-authorities supports economies of scale and best value for money, provides us with enhanced technical functionality that members acting individually could not obtain and opens future collaboration opportunities through a consortium approach.

### **Library Management System**

The library management system (LMS) is a solution that logs and tracks library assets, user information and user status to support the management of library stock and customer activity. For example, the LMS tracks movement of library items (stock), orders (issues/returns), bills paid/owed and customers records and permissions. The LMS also supports: the acquisition of assets, stock circulation, asset lifecycle management, provides an integrated performance reporting tool and a customer communication functionality. The customer interface (the online catalogue) enables self-serve book searches, holds and the opportunity to share other library information including; information on library service offers, links to social media, external webpages and book stock promotion.

The LMS helps increase library delivery efficiencies through automation, saves time, reduces libraries operating costs and overheads, ensuring best value for Nottingham City Council. Current staffing levels are aligned with having a fully functioning LMS and the automation efficiencies across service operations that it brings. There would be a serious and significant risk to library service operations should the LMS not be replaced or if there were a gap in LMS support.

### **Current contract end dates**

The EMLib consortium's current LMS contract is with SirsiDynix, and consortium members have differing contract end dates. Nottingham City Council and Inspire current LMS contract expires first, in mid-November 2024, another two authority end dates are in March 2024, and the final two consortium members' end contract date is mid-July 2025. The differing end dates is a legacy from when the current contract was established ten years ago; in the new contract we will be aligning dates to ensure future contract change efficiencies moving forward.

The value of this decision includes the cost to the Council for 10 years' systems licence and on-going support and maintenance for the Council, and estimated project implementation and support costs such data mapping, project support, specialist advice etc., to be incurred before agreeing a contract.

### **Market research and identifying the best procurement approach**

For this project an LMS User Group has been established with representatives from across the consortium working together to review LMS functionality, procurement options and to identify the most efficient procurement approach for the consortium moving forward.

A pre-market engagement exercise commenced in September 2022 seeking information about LMS functionality and advice about migration and implementation due to the time lapse from this being done previously and significant market changes during this time. Six LMS providers were fully engaged throughout the soft market engagement exercise and, full and in depth responses from the suppliers, provided us with valuable information that fed into our tender process. Also, as part of the market research, the LMS User Group also engaged with other library services who were at different stages of procurement for their Library Management solutions which also supported valuable sharing of information and lessons learnt to better equip us to move into the tender stage.

The outcome of the initial market research was a recommendation for an open tender procurement exercise to allow for wider tender response opportunities across the LMS market and to enable a more suitable contract period, helping to achieve best value outcomes.

Later soft-market exercises over 2023 have allowed us to increase understanding of LMS functionality, how to present information to ensure a successful tender process and to help us establish realistic timelines for migration and implementation stage.

### **Project management, communication and collaboration channels**

It was agreed across the consortium that Nottinghamshire County Council Procurement Team would lead both the soft-market engagement, procurement and legal elements for this project; Nottingham City Council are leading on the project management and data protection elements for this project, and Inspire have provided the IT specialist support who has worked alongside our own libraries technical specialist as part of this project.

The Nottingham City Libraries project manager and technical specialist colleague provide regular update reports directly into the EMLib consortium Chair, and meet regularly along with the procurement and legal leads to ensure the smooth running of the project. The project manager also holds regular meetings with the EMLib consortium partners who are made up of a \*User Group representative from each library authority. The EMLIB chair, who is also the project sponsor, holds regular meeting with the other EMLIB Heads of Service across the consortium members and ensures commitment to the project and agreement to the various processes involved as part of this project.

\*The User Group is made up of a nominated member of staff from each EMLib consortium library authorities put forward by their Head of Service to be their library authority representative on this project.

### **Procurement**

Nottinghamshire County Council will lead the tender exercise and is working closely with the Nottingham City Council Libraries project manager and the project technical lead.

### **Data Protection**

Data protection advice for the LMS system and tender process is being provided both pre-tender and during the tender assessment process, by Nottingham City Council's Information Compliance department.

A DPIA is currently in progress at Nottingham City Council, and data protection advice has been offered to each of the EMLib consortium members as part of our project support.

### **Legal**

The EMLib consortium will have an overarching framework contract in place with the new supplier, with individual 'Call Off' contracts for each member of the consortium that will be flexible to reflect their bespoke authority requirements.

Nottinghamshire County Council have agreed to lead the EMLib consortium tender process and are responsible for the overarching framework agreement, and creating the call-off contract templates for each consortium member.

### **Project Milestones**

- Tender issue: August 2023
- Award: November 2023
- Framework & call-off contracts in place: by December 2023
- Data mapping and migration preparation: \*January – October 2024
- Staff training: c. September / October 2024 (estimated dates – tbc as part of the tender responses).
- GO LIVE on new contract:
  - Nottingham City Council and Inspire: by mid-November 2024Remaining migrations, and new contract go live, across the remaining consortium members need to take place before their respective current LMS end contract dates, which are:
  - March 2025, and
  - July 2025

\*Migration: as a note, the consortium may have a single or phased migration depending on the tender outcomes. This flexible approach will help ensure best value outcomes in the tender and reduce project risks.

## **Other Options Considered and why these were rejected**

**Option 1:** Withdrawal from the East Midlands Library Consortium and to conduct a procurement exercise solely for Nottingham City Council

- This was deemed unviable because there would be wider authority issues because we share library assets and customers with Inspire library authority who are also a consortium member. To support these shared resources, we are required to operate the same, and shared, LMS solution. The implication of not purchasing the new LMS within the consortium would be that both ourselves and Inspire would need to withdraw from the consortium and new SLA agreement would need to be established again with Inspire. This again is unviable.
- Purchasing through a consortium offers best value, reduced procurement risk and the most efficient procurement method.

**Option 2:** Withdrawal from the East Midlands Library Consortium and to no longer use a library management software.

- This was deemed unviable due to the volume and complexity of the transactions, data and interactions the library service manages through the library management system.
- Our library service would cease to operate without this level of automation and, should this be the case, it would render the library service unviable for operations or customer service without significant operational structure changes.
- Current staffing levels have been established around the use of the LMS system.

## **Reasons why this decision is classified as operational**

- This is a decision valued under £300,000.
- All decisions relating to the library service area budget commitment, carried out under this project, fall within the budget levels controlled by the officer taking the decision.
- We are seeking approval to procure as part of the East Midlands Library Consortium, up to the total value of £245,000.

## **Additional Information**

Advice from Procurement, Information Compliance and Corporate IT has been sought and implemented into the project and procurement process as required.

A DPIA process has commenced with the Information Compliance team and they are working closely with us during the tender preparation, through to the tender assessment and award stage. The DPIA will be updated again post tender once further system functionality areas are known, and Privacy Notices updated.

### **Project risks and mitigations**

- A disruption to library service due to any project delays:
  - Project timelines have been set realistically in terms of tender preparation, time assigned to set up the consortium contract/s, data

mapping and migration preparation and testing are all achievable in term of market expectations for this level of contract size and complexity

- We have requested from the incumbent supplier information of a temporary extension if required to mitigate this risk, although a cost implication this is possible to ensure public facing service continuity
  
- An LMS suppliers has all/part software not fit for purpose for our authority:
  - As part of the East Midlands library consortium we have had full input into the procurement process including outlining our full functionality requirements.
  - We have completed a pre-market engagement process to ensure an informed decision has been made.
  - Full engagement has bene sought across our service-wide library teams, Corporate IT, Information Compliance and Procurement teams prior to tender issue; this will ensure our tender documents outlines our requirements and that these are factored into our assessment of any new solution submitted through the tender process
  - The tender weighting matrix will support our LMS priorities
  
- Possible increase of project related costs due to the joint EMLib procurement approach
  - Any increase of project costs will be minimal and shared across each authority.
  - The increase in any wider consortium project costs will be outweighed by best value of a jointly purchases LMS solution.
  - The tender process will be priced per library authority and weighted according to size/scale of library authority.
  - A joint tender will ensure the best value for money for the council, including wider system efficiencies and support future collaboration opportunities.

### **Finance Comments**

This decision seeks approval to incur expenditure totalling £245,000 over a 10-year contract. The contract will be procured via the East Midland Libraries Management Consortium, made up of regional local authorities listed above, with the aim of securing value for money. The cost is affordable as the latest approved Medium Term Financial Plan includes resources identified for this system. In recent years the Library service has implemented cost reductions to recognise the automation of process, for example, self-serve book issues / returns, searches etc., and this system supports the on-going achievement of these savings and level of service.

Maria Balchin, Senior Commercial Business Partner, 14 July 2023

### **Decision Maker (Name and Job Title)**

Colin Parr, Corporate Director for Communities, Environment & Resident Services

<b>Scheme of Delegation Reference Number</b>
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<b>Date Decision Taken</b>
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06/10/2023
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