

REPORT OF  
The Strategic Director for Place Directorate  
TO  
Procurement Board  
ON  
3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021

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TITLE: Approval to Award the Contract to Confirm Solutions Ltd for the Confirm software system.

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RECOMMENDATION:

That Procurement Board approve the award of the Contract for Confirm Solutions Ltd, currently used by Technical Services and Environmental Services in Place, as detailed in the table below:

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Detail required	Answers
<b>Title/Description of Contracted Service/Supply/Project</b>	Provision of Confirm software system
<b>Name of Successful Contractor</b>	Confirm Solutions Ltd
<b>Supplier Registration Number</b> <i>(to be supplied by Corporate Procurement)</i>	12838751
<b>Type of organisation</b> <i>(to be supplied by Corporate Procurement)</i>	Private Limited Company
<b>Status of Organisation</b> <i>(to be supplied by Corporate Procurement)</i>	Non-SME
<b>Contract Value</b>	£522,569   Full Project
<b>Contract Duration</b>	24 months
<b>Contract Start Date</b>	01/04/2021
<b>Contract End Date</b>	31/03/2023
<b>Optional Extension Period 1</b>	12 months
<b>Optional Extension Period 2</b>	12 months

<b>Who will approve each Extension Period?</b>	Strategic Director (extension < £150k)	
<b>Contact Officer (Name &amp; number)</b>	Shoab Mohammad	
<b>Lead Service Group</b>	Place	
<b>How the contract was procured? (to be supplied by procurement)</b>	Framework	
<b>Framework Details (where applicable) (procurement body, framework reference &amp; title, start/ end date)</b>	Crown Commercial Services G-Cloud 12 Framework	
<b>Funding Source</b>	Revenue Budget	
<b>Ethical Contractor</b>	Mayor's Employment Charter Committed to sign up to charter	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
	Accredited Living Wage Employer	<input type="checkbox"/>

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the award of the above mentioned contract.

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**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:**

Not applicable.

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**KEY DECISION:** Yes, contract value is above £350k.

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**DETAILS:**

1. Background

The Confirm software is a strategic asset management tool which currently supports Highways and Environmental Services Teams in asset management of the Highway Network Management, Construction Services, GMRAPS Integration, Street Lighting, Bins and Waste Management, Parks and Recreation and Street Scene services. The system provides a desktop platform for officers to perform strategic and regulatory functions and a mobile app for operations teams to utilise around the City.

The Confirm software is owned and managed by Confirm Solutions Limited with the current contract term reaching its end 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 after a 5year term.

The renewal of Confirm as our asset management software of choice has been reviewed and approved by the Strategic Director of Place to go to the Procurement Board for Key Decision.

Confirm software has been the Council's software of choice for Highways Asset Management and Environmental Services since the mid 90's. Confirm is currently hosted in house via an OnPremise service but will move to a fully hosted OnDemand service for the proposed contract term. This upgrade of the service will bring significant improvements for end users and in overall system management and brings it in line with similar IT contracts the Council has in place, supporting the Council's IT strategy for managed service provisions.

Currently there are around 35 desktop users and 91 mobile app users across the two services, with the mobile licences used by our construction services gangs out on the highway, highway safety inspectors, bin wagon operatives, park wardens and street scene teams. The system is continually updated with live data from site operatives which interfaces with the Council's ReportIT CRM system and Street Manager the Greater Manchester Roads and Permit Scheme (GMRAPS) adding value and providing vital regulatory functions across the City.

The current On Premises solution requires IT resources to manage the system infrastructure and upgrade processes. With the hosted solution, these tasks will be managed by the supplier, releasing IT resource to add value in other areas such as in-system configuration and process re-engineering. It will also enable new software features and releases to be accessible sooner, adding further benefits to users of the system.

Giving approval to award the contract to Confirm Solutions Limited will contribute to the continued critical asset management of Highways and Environmental Services, these two essential service areas would be severely impacted should the contract award not be granted.

## 2. The Procurement Process

Highways and Environmental services, IT and Procurement teams have engaged in the re-procurement process and identified the G-Cloud Framework to support in this. A search of the Framework provided only a small number of companies who could provide the full suite of services currently utilised within the Confirm software, there were three suppliers including Confirm who were considered.

A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken to determine current market values and services. All three providers are able to provide some or all of the services required, all can provide both desktop and mobile functionality and all are solely offering hosted/cloud solutions.

The providers service structures differ somewhat with one presenting additional annual fees for otherwise embedded services within our current Confirm service provision. Overall comparison of fees shows an increased cost associated with switching provider with standard added costs for new customers associated with system setup, migration, integration, training etc.

Table A below shows a basic cost analysis between Confirm and the two other providers using Confirm discounted rates for a 2year commitment from providers utilising the Framework. This is based on known basic cost items but does not account for any unidentifiable annual fees and does not reflect the licence fee rates offered by Confirm Solutions in their January quotation which have been further discounted.

Table A.

	<i>Confirm</i>	<i>Provider B</i>	<i>Provider C</i>
<i>Year 1</i>	<b>171,936</b>	<b>218,944</b>	<b>182,250</b>
<i>Year 2</i>	<b>144,180</b>	<b>156,094</b>	<b>182,250</b>
<b><i>Total 2yr commitment</i></b>	<b>316,116</b>	<b>375,038</b>	<b>364,500</b>

All three providers on the Framework are able to provide competitive rates. Confirm Solutions Limited is the recommended system of choice and re-procurement relates to licences for a system we intend to continue to utilise. It also presents the most economical advantages and provides a number of additional non-financial benefits to the Council. Confirm is currently in place in Salford, holding large amounts of current and historical Council asset management data embedded in the system. Additional financial costs are associated with changing providers as well as further non-quantifiable costs associated with deconstructing and moving from one system to another e.g. system integrations, disruption to essential Council services, site operations, services downtime, user re-training, IT resource time.

Confirm Solutions Limited, have been engaging with the Council as our current contract nears its term end and have provided a quotation to move to the OnDemand hosted service. They are able to offer the Council additional discounted rates through the Framework, standard terms of the G-Cloud Framework are an initial 2 year contract with two 1 year extensions available. It is a recommendation of this report that the Council approves the rates associated with a full 4 year contract term.

Table B below reflects the contract costs as per Confirm Solutions Quotation dated Jan 2021. This is inclusive of licence fees, move to hosted service and data warehousing charges.

Table B.

<i>G-Cloud 4yr commitment</i>	<i>Yr1</i>	<i>Yr2</i>	<i>Yr3</i>	<i>Yr4</i>	<i>Total 4Yrs</i>
<b><i>Total yrly cost</i></b>	<b>£151,319.00</b>	<b>£123,750.00</b>	<b>£123,750.00</b>	<b>£123,750.00</b>	<b>£522,569.00</b>

Confirm Solutions have agreed to hold the quotation rates for the 4 year period and request a letter of intent from Salford for the 4year commitment.

Contract monitoring will be undertaken by Salford's IT team who will oversee and support the move to the proposed hosted service, access to the training portal and general IT support for the system. At the end of year 2 they will complete a service review of the number of licences held and utilised by both service areas and look to address any decrease in licence numbers for the remaining term.

### 3. Social Value

Confirm Solutions Limited can demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to deliver Social Value outcomes.

Confirm Solutions have allocated 3 days of time over a 12month period to the provision of volunteering time, details of which are yet to be determined.

They have also provided 2 years free access to their online training portal for the Confirm software, with a contract value worth of £4,000. This free access will provide 5 users of Salford's inhouse teams (IT, Technical and Environmental Services) direct access to improved system experience and functionality. This will support ongoing training requirements for current system super users and also provide the opportunity to access training modules for developing users.

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#### KEY COUNCIL POLICIES:

Not applicable.

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#### EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable.

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#### ASSESSMENT OF RISK:

There is an evident risk in a delay or not awarding this contract, associated with termination of our use of the system by Confirm Solutions Limited which would have a considerable impact on service delivery related to essential Council services. This risk is considered to be low in probability but high in severity.

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#### SOURCE OF FUNDING:

Funding will be split between the Highway Revenue Budget (Technical Services) and the Street Scene Revenue Budget (Environmental Services). Split/allocation calculated by types and numbers of licences assigned to each service.

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#### LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

When commissioning contracts for the procurement of goods, services or the execution of works, the Council must comply with the requirements of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR) and its own Contractual Standing Orders (CSO's), failing which a contract may be subject to legal challenge from an aggrieved provider. CSO's stipulate that where a suitable framework agreement exists, this must be used unless there is an auditable reason not to. The proposed award of the contract follows a direct award (call off) under the Crown Commercial Services G Cloud 12 Framework Agreement (CCS).

The CCS Framework is fully OJEU compliant and has been procured for named authorities, including Salford City Council and other public sector organisations to use. Each framework is an overarching agreement through which those named organisations can select a service from a range of providers by undertaking an exercise to call off the services (eg. direct award or mini competition) and enter into an individual contract/agreement with that provider, according to the terms of the framework agreement. A contract will then be formed between the Council and the chosen provider/s.

The Council will need to have followed the procedure set out in the Framework Agreement to ensure the process to award the contract to Confirm Solutions for the software services is compliant.

Supplied by: Tony Hatton, Principal Solicitor

#### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The costs of the contract are split between Highways and Environment Services based on the number of licences. The cost split is as follows:

<b>Total annual cost Highways</b>	£62,400	£48,615	£48,615	£48,615	£208,245
<b>Total annual cost Environment</b>	£88,920	£75,135	£75,135	£75,135	£314,325
<b>Total annual cost</b>	<b>£151,319.00</b>	<b>£123,750.00</b>	<b>£123,750.00</b>	<b>£123,750.00</b>	<b>£522,569.00</b>

These two essential service areas would be severely impacted should contract award not be granted.

Whilst there is sufficient budget within Highways to cover the cost, it will place pressure on the wider Environment services budget, these costs will have to be met within the service area.

Submitted by: Janet Cross, Finance Manager, x2858

#### PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS:

Supplied by: Emma Heyes, Category Manager, x6243

Crown Commercial Services GCloud 12 Framework is a fully OJEU complaint framework available for use by all public sector authorities. Selection and award of a contract can only be done via direct award.

The procurement process that was followed complies with the call-off requirements of the GCloud framework, and SCC contractual standing orders.

Following approval to award, the GCloud 12 Call-Off Form must be completed to formalise the contract between Confirm and the Council.

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HR IMPLICATIONS: Supplied by:

Not applicable

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CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS:

Not applicable

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OTHER DIRECTORATES CONSULTED:

Not applicable

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CONTACT OFFICER: Shoaib Mohammad  
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WARD(S) TO WHICH REPORT RELATE(S):

All

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