ITEM No …7….…….

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - 21 JUNE 2021

REPORT ON: CORPORATE IT SERVER UPGRADE

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT NO: 193-2021

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider the purchase of new server infrastructure to replace ageing equipment that supports the Council's corporate desktop and many applications used across the Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Committee -

• Agree to the purchase of Cisco server infrastructure.

• Remit the Head of Customer Services & IT to purchase Cisco server infrastructure and support to be compliantly procured through Crown Commercial Services Network Services framework.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Server infrastructure and support is estimated to cost up to £400,000 and will be met from IT capital budget

3.2 Staffing costs to support the deployment of the products to be met from existing Customer Services and IT staffing budgets.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 This report supports the Council's IT Strategy which was approved at Policy and Resources Committee on 18 February 2019 (Report 81-2019, Article VII of the minute refers). The Councils IT strategy sets out to deliver mobile and flexibly accessible services through low cost corporately deployed solutions. IT services requiring to be available anytime anywhere.

4.2 Dundee City Council currently utilises the Cisco Unified Computing System as the primary platform for server infrastructure. This platform was first purchased in 2015 and has been expanded in recent years. Major elements of the original platform are more than 5 years old and are reaching the end of their lifespan with support of the hardware due to expire.

4.3 The platform provides the underlying hardware for around 490 virtual servers that run the Council's key applications, digital services, databases and file stores. The hardware provides desktops to 4000 Council IT users as well as supporting the delivery of digital services to Citizens.

4.4 The Cisco Unified Computing System closely integrates server, storage and networking hardware to provide an easy to manage platform that can scale and adapt to the changing needs of Council services. Making it key in providing an IT service that is robust, agile, flexible and responsive. The functionality within the platform improves deployment times and simplifies the management of the server environment. Allowing for improved resilience and reliability of the Council IT service.

4.5 Replacement of ageing servers with the latest high-performance servers will increase capacity and reduce maintenance time. Overall power consumption and running costs are reduced as the number of servers are reduced. While still meeting current demands and any future requirements for growth.

4.6 Purchasing this new hardware allows the Council to take advantage of the latest server technologies and the benefits this provides. This includes better power efficiency, improved reliability and performance as well as introducing the latest security features.

4.7 Consolidation of all the Council's Microsoft Windows servers onto the Cisco platform has seen a significant reduction in running costs of the server infrastructure required to operate the Council's IT service. The upgrade and enhanced servers purchased in this exercise will allow consolidation of all the Council's Linux servers onto the same Cisco platform with a further significant reduction in running costs of the server infrastructure as well as cost avoidance in future server renewals.

4.8 The Cisco platform provides large amounts of computing power with a reduced server footprint, which helps increase density of applications and services. It offers a wide range of functionality, benefits and cost savings. The policy-based approach to management provides the simplicity, automation and capabilities to minimise support overheads.

4.9 The timescale to adopt alternatives to Cisco UCS and associated costs would be considerable. The Council has many years' experience in deploying the Cisco UCS platform. A steep learning curve would be required to deploy an alternative. It would also require running two different platforms in parallel and duplicating costs to support the existing platform whilst a lengthy project was progressed to adopt a new platform. There would be considerable risk of disruption to users and citizens during this process as hundreds of virtual servers would require to be rebuilt.

4.10 A Procurement exercise will be carried out on the Crown Commercial Services Network Services framework to procure the hardware at the most competitive price.

5.0   POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report has been subject to an assessment of any impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. There are no major issues.

6.0   CONSULTATIONS

The Council Management Team were consulted in the preparation of this report.

7.0   BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

ROBERT EMMOTT   **Date: 7 JUNE 2021**
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES