

Scotland Excel

To: Joint Committee

On: 11 December 2020

**Report by:
Chief Executive of Scotland Excel**

Scotland's Technical Asset Management Platform (STAMP)

1. Summary

This paper updates the Committee on work undertaken by Scotland Excel, supported by the Scottish Local Government Digital Office (SLGDO), with ICT (Information and Communications Technology) and Digital Transformation leads from councils. The purpose of this work was to develop and populate an asset management register to identify collaborative contracting opportunities.

2. Recommendation

Members of the Scotland Excel Joint Committee are invited to note the current position of the ongoing work in relation to the gathering of ICT Systems details and contract information from all of Scotland's councils.

3. Background

Councils in Scotland use multiple ICT software systems to support service delivery across all services. The acquisition, support and maintenance of these systems are a significant budgetary commitment for all local authorities. In partnership with the SLGDO, Scotland Excel identified that councils would benefit from a Scotland wide analysis of existing ICT systems and associated contracts. This analysis will lead to the identification of short, medium and longer term opportunities for collaborative procurement, contract management, community benefits and financial efficiencies.

The initial challenge was to establish a baseline of the existing systems landscape across Scotland. The first attempt to gather the information was a distributed request to ICT leads via email with a spreadsheet attached for completion.

This baseline is important to understand what systems are in use, who are the suppliers to local government in Scotland, what do we spend on these systems and services, what technologies are used most commonly and what are the current contractual obligations. This information will inform the planned analysis.

The request for information led to the discovery that the detail requested was not easily accessed, software assets were not recorded uniformly, indeed in some instances, not at all.

This presented a further opportunity, which was to create an asset management platform that all councils could use to record key software asset information and that would deliver a range of benefits.

4. Progress to Date

South Lanarkshire Council offered technical resource to develop a software asset management information capture tool. Scotland Excel contributed to the specification, development and testing of the software.

Since the launch of the software tool eighteen months ago until March of this year, c.44% of councils had uploaded information into the asset management repository. However, this has since increased to c.59% - a summary of which can be found in appendix 1. The level of contribution was somewhat lower than anticipated, however barriers were identified that explained this position, including, only a single person per service access and the fact that the information did not all reside with a single officer group. Momentum stalled from March of this year with the onset of the pandemic and a need for councils to focus their resources in an appropriate response, coupled with a re-positioning of ICT support in all local authority areas.

Scotland Excel took this as an opportunity to review the feedback on the tool from the participating Local Authorities and address the barrier issues. Significant enhancements were planned and implemented, again with the support of South Lanarkshire technical developers. The latest version now has improved security features, easier & wider accessibility, audit features and additional recording / reporting functionality. West Lothian Council agreed to carry out extensive testing on the revised software and this has recently been concluded.

The latest version of the software has been named Scotland's Technical Asset Management Platform or STAMP in short and is being re-launched to all councils in collaboration with the SLGDO.

5. Benefits

Engagement across the sector has previously led to the realisation of a number of collaborative opportunities. This includes contracts for online school payments systems, customer service platforms and the current live tender exercise for social work care case management systems. However, more comprehensive information on current platforms and contract conditions will help to support the wider digital transformation, modernisation and standardisation agendas across the sector. It is anticipated that this will be phased, and include: -

Short Term

- a more informed understanding of the Scottish local government sector technology landscape
- an increased ability to effectively collaborate, share knowledge and skills to mitigate the requirement for external consultancy
- the identification of opportunities to work together to secure better deals from suppliers through the identification of common solutions
- the realisation of potential benefits, in the form of cashable savings, through an understanding of equivalent contracts in place across local government
- the identification of opportunities to engage with SME's around service innovation

Medium Term

- a more effective supplier and contract management relationship
- the reduction of support costs through identifying where councils could pool support and development expertise in virtual teams
- the identification of collaborative market engagement opportunities for new products and services

Longer Term

- an improvement in citizen experiences and outcomes through a standardised service delivery model across the sector

6. Next Steps

In conjunction with the Scottish Local Government Digital Office, a briefing note has been created to support the re-launch of the latest version of STAMP for distribution to council Chief Executives via SOLACE, heads of procurement via Scotland Excel and Heads of IT and Transformation via SLGDO.

To assist councils in reaching the full potential of this system, Scotland Excel will participate in one to one meetings with individual Local Authorities to demonstrate the functionality of STAMP and to offer advice, support and assistance on implementation and usage.

The information recorded in STAMP will inform a timeline of collaborative procurement opportunities by service sector and spend, and it will allow councils to be grouped by contract status and terms. Although currently incomplete, the data available so far will be used to develop initial contracting opportunities, which can be expanded as additional information is made available.

An enhanced user intelligence group (UIG), including subject matter experts from ICT, Procurement and Service Management will be created to consider the business merits of identified ICT collaborative opportunities. The Scottish local government Digital Assurance board will ensure that these procurements are aligned to and support the wider digital transformation policies agreed by the Scottish Government.

Appendix 1 – Council submission summary

Council	Submission level
Aberdeen City Council	None
Aberdeenshire Council	Full
Angus Council	Full
Argyll and Bute Council	Partial
City of Edinburgh Council	None
Clackmannanshire Council	None
Comhairle nan Eilean Siar	None
Dumfries and Galloway Council	Full
Dundee City Council	Partial
East Ayrshire Council	Partial
East Dunbartonshire Council	Full
East Lothian Council	None
East Renfrewshire Council	Full
Falkirk Council	Partial
Fife Council	Partial
Glasgow City Council	Partial
Highland Council	None
Inverclyde Council	None
Midlothian Council	Full
Moray Council	None
North Ayrshire Council	Full
North Lanarkshire Council	None
Orkney Islands Council	None
Perth & Kinross Council	Full
Renfrewshire Council	Partial
Scottish Borders Council	None
Shetland Islands Council	None
South Ayrshire Council	None
South Lanarkshire Council	Full
Stirling Council	Partial
West Dunbartonshire Council	Full
West Lothian Council	Full