

<b>Report to:</b>	Executive Cabinet Member – Leaders Portfolio		
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	10 January 2023		
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Corporate Resources	<b>Report Number:</b>	32518
<b>Reporting Officer:</b>	Lee Fallows, Director of Corporate Resources	<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01204 332050
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Karen Fairhurst, HR Resourcing Lead	<b>Telephone Number:</b>	01204 338515
<b>Report title:</b>	Intention to Retender for eRecruitment System as part of GM Collaboration		
<b>Not confidential</b>			
This report does not contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public.			
<b>Purpose:</b>	This report seeks permission to continue in the GM eRecruitment collaboration as we go out to tender for a new recruitment advertising solution in 2023		
<b>Recommendations:</b>	The Executive Cabinet Member is recommended to:  Approve the continued involvement in the GM eRecruitment collaboration and associated re-tender activity for a new recruitment advertising solution.		
<b>Decision:</b>			
<b>Background documents:</b>	N/A.		
<b>Signed:</b>	Leader/Executive Cabinet Member	Monitoring Officer	
<b>Date:</b>			
<b>Consultation with other officers</b>			
Finance	Yes	Aug 2021	Katherine Roscoe
Legal	No		
HR	Yes	Oct 2021	Lee Fallows/Dawn Longworth
Procurement	No		
Climate Change	No		
Equality Impact Assessment	No		I
<b>(a) Pre-consultation reports</b> Is there a need to consult on the proposals?			No
<b>Vision outcomes</b>		1. Start Well	

Please identify the appropriate Vision outcome(s) that this report relates or contributes to by putting a cross in the relevant box.	2. Live Well	
	3. Age Well	
	4. Prosperous	X
	5. Clean and Green	
	6. Strong and Distinctive	

## 1. **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. In 2008, Bolton together with the other Greater Manchester Councils entered a partnership to purchase an online Applicant Tracking System (ATS) which enabled all job adverts to be placed on one platform and for applications to be made online into the system and tracked through to completion. An ATS allows a seamless journey for applicants, recruiting managers can shortlist and offer interviews via online communications and HR can manage the end-to-end recruitment process in one place without recourse to time-consuming paper processes. The collaboration retendered for a new system in 2016 and with this, developed a brand (greater.jobs) and a website that is wholly owned by the group. The latter is hosted under a separate contract.
- 1.2. The current contracts for ATS provider and website host are due to end in August 2024 and due to the size and scale of the collaborative project, retender work and implementation of a new system will take approximately 18 months.

## 2. **ISSUES**

- 2.1. The implementation of the ATS in 2016 was rushed due to the impending end of the previous contract and the group learnt many lessons from the approach taken therefore considerable lead-in time needs to be factored into the project plan for the retender.
- 2.2. The market for ATS providers is large and it is likely that there will be many options and many tenderers when we do issue the Invitation to Tender (ITT). It is important therefore that considerable work is undertaken before the ITT is written to ensure a clear specification and that providers will be able to deliver to a group of our size and at a reasonable cost.

## 3. **CURRENT POSITION**

- 3.1. The success of the greater.jobs brand has grown year on year and the site now attracts around 250,000 candidates monthly. The brand and website content are wholly owned by the founding collaborators and there is no intention to change this, although website look and feel is routinely developed in line with market-trends and to ensure accessibility compatibility.
- 3.2. Working as a collaborative has meant that we have benefited from economies of scale in terms of the costs of the original system and subsequent developments to it. This will be true of a replacement ATS therefore it is cheaper to remain as a larger group than to purchase alone.
- 3.3. In addition, Bolton Council benefits from the central greater.jobs team income generation activities which are now considerable and aiming towards self-funding, whilst extending the reach of the greater.jobs brand to additional customers across the North-West. This allows us to undertake marketing activity and attend events that otherwise would be out of our financial reach if we were to do these as a stand-alone Council, for example transit point marketing on bus and tram stops in conjunction with Transport for Greater Manchester during October and November; attendance booked for the North-West Jobs Fair at the Trafford Centre in January 2023.
- 3.4. The collaboration have undertaken significant project work over the last 18 months to improve the candidate journey within the ATS and developed the website look and feel in line with user feedback and more closely align our back office processes where possible, with a view to jointly tendering for a new system in 2023. As systems have developed significantly since 2015 when we last replaced the system, soft market testing activity has been started to help us to understand what is available and what areas are key to include in tender documentation. Several companies have been invited

to present their systems to the collaboration in early December and this will inform our work going forwards.

- 3.5. Indicative timescales for the project are for the tender to be issued in early Summer next year with view to award towards the end of 2023 and implementation activity over the following six months.

#### 4. **OPTIONS**

- 4.1. The Council needs to have an online recruitment system to effectively manage applications for jobs. Candidates expect an online process and a swift response to applications. Not having an online application process would be a significant step backwards and would negatively impact on our ability to manage job applications, thereby impacting candidates, recruiting managers and HR Administrators. The additional time and cost involved in managing a paper-based process would be considerable. Our options are therefore:

- Do nothing and remain with the current provider – this is not viable as we are coming to the end of an 8-year contract therefore procurement legislation requires we re-tender
- Retender alone without the GM collaboration – this would be very costly and would mean extensive additional work for Procurement, HR and Legal in managing a tender process and subsequent contract
- Retender as part of the GM collaboration – this is the preferred option as costs are shared and Wigan Council would be the main contract holders, taking the burden of procurement and contractual work from the collaboration partners

#### 5. **IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS:**

##### 5.1 **Financial**

- 5.1.1 There will be cost implications involved with the procurement of a new system however the central greater.jobs GM management team are income generating so some of the costs will come from that shared balance and Bolton have already made a down-payment from 2021-22 budget of £50,000 to offset the costs of replacing the system.

##### 5.2 **Legal**

- 5.2.1 The contract will be held by Wigan Council as per current collaboration arrangements and we will “call-off” from the main contract. Our Legal team will be engaged at the relevant time.

##### 5.3 **HR**

- 5.3.1 The local contract management is already covered by Corporate HR and there will be no change to this arrangement.

##### 5.4 **Climate Change**

- 5.4.1 NONE

##### 5.5 **Other**

- 5.5.1 NONE

## 6. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA)**

- 6.1. Under the Equality Act 2010, the council has a general duty to have due regard to the need to:
1. **eliminate unlawful discrimination**, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act;
  2. **advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it; and
  3. **foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- 6.2. It is important to consider how the proposals contained within this report may impact positively or negatively on protected characteristics. It has been determined that due to the fact that the website will not change and this is the public-facing side of the system, which is routinely assessed for accessibility capabilities, it is not anticipated that the proposals within this report will have a differential impact on any of Bolton's diversity groups, including staff. A full EIA is therefore not required at this stage.

## 7. **CONSULTATION**

Not applicable, however trade unions will be informed of the proposed changes

## 8. **VISION 2030**

- 8.1 The proposal will meet the Prosperous outcome by enabling employment for the borough's residents through a streamlined recruitment portal and ensuring all opportunities are available to all.

## 9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1. The Executive Cabinet Member/Cabinet is recommended to:
- Approve the continued involvement in the GM eRecruitment collaboration and the associated re-tender activity for a new recruitment/advertising solution

# Bolton Council

