

## Delegated Officer Report

<b>Decision Maker:</b>	<b>Richard Lynch</b>
<b>Date of Decision:</b>	<b>12/03/2021</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Procurement of replacement MIS Database</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Jon Bloor</b>
<b>Ward (s):</b>	N/a

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### **Reason for the decision:**

Oldham Council's Lifelong Learning Service offers a range of courses to upskill the residents of Oldham and move them closer to employment. The impact of Covid 19 restrictions has required the service to move learning onto an online platform. Current feedback in respect of remote/virtual learning measures that have been put in place due to COVID-19 show that a high volume of learners **do not** have the digital resources and or internet access to engage with their learning.

The Service applied to Greater Manchester Combined Authority Skills Capital fund and was successfully a £50k grant. The bid set out the desire to create a **digital resource loan scheme** that would be put in place for these learners to enable them to carry out their remote learning and this will, where required, include packages for internet access.

Learners needs are currently being assessed in respect of their access to digital resources and data. It is proposed that those who do not have digital resources, causing a barrier to them enrolling/carrying out their course of learning, are loaned a digital resource.

It is anticipated that as this scheme is rolled out an ongoing need for remote learning and development of further online courses will continue. The digital

devices will enable the most disadvantaged learners to access provision.

The system will be robust and will monitor and check equipment to ensure that it can continue to be reused with the next cohort of learners

We will collect initial and ongoing feedback from learners that shows how this scheme has helped them in terms of quality and learning experience. We will use this feedback to review the system and make any changes that may be required in respect of these findings.

The report requests to use £50k of GMCA grant(100% externally funded) to purchase between 300-340 android tablets. A request for service and quotes have been carried out. It has been decided to purchase a small number of sim-enabled devices to allow the service to offer data-packages to those that do not have access to broadband. The cost of the data packages will be funded by the "Dedicated Learner Support" fund – part of the Adult Education Budget allocation.

**Summary:**

The report seeks to spend £50,000 Capital IT grant following a successful bid to GMCA to buy Android Tablets to loan to learners to enable learners to access online training provision delivered by Lifelong Learning Service. Each learner will be assessed prior to being loaned a device to ensure it meets their needs. Each device will be handed out in a Covid19 secure assessed manner. Returned tablets will be cleaned and factory reset, applications (e.g. Moodle app) reloaded before being re-loaned. This will be managed by the service.

***What are the alternative option(s) to be considered? Please give the reason(s) for recommendation(s):***

The alternative options were: 1. buy laptops but this requires greater infrastructure support and reduces the number of learners that can be supported. The tablets provide adequate access to the online provision; or 2. Do nothing to support learners and give the £50k grant back to GMCA.

***Consultation: including any conflict of interest declared by relevant Cabinet Member consulted.***

Consultation has taken place with Unity ICT, Cabinet Member and service users (Curriculum Managers, Programme Leaders and Business Support officers). No conflict of interest.

**Recommendation(s):**

The preferred option is to use the £50k of GMCA Capital investment to purchase 300- 340 digital devices.

**Implications:**

*What are the **financial** implications?*

This report is seeking approval to accept and use the GMCA Capital funding of £50K to purchase digital tablets as per the quotation in Appendix 1. This will enable access to remote learning to learners who do not have access to digital resources and/or the internet.

This is a ring-fenced grant with a spending deadline of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. Should any items be ordered and not delivered before the deadline this will be ineligible for grant and will be a cost to the services revenue budget, however it is not envisaged any items will not be delivered at this stage.

The total cost of the tablets is £50k (see appendix 1 for quote). There is a potential ongoing charge for data packages – this will be bought on an individual learner case by case for a month at a time and will be funded by the Dedicated Learner Fund (within the AEB) and therefore will not require financing by the mainstream revenue budget of the Council.

The service will pre-load the Moodle app which is a free app that links to the service's Virtual Learning Environment.

The staff costs for managing the process (handling and managing the loan of tablets) will be managed within the service.

(Catherine Dunkerley – Accountant)

*What are the **legal** implications?*

None (Colin Brittain)

*What are the **procurement** implications?*

The programme will be procured via Unity partnership and will follow IT procurement rules.

What are the **Human Resources** implications? n/a

**Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment** attached or not required because (please give reason) This will help support the learners that are digitally excluded and by definition suffering from lacking access to skills provision that will help overcome barriers. This will be based on demand/need rather than based on diversity issues.

What are the **property** implications None

**Risks:** The risk relating to the handling of the devices are being managed by the Service's Digital Policy. The risk of not approving the purchase is that a significant proportion of learners will not achieve their qualifications/learning outcomes which could impact on the service's performance which in turn could impact on the level of grant awarded/clawed back.

**Co-operative agenda** The decision will support the Lifelong Learning service to continue to deliver high quality skills provision via online provision during the Covid19 Pandemic

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Has the relevant Legal Officer confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council's Constitution? Yes


Has the relevant Finance Officer confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council's budget? Yes/

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? No

**Reason(s) for exemption from publication:** N/a

**List of Background Papers under Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:**

<b>Title</b>	<b>Available from</b>
GMCA Capital Bid	Head of Service

<b>Report Author Sign-off:</b>	
Jonathan Bloor	
<b>Date:</b>	15.02.2021

Please list and attach any appendices:-

<b>Appendix number or letter</b>	<b>Description</b>
1	Quote for Android Tablets

In consultation with Managing Director of CYP



Signed :

Date: 15 March 2020

Appendix 1 - GMCA £50,000 Capital Grant GMCA to Oldham Lifelong Learning Service

Item	Sim Card Compatible	Ram/Rom	Cost Excluding VAT	VAT per Unit	Cost per Unit inc VAT	No of units required	Total cost (£)
Lenovo Tab M10 ZA5A	Y	2gb/32g	£132.00	£26.40	£158.40	170	£26,928
OVO TB 8505F TAB 2G 32GGR GB CML 8"	Y	2gb/32g	£97.00	£19.40	£116.40	170	£19,788
						Total	£46,716
10" Tablet Cases			@£8	£1.60	£9.60	170	£1,632
8 "Tablet Cases			@£8	£1.60	£9.60	170	£1,632
						Total	£3,264
						Grand Total	£49,980