# PART A

**Report to CABINET**

# Rubrik Air Gap Backup Solution

**Portfolio Holder:**
Cllr Jabbar – Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources

**Officer Contact:** Sayyed Osman, Deputy Chief Executive

**Report Author:** John Craig, Senior IT Project Manager

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**Reason for Decision**

Ensuring our services and data is protected against loss is critical for both disaster recovery scenarios and to protect against accidental deletion, corruption or other error leading to a loss of information.  The Council has utilised Commvault hardware and software for several years to safeguard our on-premises data in Oldham. This has been a very effective and reliable mechanism for backing up system and user data.  However, the modern IT landscape provides little protection for that data beyond retaining multiple, geographically separate copies.  There is no ability to protect the backup data against malicious damage (e.g. Ransomware attack), nor any mechanism to protect services held in the Cloud. The timeframe for recovery of services on a large scale would make restoration in a DR scenario unacceptable, and the hardware supporting the service is approaching the end of its life.  As such, the ability of Commvault to be an effective solution as we advance is highly questionable.

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of the report is to ask for funding from the Cabinet to procure a modern data protection service which is Cloud aware (to enable it to support our cloud migration strategy), able to effectively protect data against deletion or manipulation (immutability) and capable of interrogating data being backed up to identify and mitigate against potential threats (ransom/malware etc.).

Oldham IT has investigated several options around a modern data protection solution based on the market leaders in this area (according to Gartner's Magic Quadrant) and identified Rubrik's 'Zero Trust Data Management' solution as the ideal candidate to replace our legacy backup product. Many Councils, particularly those hit with ransomware, have identified Rubrik as best placed to protect them moving forwards – Redcar & Cleveland being a significant relevant example, where they also conducted a detailed assessment of the market and then ultimately selected Rubrik.

Rubrik is working with 50+ Councils across the UK, including Manchester City Council, GMCA, Birmingham City Council and Blackpool Council.

Our goal is to meet the following outcomes:

- Our ability to securely protect and recover Oldham Council data is a significant measurable improvement.
- An ability to protect Cloud hosted services and data.
- An ability to automatically interrogate data held in backups will allow a better understanding of the data type (for governance purposes) and identify potential dormant threats or malicious files.

The Rubrik platform will also uniquely allow the Council to identify where sensitive data is located within the business (i.e. PII, PCI, credit card numbers, NI numbers) and greatly enhances reporting of any breach that may result in regulatory fines and/or legal action. This would also increase the Council's security posture in meeting & exceeding the NCSC Cyber Assessment Framework (CAF), particularly the NCSC's 3-2-1 Framework.

### Recommendations

Procure the Rubrik Air Gap system and migrate all Council data and backup requirements to the Rubrik solution, ceasing the use of the Commvault solution altogether. This approach provides the most comprehensive risk mitigation by covering all data and functions, ensuring the ability to promptly restore data and Council services.

**Rubrik Air Gap Backup Solution**

1       **Background**

1.1     Oldham IT has investigated several options around a modern data protection solution based on the market leaders in this area (according to Gartner's Magic Quadrant) and identified Rubrik's 'Zero Trust Data Management' solution as the ideal candidate to replace our legacy backup product.  Many Councils, particularly those hit with ransomware, have identified Rubrik as best placed to protect them moving forwards – Redcar & Cleveland being a significant relevant example, where they also conducted a detailed assessment of the market and then ultimately selected Rubrik. Rubrik is working with 50+ Councils across the UK, including Manchester City Council, GMCA, Birmingham City Council and Blackpool Council

2       **Current Position**

2.1     The existing Commvault backup solution is not immutable or air-gapped, and so is potentially vulnerable to data loss or corruption through a malware attack (As seen in Redcar and Cleveland Council and more recently. with Manchester University)

3       **Options/Alternatives**

3.1     The option to stay with the incumbent supplier, Commvault, was considered. However, this option was a more expensive option and did not provide the guarantees around data recovery and Recovery Time Objective (RTO) that the Rubrik solution does.

4       **Preferred Option**

4.1     Procure the Rubrik Air Gap system and migrate all Council data and backup requirements to the Rubrik solution, ceasing the use of the Commvault solution altogether. This approach provides the most comprehensive risk mitigation by covering all data and functions, ensuring the ability to promptly restore data and Council services.

5       **Consultation**

5.1     None

6       **Financial Implications**

6.1     The financial information is included in Part B Confidential Information.

7       **Legal Services Comments**

7.1     The NHS Shared Business Services, being a Central Purchasing Body, has entered into a framework arrangement with multiple service providers for the provision of Cyber Security Services. The Framework Agreement offers a complete range of external support services to help NHS and wider public sector organisations manage cyber risks and recover in the event of a cyber security incident. Under Lot 2 of the Framework Agreement (Cyber Security Consultancy Services) contracting authorities can commission specialist support to enhance cyber credentials, including Data Security On-Site Assessments, Security Testing, Technical Assurance, Forensics and Investigations, Policy Development, Awareness and

Training. The Framework Agreement allows for both direct awards and mini competitions. In this matter a direct award is proposed. Rule 4 of the Contract Procedure Rules together with the Public Contract Regulations 2015 allow for call-offs to be made under compliant framework arrangements. Therefore, provided the Commercial Procurement Unit is satisfied that the direct award criteria applicable to this Framework Agreement can be applied and provided the call-off is arranged and formalised in accordance with the terms of the Framework Agreement, with advice from Legal Services on the form of call-off contract, there are no known legal implications to the proposed recommendation. (Sarah Orrell, Commercial and Procurement Solicitor)

## 8. Co-operative Implications

8.1 Procuring Rubrik to protect data across services aligns to the Council's Co-operative agenda as Rubrik is a single software platform that delivers backup, recovery, archival, compliance, and cloud data management that is secure from cyber-attacks with an air-gapped, immutable file system that can't be modified, deleted, or encrypted by hackers. This is essential as over the past few years there has been a growing threat of hackers stealing information. This will also allow services to maintain essential data relating to services and residents and deliver high-quality services (Mahmuda Khanom, Policy Support Officer)

## 9 Human Resources Comments

9.1 N/A – This is a technical requirement to replace critical equipment.

## 10 Risk Assessments

10.1 The Council is aware of ransomware attacks at other local authorities and the risks of loss of, or the inability to access data. The existing software (Commvault) is approaching the end of support. The existing backup solution is not immutable or air-gapped, and so is potentially vulnerable to data loss or corruption through a malware attack. Attacks at Redcar and Cleveland Council and more recently with Manchester University have shown the severity of the financial and reputational impact a cyber-attack can have on an organisation. The Rubrik Air Gapped backup solution needs to be understood by those looking after business continuity, disaster recovery and emergency planning to ascertain how this will improve the Council's resilience in the event of an incident. Consideration needs to be given around the changing IT technology and this product should be reviewed periodically to ensure it meets the changing IT landscape over time. There is a risk due to the complexity of the implementation and the numerous dependencies as part of this change, that other in-flight IT projects could be impacted.
Vicki Gallacher (Head of Insurance and Information Governance)

## 11 IT Implications

11.1 This is an IT driven project and has been through the internal project governance board approval process.

## 12 Property Implications

12.1 N/A - This is a technical requirement to replace critical equipment.

## 13 Procurement Implications

13.1 Commercial Procurement Unit supports the recommendation: Option 2: Procure the Rubrik Air Gap system and migrate all Council data and backup requirements to the Rubrik solution, ceasing the use of the Commvault solution altogether. Procurement have worked with IT

colleagues and assisted with the evaluation of available applications, with Rubrik Air Gap system identified as the preferred solution. The procurement for this project will be via SBS Contract ref: SBS/19/CW/ZMD/9348, Lot 2 Cyber Security Consultancy Services, direct award. Oldham Council are set up on this framework, Procurement will ensure all buying guidelines are followed. This framework is compliant with the Councils' Contract Procedure Rules and PCR compliant. (Senga Henstock – ICT Senior Buyer)

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

14.1 There are no environmental and Health and Safety implications. The incumbent backup solution equipment will be replaced by more modern energy efficient hardware.

15 **Community cohesion disorder implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

15.1 None

16 **Oldham Impact Assessment completed (including impact on Children and Young People)**

16.1 Yes – This is attached at Appendix 1

17 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 FCR-01-23

19 **Background Papers**

19.1 None

20 **Appendices**

20.1 Appendix 1 EIA Rubrik Air Gap Backup Solution