



## **CABINET 16<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2024**

**SUBJECT:           CONNECTING CARE SOCIAL SERVICES DATA BASE  
REPLACEMENT SYSTEM**

**REPORT BY:       INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR SOCIAL SERVICES**

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### **1.     PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1    To seek Cabinet approval of a recommendation that the one-off cost of £162k associated with the essential replacement of the social care data base WCCIS is funded from the Social Services retained underspend reserve.

### **2.     SUMMARY**

- 2.1    The technical support for the current information case management system used within social care (WCCIS) reaches end of life use in January 2026. The Local Authority has no control over the cessation of this support and is a national (Wales wide) issue.
- 2.2    This will result in significant risks in terms of cyber-attack with data being at risk of being compromised at that time. The system will become unsupported and render itself unusable.
- 2.3    Social care cannot function without an effective information system and the risks associated with having no system in place relate to the effectiveness of safeguarding, care planning, multi-agency working and will in effective result in an insurmountable risk to individuals and the organisation.
- 2.4    Although indications are that there will be, there is currently no confirmed additional financial support from Welsh Government.
- 2.5    The 5 Local authorities in Gwent agreed to develop a regional approach to procurement and implementation of a single instance of a new system.
- 2.6    Newport City Council have led on the procurement process, the tender has concluded, and we now need to agree the award of the contract to enable work

to commence in December 2024 for 14 months to ensure the authority is able to meet the deadline for transfer to a new data base.

- 2.7 Data migration is a key risk for all the authorities, as a result the WLGA has commissioned independent legal advice which will be available shortly. Costs for data migration have not been established at this stage but they are likely to be significant in relation to legacy systems. These costs are being included in a business case being submitted to the Welsh Government along with the need for additional resources to implement the system. If funding is not forthcoming from WG there may need to be a further call on Social Services reserves for the data migration.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Cabinet agree the £162k of the one-off cost for the new system.
- 3.2 Cabinet note the potential further cost of data migration to the new system if WG funding support is not agreed.

### **4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 The tender needs to be awarded across the region to enable the timelines to be met to ensure that Social Services can meet its legislative responsibilities.

### **5. THE REPORT**

- 5.1 The existing WCCIS system has been in place since November 2016, currently 771 staff have access to a broad range of data and information held on people. This information is both contemporary and historic which enables effective care planning, decision making and risk management.
- 5.2 As a result of concerns expressed across all Local Authorities re confidence in Digital Health Care Wales (DHCW) to oversee the process the Senior Responsible Officers group was established to try to influence the process to meet the needs of social care professionals. The urgent nature of this report is to ensure time scales are met to move to a new platform to mitigate the risks.
- 5.3 Regionally we have established a Connecting Care Board which Directors attend.
- 5.4 The Health Board currently hosts the regional WCCIS team. These posts are essential as they conduct critical functions including data migration, data security, data sharing, testing, and reporting. DHCW fund these posts, but funding has yet to be confirmed for the remainder of this financial year. To mitigate against this risk the Directors put forward a successful bid to the Regional Integration Fund (RIF) for funding from partnership money given the significance of the risk for all partners.

5.5 The Regional Board has also identified the need to establish an additional 3 FTE fixed-term posts to be based in the regional team, employed by Torfaen County Borough Council, RIF will be used to fund these posts .A Service level agreement is in place across the 5 LA's.

5.6 The development of a national business case to Welsh Government is ongoing, we have provided information in respect of additional resources required to implement the system in Caerphilly based on previous experience of migration to WCCIS.

5.7 The lack of clarity on funding remains the biggest risk and is reflected in the Social Services and corporate risk register.

## 5.8 **Conclusion**

The replacement of the WCCIS system came sooner than expected. However regionally and nationally authorities have worked together to try to mitigate the risks of not having a suitable system in place by January 2026.

The procurement process has concluded, and Newport City Council need to award the tender to enable deadline to be met and ensure delivery of a safe service.

Financial risk remains high as Welsh Government have yet to confirm the level of funding that will be available.

## 6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 It is assumed that the other 4 Local Authorities will agree to the award of the tender.

## 7. **SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 An IIA is not necessary currently.

## 8. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The one-off cost for implementation of the system over 14 months from December 2024 is £162k and it is recommended that this is funded from the Social Services retained underspend reserve.

8.2 The recurring annual revenue cost of the new system for Caerphilly CBC is affordable within existing revenue budgets.

8.3 A business case is being submitted to Welsh Government for financial support including the costs associated with data migration. If funding is not forthcoming

from WG there may need to be a further call on Social Services reserves for the data migration.

## **9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 There are no HR implications associated with this report.

## **10. CONSULTATIONS**

10.1 All comments received have been included in this report.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

11.1 Social Services and Well-Being Act 2014

11.2 Local Government Act 2000

## **12. URGENCY**

12.1 In order to enter contractual arrangements within prescribed timescales and comply with the relevant funding approval, the Presiding Member has been consulted, who has confirmed that the decision proposed is reasonable and in the circumstances the report can be treated as an urgent item and therefore not subject to call-in.

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