REPORT TO:	Executive Board
DATE:	14 March 2019
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Education & Social Care
SUBJECT:	Upgrade of the Care Management Software System supplied by OLM Systems Ltd
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0   **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1   The purpose of the report is to seek the Board's agreement for the Council to upgrade the current Care Management Software Systems as supplied by OLM Systems Ltd to the latest iteration of the solution also supplied by OLM Systems Ltd and to support the proposed procurement process.

2.0   **RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board approves the upgrade and proposed developments associated with the continued use of the software management system supplied by OLM Systems Ltd for the Council's Care Management System, as outlined in this report be agreed.**

3.0   **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1   The Council has been using a software system called Care First since it became a Unitary Authority in 1998. There have been a number of versions of Care First utilised by the Council to the point that a product called Care First 6 is currently being used.

3.2   Care First 6 is a Care Management System which holds records of the Council's Social Services clients, both adults and children's. It is an essential tool in the provision of social care and supports the protection of both vulnerable adults and vulnerable children and young people. It allows social care staff and key partner agencies to gather, retain and understand the needs of individuals and families. The importance of the retention and use of accurate client information in this area of the Council's work cannot be overstated.

3.3   As the Care First 6 product has been utilised for such a long time, it has become outdated and there are now more efficient and effective products on the market. Crucially, it will not be long until the suppliers of Care First 6, OLM Systems Ltd, will cease to support the product and update it. The Council therefore has to make a

decision about its future arrangements for the provision of a social care records system.

3.4   The Council essentially has 2 choices:

1) to go with a completely new product and supplier; or

2) to remain with its existing supplier OLM Systems Ltd and purchase and install their updated and upgraded version of their software, known as Eclipse.

3.5   Officers from all interested services (Children's and Adults Services and IT) have, over recent months, carried out a review of the available software on the market that could potentially replace the Care First 6 product. This included a soft market test exercise and a review of what other local authorities have done.

3.6   This has been a thorough and detailed process with the following objectives at the forefront of that process:

•   Operational requirements – does it do what the Council needs it to do, delivering its statutory responsibilities around children and adults social care;

•   Is there the organisational capacity to manage efficiently and effectively the change over from Care First 6 to the new arrangement with minimum disruption;

•   Does it represent value for money, given the importance of the service and the pressure on Council budgets; and

•   Is there a procurement route available that is compliant both with the law and the Council's Standing Orders.

3.7   The conclusion from that work and activity, which is supported by all interested parties, is that the Council should upgrade to the Eclipse product from its existing supplier OLM Systems Ltd, being the approach that best matches the objectives set out above.

3.8   Utilising the Eclipse product will enable the Council's IT Team to manage the upgrade, in partnership with the OLM delivery team, whilst maintaining "business as usual" services through the existing software at no extra cost to the authority. Following this route will mean that the cost of the upgrade will not exceed the current revenue costs in place for the existing software management solution, which is £145,000 per annum.

3.9   There is an existing Procurement Framework in place which allows for the Council to make a direct award to OLM without the need for further competition, thus reducing the cost of procurement for the

Council. This allows for a 5 year fixed price contract utilising a negotiated process.

3.10 The Council's Legal, Finance and Procurement Teams have reviewed the suggested approach and are satisfied that it meets with both legal and constitutional requirements.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 None identified.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The delivery project will be managed by the relevant IT support teams and the overall project will be overseen by the Strategic Director People, supported by the Operational Director ICT & Support Services through pre-arranged programme and project meetings.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The work programme will enhance partnership and collaborative targets as well as continue to support staff in delivering the service efficiently and in modern ways.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

The work programme will enhance partnership and collaborative targets as well as continue to support staff in delivering the service efficiently and in modern ways.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The work programme will enhance partnership and collaborative targets as well as continue to support staff in delivering the service efficiently and in modern ways.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The work programme will enhance partnership and collaborative targets as well as continue to support staff in delivering the service efficiently and in modern ways.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

The work programme will enhance partnership and collaborative targets as well as continue to support staff in delivering the service efficiently and in modern ways.

7.0   **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1   The key risk of the project is ensuring that there is an effective balance between supporting evolving business needs and supporting existing working practices within all teams. By implementing the correct technology, alignment with an effective training programme and sound project management, project analysis and reporting linked to an agreed communications strategy, this key risk will be mitigated.

7.2   The reliance upon key members of staff continues to be risk as teams reduce in size and the workloads increase due to the continuing need for technology to support the wider efficiency needs of the Council.

7.3   As the current software is dated and will cease to be supported, it is essential that the Council has an effective new arrangement in place to ensure continuity of service in this vital area of business.

8.0   **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1   None identified.

9.0   **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

None under the meaning of the Act.