

**Report to:** CABINET – Part 1

**Date of Meeting:** 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Report Title:** Procurement and renewal of Hybrid Mail Solution

**Report By:** Stephen Dodson, Transformation and Programmes Manager

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### **Purpose of Report**

To request approval from Cabinet for the renewal of the corporate hybrid mail solution for Revenues and Benefits Service and other areas of the Council to maintain productivity and continuation of savings.

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### **Recommendation(s)**

1. That Cabinet approves the procurement of a hybrid mail solution
2. To extend the hybrid mail solution with our existing supplier through the East Sussex Procurement Hub via the appropriate framework to continue the provision of hybrid mail.
3. To give delegated authority to the Managing Director in consultation with the Lead Member for Organisation to complete the procurement process and appoint the successful vendor.

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### **Reasons for Recommendations**

The existing hybrid mail solution used by the Revenues and Benefits service expires on the 16 November 2022 and needs to be extended to maintain our postal and electronic communications.

The use of the existing supplier has been extremely successful and has reduced the organisations spend per year on postage and mail services prior to their appointment.

The ESPO Framework allows for direct award to the existing supplier without the need for a full tender exercise and due diligence shows that they provide best value.

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### **Introduction**

1. The council currently corresponds with many residents annually, particularly for council tax billing. Without hybrid mail costs involved in doing this includes the cost

of paper and photocopiers, as well as labour costs to print out envelopes, sort and frank letters.

2. The move to a hybrid mail solution in 2017 enables staff to send a digital copy of correspondence to the service provider from a desk top computer through a secure network. The offsite hybrid mail provider then prints, addresses envelopes, and delivers – either as paper or electronically mail items.
3. This negates the need for internal time-consuming manual handling of mail items and is necessary for large bulk physical or electronic mail outs.
4. The existing hybrid mail solution, which has been in operation since November 2017 has been extremely successful in realizing the original savings and has brought both direct savings and increased efficiencies to the Revenues and Benefits services in postal communications since its introduction.
5. Hybrid mail solutions provide high quality value for money, off-site postal and email solutions and by extending this to other service areas further efficiencies and productivity have been gained.
6. Savings in labour time and costs have also been gained, for example, Revenues and Benefits service's use of the existing hybrid mail solution has made significant labour savings.

## Procurement

7. The existing arrangement with our hybrid mail provider expires on the 16 November 2022 and we would wish to extend the contract for a further three years.
8. East Sussex Procurement Hub have advised that we can directly award the contract to our existing supplier without the need for a full tender exercise using the ESPO Framework Lot 7 Hybrid Mail, Digital and Transformational Communications.

## Policy Implications

9. **Equalities and Community Cohesion.** The hybrid mail solution enables the council to communicate in the way the customer wishes to be communicated with either electronically or by physical mail.
10. **Risk Management:** Our existing system will cease to function by 16<sup>th</sup> November which means that we need to extend our existing contract through the appropriate direct award framework.
11. **Environmental Issues.** The more mail that can be done electronically reduces the need for paper, ink and transport thus reducing carbon emissions.
12. **Economic/Financial implications.** The council has the budget for this statutory service. The continuation of the contract will ensure that we are providing the most cost-effective way of contacting residents.
13. **Organisational Consequences.** The Hybrid mail system facilitates hybrid working and maintains the council's high standard of digital communications at the lowest cost.

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## Wards Affected

All

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## Policy Implications

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	No
Risk Management	YES
Environmental Issues	YES
Economic/Financial Implications	YES
Human Rights Act	NO
Organisational Consequences	YES
Local People's Views	NO
Anti-Poverty	NO

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## Additional Information

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### Officer to Contact

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