

Notice of Non-Key Executive Decision

Subject Heading:	FFT Aspire Annual Subscription Renewal
Decision Maker:	Trevor Cook, Assistant Director of Education Services
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Oscar Ford
ELT Lead:	Tara Geere
Report Author and contact details:	Wendy Goodman, 01708433794, wendy.goodman@havering.gov.uk
Policy context:	Best value - There is no equivalent product available on the market. The 3rd party provider is 1 of 8 partners with the Department of Education and allows teams to deliver their statutory functions for the borough.
Financial summary:	Purchasing an LA subscription directly from the supplier allows them to provide it to the local authority at a heavily discounted price. We are being charged £33,311.10 per year for 3 years under this contract. This protects us from annual increases, estimated by FFT to be 3-4% per annum. Total cost for this contract is £99,933.30 over 3 years.
Relevant Overview & Scrutiny Sub Committee:	People OSC
Is this decision exempt from being called-in?	The decision will be exempt from call in as it is a Non key Decision

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The subject matter of this report deals with the following Council Objectives

People - Supporting our residents to stay safe and well X

Place - A great place to live, work and enjoy

Resources - Enabling a resident-focused and resilient Council

Place an X as appropriate

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Part A – Report seeking decision

DETAIL OF THE DECISION REQUESTED AND RECOMMENDED ACTION

This report is seeking approval from the Assistant Director of Education to:

- Directly award a contract to FFT Education Ltd via Lot 2: Cloud Software of the G-Cloud 14 Framework Agreement (RM1557.14) for the delivery of an analytical tool that enables schools to evaluate their performance and the local authority to undertake its statutory monitoring and intervention duties, commencing in April 2026 for a duration of three years and at an estimated total cost of £99,933.30 (£33,311.10 per annum).

AUTHORITY UNDER WHICH DECISION IS MADE

Part 3 of the Council's Constitution

Scheme 3.3.3 - Powers common to all Strategic Directors

4. Contracts

4.2. To award all contracts with a total contract value of below £1,000,000 other than contracts covered by Contract Procedure Rule 16.3. This delegation shall include the ability to extend or vary a contract up to and including a value of £1,000,000 (provided that the extension is in line with the existing contractual provisions).

As delegated to Trevor Cook, Assistant Director of Education Services on 22 May 2025, subject to a financial limit of £500,000.

STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR THE DECISION

FFT Aspire is an analytical tool that enables schools (and the local authority) to evaluate school performance and set targets for pupils. It also enables benchmarking using FFT estimates, and real-time monitoring of pupil progress. Access to this individual school and aggregate data is essential for the LA in undertaking its statutory monitoring and intervention duties.

There is no equivalent product available on the market as this is the only product that the DfE support that provides aggregated data to the LA. The local authority has researched the products that are available online, at BETT (leading Education Technology) conference, and with the British Education Suppliers Association, and have concluded that this is the only product available to meet its needs.

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The 3rd party provider is 1 of 8 partners with the Department of Education and allows teams to deliver their statutory functions for the borough.

Subscription is used as a part of a traded function where it is sold on to schools, therefore recouping most of the cost.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

Do nothing – this is not an option as the local authority has a number of statutory monitoring and intervention duties that require the level of data analysis that this product provides.

Competitive tender process – this is not an option as this is the only product on the market that provides aggregated data to the LA.

Direct award from supplier – this was considered, but purchasing a local authority subscription directly from the supplier via a framework allows them to provide it to the local authority at a heavily discounted price. The normal price if all schools were to buy a subscription would be £86,931.36 in 2026, rising by an estimated 3-4% per annum over the next 2 years.

PRE-DECISION CONSULTATION

None required.

NAME AND JOB TITLE OF STAFF MEMBER ADVISING THE DECISION-MAKER

Paul FitzGerald, Education Data Officer

Name: Trevor Cook

Designation: Assistant Director for Education

Signature:



Date: 04/02/26

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Part B - Assessment of implications and risks

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The Council has the power to award the contract under s111 of the Local Government Act 1972, which permits the Council to do anything which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.

The Council also has a general power of competence under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual may generally do subject to any statutory limitations. The recommendation sought within this report is in accordance with this power.

The total estimated contract value is below the threshold for services under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015). As such, the contract is not caught by the full PCR regime. The PCR is relevant in this circumstance, as the framework was procured under these regulations and remains live

Lot 2: Cloud Software of the G-Cloud 14 Framework Agreement (RM1557.14) permits selecting a supplier via direct award. As set out in this report, officers have followed the framework process for selecting a supplier via direct award, and now recommend awarding the contract to FFT Education Ltd.

The Council is a Best Value authority and has a duty to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. As set out in this report, officers consider the proposals achieve Best Value.

In light of the above, the Council may proceed with awarding the contract.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

The agreement by FFT to freeze the price of the 2026 subscription for 3 years and to allow the Council to pay this in 3 instalments instead of one lump sum up front offers financial security and cost certainty for future planning.

Most of the cost of this subscription is recovered from school through traded services so there is minimal cost to the Council.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS (AND ACCOMMODATION IMPLICATIONS WHERE RELEVANT)

There are no further human resources implications or risks from this decision.

EQUALITIES AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

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Havering has a diverse community made up of many different groups and individuals. The council values diversity and believes it essential to understand and include the different contributions, perspectives and experience that people from different backgrounds bring.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires the Council, when exercising its functions, to have 'due regard' to:

- (i) The need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010;
- (ii) The need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share protected characteristics and those who do not, and;
- (iii) Foster good relations between those who have protected characteristics and those who do not.

Note: 'Protected characteristics' are age, sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnerships, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity and gender reassignment.

The Council demonstrates its commitment to the Equality Act in its decision-making processes, the provision, procurement and commissioning of its services, and employment practices concerning its workforce. In addition, the Council is also committed to improving the quality of life and wellbeing of all Havering residents in respect of socio-economics and health determinants.

There are no further equalities and social inclusion implications or risks from this decision.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no further environmental and climate change inclusion implications or risks from this decision.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

There are no further health and wellbeing implications or risks from this decision.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

None

Non-key Executive Decision

Part C – Record of decision

I have made this executive decision in accordance with authority delegated to me by the Leader of the Council and in compliance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Decision

Proposal agreed

Proposal NOT agreed because

Details of decision maker

Signed



Name: Trevor Cook

~~Cabinet Portfolio held:~~

~~CMT Member title:~~

Head of Service title: Assistant Director Education

~~Other manager title:~~

Date: 4th February 2026

Lodging this notice

The signed decision notice must be delivered to Committee Services, in the Town Hall.

For use by Committee Administration

This notice was lodged with me on _____

Signed _____

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