Appendix 6 - Plans for moving to the new contract

Preparation and Planning

The initial phase involves comprehensive planning and preparation, crucial for a smooth transition. This includes:

- **Assessment:** Conduct a thorough inventory of the existing IT infrastructure, applications, and data to understand the scope and requirements of the migration.
- **Strategy Development:** Develop a detailed migration strategy that aligns with the Council's objectives, including timelines, budget, and resource allocation.
- **Skill Assessment:** Evaluate the in-house team's skills and identify gaps. Plan for training or hiring to ensure the team is equipped with necessary Azure knowledge.
- Risk Management: Establish a risk register to identify, assess, and mitigate potential risks throughout the migration process.

Architecture and Design

In this phase, the focus is on designing the Azure cloud environment:

- **Architecture Design:** Design the Azure architecture to ensure it meets the Council's operational, security, and compliance requirements.
- **Networking and Security**: Plan the network architecture, ensuring secure connectivity between on-premises and Azure environments. Implement robust security measures to protect data and applications.
- **Compliance Checks:** Ensure the design complies with regulatory requirements and industry standards relevant to the Council's operations.

Pilot Testing

Before the full-scale migration, a pilot test is conducted:

- **Selection of Pilot Applications:** Identify a small, non-critical set of applications and data for the pilot migration. This helps in understanding the challenges and adjusting the strategy as needed.
- **Pilot Migration:** Migrate the selected applications to Azure, closely monitoring the process and performance.
- **Evaluation:** Assess the pilot's success, gather feedback, and refine the migration approach based on the findings.

Full-scale Migration

Armed with insights from the pilot, proceed with the full-scale migration:

- **Application Migration:** Start with the least complex applications, gradually moving to more critical ones. Use Azure's migration tools and services for efficiency.

- **Data Migration:** Migrate data securely, ensuring integrity and minimal downtime. Implement continuous backup and disaster recovery strategies.
- **Integration and Testing:** Integrate migrated applications and services, conducting thorough testing to ensure functionality and performance meet expectations.

Optimization and Management

After the migration, the focus shifts to optimization and ongoing management:

- **Performance Tuning:** Monitor the performance and optimize resources to ensure cost-efficiency and operational effectiveness.
- **Security and Compliance:** Continuously monitor security, conducting regular audits and compliance checks to adapt to evolving threats and regulations.
- **Training and Adoption:** Facilitate training sessions for staff to ensure they are comfortable with the new cloud environment. Encourage adoption through support and guidance.

Review and Continual Improvement

Finally, establish a process for regular review and continual improvement:

- **Performance Review:** Regularly review the performance of the cloud infrastructure against the set objectives and KPIs.
- **Feedback Loops:** Gather feedback from users and stakeholders to identify areas for improvement.
- **Technology Updates:** Stay updated with Azure's evolving capabilities to continually enhance the Council's cloud infrastructure.