

ITEM No ...3.....

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE – 12 DECEMBER 2016
REPORT ON: CHANNEL SHIFT PROGRAMME
REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES
REPORT NO: 412-2016

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Channel Shift programme, currently underway with the primary aim of delivering an enhanced digital channel for our citizens to access Council services. The channel shift programme was approved at the Policy & Resources Committee on the 25th February 2016.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 This report recommends that the collaboration opportunity identified is progressed through the direct award of contract to a single provider, Firmstep, to deliver a Customer Service Platform (CSP) in Dundee City Council which will provide citizens a clear platform to transact with the Council digitally. This same provider will be used to deliver the same product in Angus and Perth & Kinross Councils as well, allowing for future opportunities to collaborate, saving time and resources in the implementation and development of this platform.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The cost of implementing the Firmstep's CSP solution will be £433,715 across a 4-year period (inclusive of licencing costs). Additional programme costs allocated to the procurement of a website design company to re-develop the Councils website and additional internal project costs will cumulate to match the figure of £776k across the lifetime of the programme.

4 BENEFITS

- 4.0 As part of the Channel Shift programme, a collaboration opportunity has been identified between Angus, Dundee, and Perth & Kinross Councils and this report summarises the details of this collaboration and its benefits.
- 4.1 In delivering this project the Council will provide customers of Dundee with a full choice of digital service options along with feeding into Scottish Government strategies, helping to build Scotland's digital future.

In year 1 and 2, the primary focus will be on Corporate Services and Neighbourhood services, shifting to review other service areas in the latter half of year 2 and into year 3. It is anticipated that at the end of year 3, the majority of the process improvement work will have been achieved allowing the focus of the project to switch to marketing and campaigning to encourage citizens to make the shift to online.

The main benefits associated with the channel shift project are:-

- Citizens will be empowered to embrace digital in their day to day lives
- Citizens will have greatly enhanced options for accessing the Council's services in a manner convenient to them
- Dundee's communities will be engaged with the Council in shaping how we deliver their services
- The new website will provide online transactions which will be simple and easy to use, this will encourage citizens to carry out transactions with the Council online and improve satisfaction rates
- With more citizens actively choosing digital channels, the Council will realise savings as citizens move away from the substantially more expensive channels offered through face to face and the telephone
- As we encourage more citizens to go digital, the volume of citizens seeking face to face or telephone contact will decrease, resulting in faster service times and fewer queues for those remaining on traditional channels

- The Council will have a strong social media presence and a clear content strategy to match allowing us to have stronger two way communications with our citizens through channels which are strongly embraced by our citizens
- Numerous financial benefits can be realised through the digitisation of a number of existing services reducing the amount of manual work and time taken to process service requests.

5 BACKGROUND

5.1 The UK is going through vast and rapid digital growth. A recent report by Deloitte, commissioned by the Scottish Futures Trust, highlighted that by 2030 as many as 99% of Scottish people could be using the internet, there could be up to 130 million digital devices in Scotland.

5.2 There are a number of programmes and strategies that the Scottish Government have created which focus on Scotland's place on the world's digital stage, including:-

- Scotland's Economic Strategy
- Open Data Strategy
- Smart Cities programme
- Local Government Digital Transformation Strategy
- Scotland's Digital Future Strategy

5.3 All of these set their sights on the same target date for building Scotland's digital future – 2020. Dundee City Council are an integral part of delivering this vision along with other transformational projects due to be delivered in Dundee within this timescale.

5.4 In the past few years Dundee City Council has delivered some key improvements to our website and the MyDundee account in an attempt to make our digital service options more accessible to our citizens. Initiatives such as 'Digital on the Move' have actively engaged our communities to help build IT skills in advance of welfare reform.

5.5 While the Council does offer services through our website and the MyDundee account, a large number are not linked to our main IT systems and take the form of online email form and those which are linked to IT systems do not have a consistent look and feel for our citizens.

6 DIGITAL USE AND LITERACY

6.1 The Council's 2014 Annual Survey shows that of those who recently contacted the Council, 91% called, 6% visited in person and 1% went online. In contrast, the survey highlights that over 90% of under 55s have access to the internet.

6.2 This is only one survey and cannot stand alone as the true picture of access within Dundee. Other factors need to be considered when discussing digital literacy such as the fact that mobile use doesn't necessarily mean online access, a PC, laptop or tablet would be required for more complex online interactions and while Dundee has a strong network of access points within communities, not everyone would associate this as having access to the internet.

6.3 Even if it is assumed that Dundee's digital literacy is lower than the UK average, our citizen's lives are still being increasingly lived out online or with access to the internet through many routes including smartphones and it is impossible to ignore the need for a stronger online service offering for Dundee City Council. To ensure that our citizens have accessible services available to them at their convenience, the Council needs to ensure it embraces digital services with enough pace and priority to get out in front of the digital revolution and drive the Council forward as a leading Scottish digital Council.

7 CURRENT POSITION

7.1 The Council receives over 440,000 contacts every year, the majority of which, around 70%, are telephone contacts.

7.2 The Council has multiple options for its citizens to make contact, offering face to face, telephone and online channels. Satisfaction with all channels has remained consistent across the past 3 years with telephone receiving very high satisfaction (avg. 95%), face to face with good levels of satisfaction (avg. 74%) and online below satisfactory levels (avg. 49%).

Customer Satisfaction Data		
	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Face to Face	74%	26%
Telephone	95%	5%
Web	49%	51%

7.3 The Council are currently working on a number of different IT improvements which will feed into the Dundee Digital Community programme. These improvements span a number of different areas of the Council but are all focused on some of the main customer facing services that the Council provide and include:-

- Customer Relationship Management System (CRM)
- Improvements to QNet – queuing system used in Dundee House and East/West Housing Offices
- Recently updated telephony in the Customer Contact Centre
- Neighbourhood Services IT system
- Social Care IT System
- Digital on the Move
- MyGovScot Authentication

8 OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE – 2020 VISION

8.1 In the present environment which seeks to encourage and support smart and digital programmes of work, Dundee City Council has a unique opportunity to embrace this and focus on developing Dundee as a leading Scottish digital Council by 2020, feeding into the Scottish Government's vision of Scotland digital future.

8.2 By providing our citizens with the skills, confidence and resources to access online services, alongside a greatly enhanced digital service offering from the Council which is delivered both through an enhanced website and at the heart of the communities with a primary focus of delivering a great and engaged customer experience.

8.3 The vision for Dundee by 2020 would be to that all of our citizens have the option to choose the right service channel for them, giving our citizen's maximum choice, regardless of age, background or technical ability.

9 COLLABORATION

9.1 Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross Councils have identified an opportunity to work more collaboratively in the delivery of their individual channel shift programmes by awarding contracts to the same provider, Firmstep, for the implementation of a Customer Services Platform (CSP). This contract is being let under the Scotland Excel Customer Service Platform framework agreement.

9.2 Through the Tayside Procurement Consortium (TPC), the Councils have sought to establish an initial three year working relationship to ensure the Firmstep solution is effectively embedded across the organisation both in terms of customer service solutions and internal support and development. It was anticipated that this would include:

- Design and configuration services to tailor the solution within the Councils environments
- Support for early adopter and thereafter wider corporate implementation including integration to an agreed level
- Training and knowledge transfer to enable the Councils to be self-sufficient in the development of customer service solutions
- Training and knowledge transfer to enable the Councils to be self-sufficient in the administration and support of the customer service portal.
- Support / Helpdesk services
- Ongoing maintenances services
- Software assurance
- Adhoc Consultancy Services

9.3 A report on the proposed collaboration and working relationship between the three Councils was taken to the TPC steering group on the 8th November 2016 and approved. This working

relationship is now being established and each individual council are in the process of awarding contracts with Firmstep to begin the procurement of the CSP solution.

10 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty and Risk Management. There are no major issues.

11 CONSULTATIONS

11.1 The Chief Executive, Head of Democratic and Legal Services have been consulted and are in agreement with the report.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

12.1 None

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Date: