

ITEM No ...6.....

REPORT TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE 2021 - 21 JUNE 2021

REPORT ON: CUSTOMER SERVICES PLATFORM

REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

REPORT NO: 192-2021

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To consider the ongoing use of a digital platform to continue to provide internet-based customer services.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to approve the following: -

- Agree to the renewal of Granicus GovService licensing with support for 5 years.
- Remit the Head of Customer Services & IT to purchase Granicus GovService licensing and support compliantly procured by the Tayside Procurement Consortium in partnership with Angus Council and Perth and Kinross Council.

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 Licensing and support for 5 years for the product is estimated at £283,000 to be funded from existing Corporate Services revenue budgets.

3.2 Staffing costs to support the deployment of the products to be met from existing Customer Services and IT staffing budgets.

4.0 MAIN TEXT

4.1 This report supports the Council's IT Strategy which was approved at Policy and Resources Committee on 18 February 2019 (Report 81-2019, Article VII of the minute refers), The Councils IT strategy sets out to deliver mobile and flexibly accessible services through low cost corporately deployed solutions. IT services requiring to be available anytime anywhere. With planned migrations to cloud hosted services to introduce further efficiencies.

4.2 As agreed in report 412-2016,(Article III of the minute of meeting of this Committee of 12 December, 2016 refers) Dundee City Council implemented the Firmstep to deliver a Customer Service Platform (CSP) in Dundee City Council to provide citizens a clear platform to transact with the Council digitally.

4.3 It should be noted that during the time of usage the Firmstep brand has been acquired through marketplace changes with the products now owned by Granicus.

4.4 The Granicus platform is implemented through the Councils website.

4.5 Since Granicus was implemented the Council has realised many of the benefits identified in the original report. Empowering Citizens to embrace digital in their day to day lives and accessing Council services in a manner convenient to them. Providing online transactions which are simple and easy to use. Moving these transactions from the substantially more expensive channels offered through face to face and the telephone.

4.6 The Council now has 164 services deployed through its on Granicus platform. Since implementation over 265,000 transactions have been carried out on the platform.

- 4.7 The use of Granicus was particularly beneficial in enabling the Council to respond quickly to the demands of the Covid crisis with 17 forms and processes being created rapidly to support citizens and business during the crisis in applying for grants and benefits.
- 4.8 The timescale to adopt alternatives to Granicus and associated costs would be considerable. The Council has many years' experience in deploying Customer Services solutions utilising the Granicus platform. A steep learning curve would be required to deploy an alternative. It is also likely duplicate costs would be encountered to support the existing platform whilst a lengthy project was progressed to adopt a new platform. There would be considerable risk of disruption to citizens during this process as each of the 164 forms and processes would require to be deployed and tested in an alternative environment.
- 4.9 A Procurement exercise will be carried out by Tayside Procurement Consortium in partnership with the councils of Angus, Dundee and Perth & Kinross.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This report has been subject to an assessment of any impacts on Equality and Diversity, Fairness and Poverty, Environment and Corporate Risk. There are no major issues.

6.0 CONSULTATIONS

The Council Management Team were consulted in the preparation of this report and agree with its contents.

ROBERT EMMOTT
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE SERVICES

08 JUNE 2021