

**RECORD OF DECISION TAKEN UNDER SCHEME
OF DELEGATION BY MEMBER OF LEADERSHIP
TEAM IN CONSULTATION WITH PORTFOLIO
HOLDER/COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN**



Leadership Member:	Paul Hussey
Service Group:	ICT
Portfolio Holder / Chairman:	Cllr Matthew Tomlinson
Portfolio / Committee:	Corporate Support and Assets

Subject: Firmstep Single Sign On and Outlook integration

Decision: Authorise Capital Spend of £32,500
Note the increase in revenue expenditure of £10,500 that is funded within existing budgets

Details and Reasoning: **Single Sign On**

Firmstep is a supplier of Software products used by Gateway, CRM, to gather information from the Public either over the Phone or Face To Face.

Firmstep also supply the Council with a self- service portal enabling the customers to interact digitally with the Council for the majority of services.

Capita provide the Council’s Revenue, Benefits and Business Rates system. They also provide a customer self-service portal for Council Tax and Benefits

Idox provide the Council applications used in Planning, Building Control, Environmental Health and Licensing.

Idox also provide a portal for the Planning and Licensing departments to display Planning Application’s and Premises Licensing details to the customer.

The above does not always provide the customer with a good experience if wishing to digitally interact with the Council particularly if they do not register on some of the other products. For example the Council send out Council Tax bills but the customer could sign up to receive electronically. In this example offering a better customer experience the Council could proactively promote paperless bills which would not only reduce costs for the Council but also promote the Council’s Green Agenda.

Mentioned in the Website Refresh Cabinet Report of 16th October 2019 one of the key findings from the research phase of the Digital to Improve Programme was that the website contained a number of different logins which made self-service complicated for residents. Currently the council’s online portfolio contains at least five different registration and login areas (Firmstep, eBilling, Modern Gov, Public Access for Planning and Public Access for

Licensing). Included within the scope of this project is the ambition to remove as many barriers to self-service as possible, and therefore provide single sign on access to as much of the website as possible

Firmstep offer a single sign on solution that will bring these products together with a single username and password.

Calendar Integration

Firmstep also offer a calendar integration that promotes the following :

- Offers Customers the ability to book appointments online
- Integration with MS Exchange and Google calendars
- Dynamic calculation of slots & times
- Can be used within any form across all service areas
- Available for internal and external bookings
- Can be easily amended / cancelled by Customers online
- Same bookings connector across all channels
- Enables 100% online self-service for new appointments and changes
- Efficiencies through the removal of manual booking stages
- Reduced number of 'no shows' through automated reminders
- Empowers back office staff to easily manage availability through existing calendars
- Available across online and mediated channels

With the Council willingness to reopen to the public during the current Covid-19 by appointment this could also help to facilitate this.

This would also allow moving forward the customer to make an appointment knowing that the relevant officer or department would be available rather than a chance drop in.

The customer and council also has the opportunity to change the appointment which would automatically update the recipient enabling no wasted journeys and also if changed allowing other customers to take that slot.

Single Sign On and Calendar integration are part of the Council's Digital to Improve program and has been budgeted in the ICT Capital Program.

The costs are :

Single Sign On - £25,000 Capital and Revenue £7,500pa
Calendar Integration - £7,500 Capital Revenue £3,000pa

The Council's contract procedure rules can be waived because "the nature of the market for the works to be carried out or the goods or services to be provided has been investigated and is demonstrated to be such that a departure from the requirements of the Rules is justifiable" as only the current supplier can install and maintain the product. A waiver will be applied for separately through our electronic waiver system.

**Wider Implications
(including Financial,
Legal, Equality and
Risk):**

IMPLICATIONS

In the preparation of this report, consideration has been given to the impact of its recommendation in the areas listed below:-

FINANCIAL

The capital costs can be funded from the 'IT Programme – Digital Strategy' that is part of the approved capital programme.

The revenue costs were factored into the revised revenue budgets for ICT supplies and services in 2020/21 and beyond, as part of the budget setting process.

LEGAL

This appears to be a very sensible proposal that could both improve the customer experience and save money for the council in the long term.

There are no concerns from a legal perspective.

Clearly a contract will be entered into.

A waiver of Contract Procedure Rules will be required as no tender exercise has taken place. This will be attended to in accordance with our normal procedures via the electronic waiver system.

**HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT**

ICT/TECHNOLOGY

Improved customer service delivery and experience.

PROPERTY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

There are no property or asset management implications to this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT

There are risks implications

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPACT

There are no equality implications to this report.


**Report attached?
Exempt from
publication?
If exempt, give
reason(s):**

No


No

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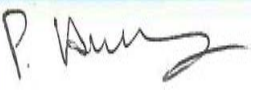
Signed:


Date: 17/06/20

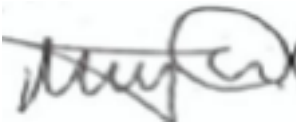
Financial
Management


Date: 25/06/2020

Legal
Services


Date: 18/06/20

Leadership Team
Member


Date: 25/06/2020

Portfolio
Holder/
Chairman

**Publication Date (DST
use):**

CA 25/06/2020

Decision template revised June 2013

**THIS DECISION WILL COME INTO FORCE AND MAY BE IMPLEMENTED FIVE
WORKING DAYS AFTER ITS PUBLICATION DATE, SUBJECT TO BEING
CALLED IN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE COUNCIL'S CONSTITUTION**