

15th July 2019

Agenda Item: 5

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR, FINANCE, PROCUREMENT &
IMPROVEMENT**

MYNOTTS APP

Purpose of the Report

1. To update members on the MyNotts App project, particularly in terms of the research completed to date and the progress made in procuring the right partner to take this work forward.

Information

2. Work completed to date

A significant amount of work has been completed to understand the best approach to take to deliver a great solution for Nottinghamshire:

- a. Investigating current information available (high demand services at the Customer Service Centre and the top pages and information being viewed online)
- b. Considering and investigated best approach to design. Over 20 Local Government Apps have been reviewed to understand and learn from others.
- c. Considering the approach to take regarding support and maintenance i.e. which elements would be managed in-house and which would be supplier led. An example of this would be Operating System updates (OS/IOS updates). As these happen across several operating systems and this happens very frequently this, ideally, would be managed by the chosen supplier, whereas minor tweaks, additions and changes would be managed in-house by fully trained staff with access to the development elements of the App.
- d. A consultation was arranged with Staffordshire County Council, the most similar council to Nottinghamshire with an App of this type, to understand the best approach, pitfalls, support models and best practice. The Staffordshire App is one of the most successful Apps in this sector.
- e. A whole range of customer feedback was reviewed (available from various App Stores)

- f. The project group met and consulted with procurement to ensure the right questions were asked during the procurement process.

3. Phased approach

a. Phase 1

- i. Develop the MyNotts app which will be a 'Digital Doorway' for customers to access key information and most used services available from NCC.
- ii. Have icons and access to sites that promote the NCC Visitor Economy Strategy
- iii. Ensure that Phase 1 of the App is 'future proof' for subsequent phases
- iv. Create a design to make it easier for customers to access 'key' information, but also ensure the design meets accessibility guidelines and therefore is fair and equitable
- v. Provide a 'skin' that creates a shortcut to the best used and to information that provides the most value to our customers.
- vi. Estimated timeline for completion – 6-8 months (**Caveat:** The project is reliant on the Apple Apps Store to upload the App and make it live – we are told this could take some time, as such we may see some slippage moving it into the 'live' environment).

b. Phase 2

- i. Extend links to other NCC services (additional buttons/tiles/links)
- ii. Broaden the scope, to include:
 - Some personalisation (see what is important to you)
 - Links to other partner sites, District partners, police, fire and rescue
 - Links to health services including the third sector
 - Further education / local school sites
 - Local news sites e.g. Mansfield Chad, West Bridgford News
 - 'Push' of tailored communications to improve customer engagement
- iii. The more we add and personalise, the more customers will benefit and use the App, all of which leads to improved customer engagement and reputational enhancement.

4. Procurement:

a. Several stages of procurement have now been completed:

- i. Requirements for Phase 1 were published via Digital Market Place with 18 bids being considered and scored. The procurement began early April and was completed 24th April. Unsuccessful bidders were notified.
- ii. 6 suppliers were shortlisted and were asked to send in written proposals for the work, these were received and evaluated on 8th May.

- iii. 4 suppliers were shortlisted from the written proposal and asked to attend a presentation and Q&A session to ensure there had been due diligence completed and to help inform the final choice. This exercise was completed on 16th May.
- b. The successful supplier was **Cantarus**, a Manchester based development agency with a wide understanding and expertise in the development and design of Apps. **Cantarus** are an Umbraco Gold partner (Umbraco is the system used by NCC to manage and develop web content) and have considerable experience with Firmstep (the system used extensively by NCC for online forms and to provide support the Customer Service Centre). They also have experience of working with several local government organisations and councils.

5. Costs

The costs outlined are for Phase 1 development.

Costs from other suppliers varied with some being as high as £188k. It was felt that Cantarus provided the clearest and most cost-effective costs.

Discovery and design	£20,900
Implementation	£40,000-£70,000
TOTAL TO DELIVER MYNOTTS APP - PHASE 1 (at worst case)	£90,900
Support and maintenance (Cantarus offer support through call off days)	£12,000 in year 1 / £6,000 thereafter (Based on the assumption that more days will be required in year one)

- 6. There will be some additional costs for further development (Phase 2). There may be an option to share these costs with partner organisations should this be identified as part of the project scope. A further paper will be brought to members for authorisation of subsequent phases.
- 7. An option has been included to stop the project after the discovery and design phase if budget is not approved for the implementation phase.

Resourcing

- 8. A project team across several areas will be in place once contracts have been signed and funding agreed. This will include 1 x Project Manager, 1 x ICT resource, 1 x Customer Service resource, 1 x Digital resource and an overall Project Lead.

Other Options Considered

- 9. Developing this in-house was considered, however there is insufficient in-house expertise to be able to deliver this.
- 10. This is NCC's first App, so it was imperative that a supplier is engaged with a proven track record and considerable experience in the development of Apps for Councils and Local Government was essential. Cantarus can provide this.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

11. A MyNotts App will improve engagement with our customers and support them to find the information they need quickly and easily:
 - a. Easier and quicker access to the service and information required
 - i. Each button/tile connects to the relevant 'Book it / pay for it / apply for it' sections on the NCC website
 - ii. Information presented to answer enquiries more efficiently
 - b. Enhanced customer experience / ease of use
 - i. Supports the cross-cutting programme of work 'Improving Customer Experience through Digital Development' commissioned by members.
 - ii. Easy to access, stable and reliable once downloaded from the App Store
 - iii. Further links to private sector to be explored (potential)
 - c. Efficiency / Value for money
 - i. Drive self-service
 - ii. If take-up is good there is potential to reduce transactional calls to the CSC and departments
 - iii. Push notifications in Phase 2 may prevent 'avoidable contacts' by providing customers with news and information they need at a time they need it.
 - d. Reputation
 - i. Additional channel for 'App' customers
 - ii. Improved service = happier customers = better engagement with NCC
12. Phase 2 of the App development will include some personalisation and access to many other services, not all NCC:
 - a. One Stop Shop
 - i. Potential to link to partner sites in subsequent phases (in line with the Staffordshire County Council App)
 - ii. Access to all key Nottinghamshire Services regardless of who delivers them.
13. The team were asked to investigate this urgently by members and we are aware that there is a strong political will to deliver this quickly for all our customers and for Nottinghamshire.
14. Phase 1 offers good value for money and will put in place the building blocks required to enable NCC to move to Phase 2 quickly and effectively.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

16. The aim of the MyNotts App is to make it easier and improve engagement and access to Council information, services and the wider Nottinghamshire organisations. In reviewing processes and considering technological and automated developments, consideration will be given to the needs and abilities of all residents to access services to ensure that any approaches developed do not disadvantage groups (see also Equality Duty implications)

RECOMMENDATION/S

That members consider whether they require any further actions as a direct result of the contents of the report.

Nigel Stevenson

Service Director – Finance, Procurement & Improvement

For any enquiries about this report please contact Kaj Ghattaora, Group Manager – Procurement

Constitutional Comments (CEH 14.06.19)

The report is for information purposes. Committee should consider if there are any comments they wish to make on the contents of the report.

Financial Comments (KP 17.06.2019)

As set out in the report the maximum supplier cost for Phase 1 is estimated at £90,900, with ongoing support and maintenance costs of £12k in year 1 and £6k p.a. after that.

In addition there will be project team costs and an ongoing staffing support cost, estimated at £29k p.a. including salary on costs.

If the project proceeds to Phase 2 there will be additional costs, although there may be an opportunity to share these with partner organisations.

All costs will be subject to appropriate approvals.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All