

# Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



**Nottingham**  
**City Council**

Reference Number:

3693

Author:

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Department:

Strategy and Resources

Contact:

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Subject:

Extension of existing contract with Xpress Software Ltd (Civica) to provide electronic tablets for the personal canvass stage of the annual canvass

Total Value:

£40,200 (Type: Capital)

Decision Being Taken:

1) To extend the existing contract with Xpress Software Ltd (Civica) by two years to provide 31 electronic tablets and protective cases for the personal canvass stage of the annual canvass, at a total cost of £33,500+VAT. This will be funded from existing budget within the Elections service.

2) To dispense with Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1 in accordance with Financial Regulation (3.29) (Operational Issues), to allow for the 2-year extension of the contract to be awarded directly to Xpress Software Ltd (Civica) as the sole supplier.

**Reasons for the Decision(s)** The Electoral Registration Officer has a duty to maintain the Electoral Register and, in doing so, must conduct an annual canvass and publish a revised register on 1 December each year. The final stage of the annual canvass is to make a personal visit to every household that has not responded to the previous three forms sent by post. Electoral Services employ canvassers to carry out these personal visits and provide them with an electronic tablet with information of the outstanding properties loaded on them. Prior to using tablets, we provided canvassers with printed paper forms to carry out these visit. We have used tablets for the last few years and are now seeking permission for the extension of this contract. The tablets have proven to be extremely beneficial to the personal canvass process and the reasons for using the tablets as opposed to paper forms are as follows: Increased service delivery: canvassers can easily obtain information for both the Household Enquiry Form (HEF) and Invitation to Register (ITR) at the same time, assisting citizens with completing both parts of the registration process. This results in citizens being registered quickly and easily and not having to complete additional forms sent from Electoral Services by post; Efficiency savings: canvassers add the information into the tablets and upload the information directly onto the electoral register. Therefore, there is no sorting, scanning and inputting required by Electoral Services. This means that there is no longer a requirement to employ additional temporary staff for processing forms. There are also savings on postages where the canvasser has been able to complete an ITR with a citizen, as no further forms needs to be sent by post; Productivity: canvassers can canvass more properties, as they do not have to keep returning to their car to drop off and pick up forms when on their rounds; Security: the tablets are protected with logins and PINs, and any information entered into the tablets is uploaded regularly. Once the information has been uploaded, it will no longer be available to the canvassers. Having these additional security measures mean that personal data cannot be lost or shared with a third party, which meet GDPR requirements for handling personal data securely.

**Briefing notes documents:** For Information - Not for publication Nottingham - MCA Variation 12.09.19.docx, For Information - Not for publication - Nottingham software licencing agreement SIGNED FINAL.pdf

**Other Options Considered:** 1) To use printed paper forms for the personal call stage. Due to the significant improvements over paper enabled by the tablets, this option is rejected.  
There are no other options available to use and doing nothing would result in the Electoral Registration Officer being in breach of his official duty, as he would not be complying with the legislation, by failing to conduct the annual canvass.

**Background Papers:** None

**Published Works:** None

**Affected Wards:** Citywide

**Colleague / Councillor Interests:** None

**Dispensation from Financial Regulations:** Yes

**Consultations:** Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.

**Crime and Disorder Implications:** This decision has no crime or disorder implications.

**Equality:** EIA not required. Reasons: This decision does not affect or change any existing policy, service or function.

**Social Value Considerations:** Not applicable

**Decision Type:** Portfolio Holder

**Subject to Call In:** Yes

**Call In Expiry date:** 12/11/2019

**Advice Sought:** Legal, Finance, Procurement

**Legal Advice:**

The Council may grant a dispensation from the need to comply with its Contract Procedure Rules for operational reasons. Those reasons have been set out by the report author.

Subject to the total value of the contract to date (including the extension period) not exceeding the threshold for EU procurement then this decision is supported by Legal Services in order to ensure compliance with statutory obligations under Elections law.

Prior to the end of the two year extension period, a review of the market should be undertaken as to options available to the Council for these goods and services.

Advice provided by Naomi Vass (Senior Solicitor) on 20/10/2019.

**Finance Advice:**

This decision seeks approval to enter into a 2-year contract extension with Xpress Software Ltd (Civica) for the provision of electronic tablets for personal canvassing. The value of this decision is £33,500 and is to be funded from existing budget within the Election service. No financial pressure is expected as a result of this decision.

This decision also seeks approval to dispense with Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1 in accordance with Financial Regulation (3.29), due to operational issues. The tablets and software needed are only available via Xpress Software Ltd (Civica), due to compatibility with the current software. On this basis, dispensation is supported.

Advice provided by Philip Gretton (Finance Analyst) on 24/10/2019.

**Procurement Advice:**

Approval to dispense with Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1 in accordance with Financial Regulation (3.29) (Operational Issues) to allow for the 2 year extension of the contract and award the contract directly to Xpress Software Ltd (Civica) as a sole supplier is required.

Procurement supports this decision for operational reasons.

Advice provided by Paul Ritchie (Lead Procurement Officer) on 16/10/2019.

**Signatures**

Sally Longford (PH for Energy, Environment and Democratic Services)
SIGNED and Dated: 05/11/2019
Candida Brudenell (Corporate Director for Strategy and Resources)
SIGNED and Dated: 31/10/2019
Laura Pattman (Strategic Director of Finance) - Dispensation from Financial Regulations
SIGNED and Dated: 01/11/2019
Chief Finance Officer's Comments: