



RECORD OF DELEGATED DECISION (OFFICER)

1. Decision Reference No.	CEX354
2. Name/Title of Officer	Pranali Parikh Director for Growth & Regeneration (Place)
3. Email address of Officer	pparikh@melton.gov.uk
4. Title / Subject Matter:	Procurement of new software for public consultation
5. Type of Decision: (The decision will be published in its entirety unless it contains exempt information as described in Section 1.4 of the Council's Access to Information Rules)	Public
6. Key Decision?	No
7. Decision Taken: 1. Authority for the initial procurement of the software for 2023/24 with an option for annual renewal thereafter, subject to successful implementation and use after the first year.	
8. Reasons for Decision: Statutory consultation is an essential democratic process; Melton Borough Council (MBC) has a legal requirement to consult on certain issues to get feedback on policy, engage with stakeholders on key issues, maintain transparency and accountability and comply with statutory requirements. At present the Council uses a product for external public engagement both statutory and non-statutory. We have three licenses for this product which are linked to one account and limits the flexibility for the Council to use this across multiple areas. This limits the number of consultations that can be 'built' and held concurrently, affecting timescales for larger projects. The current product makes responding to surveys more difficult and time consuming both for respondents and those analysing the results. In addition, there is no connected way to feedback on the basis of 'you said, we did'. The Council will be holding substantial statutory consultations over the next few years, starting this Autumn, focussed within the Local Plans Team. This will start with the Regulation 18 consultation on the Local Plan Review and will be closely followed by Climate Change Strategy; both will involve substantial public interaction and will require careful and detailed consideration of responses. We also will be undertaking a number of important non-statutory consultations and engagement with residents and businesses over the next 3 years on the new Corporate Strategy, UKSPF, LUF and other	

emerging projects.

We need a new solution to deliver:

1. Integrated solution(s) to capture all of the Council's consultation and engagement activity.
2. Flexibility to deliver core / statutory consultations and the ability to adapt and grow this going forward and have the ability to share data/insight across the Council.
3. Cost effective solution due to budget constraints.
4. Compliance with data security, IT, and legal aspects (including accessibility).

The proposed software solution provides the Council with the solution to address these issues and meet the increasing demand for consultation and engagement from services now and in the future.

9. Authority / Legal Power:

The Director for Growth & Regeneration has delegated authority to take this decision in accordance with paragraph 12.2 of the Officer Scheme of Delegation.

10. Background Papers attached?

No – exempt information contained in report.

11. Alternative options available / rejected:

1. Continue as we are with current product, this is not sustainable as it does not give us the functionality to undertake the Regulation 18 consultation set out in the Local Plan Review and other statutory and non-statutory consultation.
2. Develop our own internal system, we do not have the skills/capacity with the teams to do this.

12. Implications:

Legal	<p>Software provider is ISO:27001 certified and compliant with GDPR and complies with accessibility standards.</p> <p>The Council has the power to enter into contracts in order discharge its functions (Local Government Act 1972, s111 and the Local Government (contract) Act 1997, s1).</p> <p>The Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to have regulations for how it enters into contracts. In addition to complying with all relevant UK and EU legislation every contract entered into on behalf of the Council must also comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Council's Financial Regulations</p> <p>[Legal Approval – 11 September 2023]</p>
Finance	<p>£10k for a year, of which £5k in 2023/24 to be met from the local plans budget reserve. The remaining £5k for 23/24 will be met from the Corporate services budget. Future annual provision of £10k will be met from the corporate budget from 2024/25 onwards and a growth bid submitted for approval for the 3 year period.</p>

	<p>Procurement - All quotes available from the government digital marketplace under Digital engagement platform for governments & public organisations. Option proposed is to enter into a 1 year + 1 year + 1 year contract with Citzenspace which gives us an option to exit contract if they don't meet our contract management PI's.</p> <p>[Finance Approval – Director for Corporate Services 24.8.23]</p> <p>[Procurement Approval Head of Welland Procurement – 24/08/23]</p> <p>I have discussed with the department and its fully compliant as a route. I advise a 1 year trial with 2 additional one year extensions to balance the value for money (cash and resources) of a longer arrangement with the risk mitigation of regular renewal/escape points.</p>
HR	<p>There are no resourcing implications as a result of the purchase and implementation of this software.</p> <p>[HR & Communications Approval – 31 July 2023]</p>

13. APPROVAL/SIGN OFF (Do not complete until all implications signed off at Section 12)

Signature of Decision Maker with authority to sign (See Section 9):	Email approval received Pranali Parikh Director for Growth & Regeneration
Consultation with:	N/A
Date:	11/09/2023