

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO
Cabinet

17th March 2026

Report Title: Renewal of Civica APP for Regulatory Services

Submitted by: Service Director, Information & Technology

Portfolios: One Council, People & Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

<u>Purpose of the Report</u>	<u>Key Decision</u> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
To renew the contract for Civica Authority Public Protection (APP) system, the case and licence management system used by Regulatory services.	
<u>Recommendation</u>	
<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approves the proposal to renew the contract for Civica APP for a maximum period of four years (2+1+1). 2. Delegates to the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People & Partnerships, Chief Executive and Service Director – Information & Technology, authority to direct award the contract following a compliant procurement exercise. 	
<u>Reasons</u>	
Civica APP is an essential tool for case and licence management, ensuring the Council's compliance with legislative obligations and the efficient delivery of key public services.	
The Council's current contract for the solution expires on 31 st March 2026.	

1. Background

- 1.1** The Council's regulatory services team is responsible for a wide range of statutory duties, including:
 - 1.1.1** Food & Safety
 - 1.1.2** Environmental Health
 - 1.1.3** Licensing (alcohol, taxis, premises, gambling etc).
 - 1.1.4** Housing
- 1.2** The duties performed by these teams are underpinned by an IT system, Civica APP. The Civica APP solution enables the Council's officers to manage complex casework and maintain accurate records of certifications and licences in accordance with statutory regulations and requirements.
- 1.3** The Civica APP system which is specifically developed for local authorities has been used by the Council for over 20 years. Over this period, a

significant amount of configuration, time, resources and data have been added to the system to support the effective delivery of key and statutory Council services.

2. Issues

- 2.1** The Council's current contract for the solution expires on 31st March 2026. After this date, Council officers will be unable to use the application.
- 2.2** The inability for Council officers to access this system would have significant impact on the delivery of services to residents and businesses across the Borough.
- 2.3** The Council is therefore required to renew the existing contract or explore alternative options. This is set out within Section 5 of this report.

3. Recommendation

That Cabinet:

- 3.1** Approves the proposal to renew the contract for Civica APP for a maximum period of four years (2+1+1).
- 3.2** Delegates to the Portfolio Holder for One Council, People & Partnerships, Chief Executive and Service Director – Information & Technology, authority to direct award the contract following a compliant procurement exercise.

4. Reasons

- 4.1** The Regulatory services team are familiar with the Civica APP solution and is used by officers daily.
- 4.2** The loss of access to the system could lead to the loss of historical case records and evidence, impacting investigations and legal proceedings.
- 4.3** The inability to effectively manage and track statutory casework could lead to potential breaches of legislation.
- 4.4** Failure to meet statutory duties could result in harm to the potential harm to the public, resulting in a possible litigation against the Authority.
- 4.5** The Regulatory Services team worked to implement the ability to apply and report issues online, as part of the One Council transformation programme. Whilst this work is continuing, operating without a suitable case management system would lead to reduced efficiency, with increased manual processing and the increased risk of error.
- 4.6** As part of the contract procedure, the supplier will also provide social value by supporting digital inclusion initiatives, ensuring that residents across the Borough have improved access to digital services and the skills needed to engage confidently online.

- 4.7 The renewal of the contract provides the Council with flexible options for future as it navigates through the complexities of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).
- 4.8 The use of the Crown Commercial Services Vertical Application Solutions (VAS) framework provides public sector customers can access software focused solutions to meet the specific needs of their industry, business application or services.

5. Options Considered

- 5.1 As part of the Council's contract review process, Council officers have undertaken a review of the solution and have identified the below options.

5.1.1 **Option 1 - Don't Renew Contract**

The non-renewal of the Civica APP contract would render the Regulatory Services team without access to the system and the data held within the system.

This would have a significant impact on the team's ability to effectively deliver services, as well as residents and businesses. For example, this would impact on the ability to issue alcohol/taxi/premises licences, food hygiene inspections and other types of legislative processes/requirements.

Given this, Option 1 has been discounted and is not recommended.

5.1.2 **Option 2 – Move to another Solution**

Due to the wide breadth and complex nature of a complete regulatory service solution, there are only a limited number of other suppliers who can provide this service/solution.

This option would also require significant investment of money, time, and staff resources to implement a new solution. Given the national shortage of regulatory service qualified officers, as well as the delivery of other key IT projects, it would not be possible to implement a replacement solution in the timeframe available.

This option is therefore not recommended.

5.1.3 **Option 3 - Renew Contract (Recommended)**

Despite a review of the Council's options, the renewal of Civica APP remains the recommended and preferred option.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

- 6.1 The system is critical for evidencing compliance with legislation such as the Food Safety Act, Environmental Protection Act, Licensing Act, and many other related statutory frameworks and laws.
- 6.2 The use of the Crown Commercial Services Vertical Application Solutions (VAS) framework ensures compliance with the Council's contract procedure rules and the Public Contract Regulation 2015.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 No adverse impact has been identified as a result of delivering this proposal.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

8.1 The contract is based upon an initial 2-year term, with the option to extended for 1 year and an option to extend for a further 1 year. Bringing the maximum contract length to 4 years (2+1+1).

8.2 Whilst the Council has implemented budgetary provision for this system, this renewal has been subject to a significant price increase compared to previous years. The supplier has advised that this is due to the Council being required to re-procure the relevant licences to utilise the software.

8.3 Details of costs and pricing are set out in the accompanying confidential report.

9. Major Risks & Mitigation

9.1 The Council runs a risk to the delivery of operational services where it fails to invest in ICT and modern technologies.

9.1.1 This is an identified risk within the Corporate Risk Management system under the ICT Services and Corporate Risk profile.

9.1.2 The council have already taken steps to mitigate this risk with control measures, such as the implementation of a Technology Strategy, Consolidation of hardware and software and the One Council transformation programme.

9.1.3 The renewal of Civica APP, a key business system will ensure the Council is authorised and licensed to utilise the application. The contract will also provide the Council with direct support with Civica.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)



11. One Council

Please confirm that consideration has been given to the following programmes of work:

One Commercial Council

We will make investment to diversify our income and think entrepreneurially.

One Digital Council

We will develop and implement a digital approach which makes it easy for all residents and businesses to engage with the Council, with our customers at the heart of every interaction.

One Sustainable Council

We will deliver on our commitments to a net zero future and make all decisions with sustainability as a driving principle

12. Key Decision Information

12.1 The overall contract value will be a revenue commitment in excess of £100,000 and as such is considered as a key decision.

13. Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions

13.1 None.

14. List of Appendices

14.1 None.

15. Background Papers

15.1 None.