

Report on	Implementation of Online Registration Services Booking System
Date of Meeting	9 th March 2023
Reporting Officer	Joe McGuckin, Head of Strategic Services & Engagement
Contact Officer	Sandra Matchett Gabr, Registration Services Manager

Is this report restricted for confidential business?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	No	X

1.0	Purpose of Report
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update Members on the introduction of a new online booking system for the Registration service in Council.
2.0	Background
2.1	One of the Council's corporate improvement objectives states that <i>"We will ensure a more connected Mid Ulster where new technologies and ways of working, empower citizens to get the best services that matter to them."</i>
2.2	As an outworking of that objective, the Council agreed in June 2021 to develop a digital transformation strategy.
2.3	The strategy is intended to establish the Council as a leading digital council, setting the organisation's digital direction, enabling it to leverage the opportunities provided by technologies to innovate and improve, and to adopt a 'whole organisation' approach which realises cultural, organisational, and operational change, adding value for the organisation, stakeholders, and customers.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	As an outworking of the Councils Digital Transformation Strategy the Organisational Development, Strategy and Performance Directorate seen an opportunity to enable a digital channel shift for their registration services by allowing citizens to book appointments using a simple online process.
3.2	The increasingly significant workload within Registrar's Office being undertaken within the existing staffing complement necessitated the need to look at how best the existing business processes could be streamlined, whilst adding value to the customer experience for those engaging with Registration Services whether it be on births, deaths or marriages.

3.3	The Council appointed Tail Wind Digital to assist with the project roll out along with an internal Cross departmental working group consisting of staff from Registration Services, ICT, Marketing & Communications, Customer Services and Organisational Development.
3.4	The project vision was to develop a “Customer Focussed, digital booking system, readily accessible, 24/7 which improves and simplifies our current registration processes”.
3.5	Mid Ulster District Council wanted to transform their services and make them more accessible to their customers, while looking at ways to make efficiencies by reducing time spent on the telephone or in doing administrative tasks.
3.6	<p>Registration Services was the ideal place to pilot a booking system as it is used by a high volume of customers and is in constant demand. The service contained many bookable services, each needing their own separate customer journey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration of births • Registration of deaths • Arranging a wedding (book a Registrar) • Giving notice of a marriage or civil partnership • Arranging a civil partnership
3.7	The Council has previously taken bookings for these services during office hours by telephone and relied heavily on answering machines to return calls to customers to provide them with a suitable time slot and the process was an administrative burden. This labour-intensive system was time consuming and often duplicative, leaving staff unable to answer calls and provide the customer experience we would expect during busy periods.
3.8	The Council is due to have a soft launch and pilot of the booking system for Registration of Births including the completion of the online Birth Registration form which forms part of the process commencing on 7 th March 2023.
3.9	We will be monitoring the pilot for the month of March making any required tweaks to the system as necessary. The remainder of the booking system will be finalised with a planned Go-Live in April 2023.
3.10	A short online demonstration was provided for Members on the online booking system prior to the meeting.
3.11	Regular updates on the progress of the online registration booking system will be taken back to committee on a quarterly basis.
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	Financial: Project delivered within savings within the Organisational Development budgetary provision.

	Human: N/A
	Risk Management: N/A
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	Equality & Good Relations Implications: Preliminary screening has been completed. No major impacts have been identified. Minor issues identified in the preliminary screening will be further addressed based on the outcome of the pilot.
	Rural Needs Implications: A Rural Needs Impact Assessment has been undertaken in relation to the Digital Transformation Strategy under which this system is being introduced. All social and economic impacts identified in the assessment have been considered in relation to the development of the pilot and introduction on the new Online Registration System.
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	Members note the contents of the report on the Implementation of the Online Booking system for Registration Services.
6.0	Documents Attached & References
	N/A