

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>EXECUTIVE</b>
<b>Relevant Officer:</b>	Mark Towers, Director of Governance and Regulatory Services
<b>Relevant Cabinet Member:</b>	Councillor Graham Cain, Cabinet Member for Tourism and Leisure
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	23 <sup>RD</sup> February 2015

## REGISTRATION – SCANNING OF RECORDS

### 1.0 Purpose of the report:

- 1.1 To consider and approve the purchase of a software package designed specifically for register offices which will provide the instant retrieval of family registers.

### 2.0 Recommendation(s):

- 2.1 To agree to engage Microform Imaging Ltd to provide a Registration imaging solution, as they are the only supplier who provide this service. Microform Imaging Ltd's Registration Entry Gateway (REG) is software designed specifically for register offices for instant retrieval of family registers. The service incorporates the whole process from digital preservation of registers to ensuring compatibility with the REG software and installation for use on the Council's IT system.
- 2.2 To agree Prudential Borrowing in the sum of £83,000 for the purchase of the system, with the repayments made on the basis set out in the report (staff savings and increased income).

### 3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

- 3.1 It is important that a solution is found to preserve these registers and indexes, by scanning of these electronically it will also decrease the time taken by the team in the processing of certificate applications therefore improving the service that the team offer to the Council's customers and increasing income.

- 3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

- 3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes – subject to the Prudential Borrowing being agreed.

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

To retain the current manual process accessing the paper records but there is increasing danger of the records becoming damaged beyond repair, with daily use.

**4.0 Council Priority:**

4.1 The relevant Council Priority is

“ To deliver quality services through a professional, well-rewarded and motivated workforce “

**5.0 Background Information**

5.1 The registers which are maintained by the Registration Team date back to 1837, the registers and indexes are used on a daily basis by the team for copy birth, death and marriage certificates and it is vital that a solution is found to preserve these registers and indexes, by the scanning of these electronically.

5.2 The scanning of these documents will also improve the time taken by the team in the processing of all certificate applications, therefore improving the turnaround of requests. This will see a large reduction in staffing time which will improve the service and deliver savings in staffing costs by removing the need for experienced staff to produce the certificates themselves. This will also improve greatly the overall service that the team offer to our customers for a service with an increasing demand. Over recent years there has been an increase in the numbers of certificates requested and the proposals in the fees and charges for the service now allow for a quicker turnaround and this will more than meet the repayment for the prudential borrowing.

5.3 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

**5.4 List of Appendices:**

None

**6.0 Legal considerations:**

6.1 In accordance with Contract Procedure Rules, the Head of Procurement and Projects, after consultation with the Cabinet Member, is of the opinion that the work, goods and services can only be obtained from a sole supplier and there would be no benefit to the Council in giving public notice for inviting tenders.

**7.0 Human Resources considerations:**

7.1 In year staff savings already made and the income to be generated for the fees and charges for this service (which are currently in place) will more than meet the approximate £10,000 per year cost over a 10 year period.

**8.0 Equalities considerations:**

8.1 Providing this online service will allow equal opportunity to customers to access these records and request copies at any time.

**9.0 Financial considerations:**

9.1 Total cost of system is a £82,279.99 (plus VAT) one off fee for the scanning of all registers and indexes, the software solution, safe collection and returns of all of the registers and free maintenance for the first 12 months. Ongoing maintenance can be met thereafter from current budgets (approx £5,000 per year).

**10.0 Risk management considerations:**

10.1 The registers which are maintained by the Registration Team date back to 1837. Following the closure of the South King Street offices and the move of the team into Municipal Buildings these are now stored in the Registrars strong rooms in the Town Hall and Municipal Buildings. The registers and indexes are used on a daily basis by the team for copy birth, death and marriage certificates and due to this are at increasing daily risk of becoming damaged through wear and tear.

**11.0 Ethical considerations:**

11.1 The scanning of the registers will preserve the integrity of these historic records and also provide an immediate response to requests from members of the public for information which they would otherwise have to come into the office for or wait an unacceptably long time for it to be sent to them by post.

**12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:**

12.1 Microform Imaging offer a bespoke service suited to Registry Services. The product was designed in co-operation with Liverpool Registry Office who following a tender exercise spotted a gap in the market for a bespoke system for Registrars. There are no other companies who provide this same service.

12.2 Staffordshire County Council's Procurement Team recently investigated the market for a similar Registry data project. Staffordshire's experience was that the main suppliers in the data capture market have business models which rely on 'selling' the data via subscription through their websites and stated that whilst this works well for historic material, it is not suitable for more modern Registers.

12.3 Staffordshire County Council confirms that it could not find any suppliers other than Microform Imaging Ltd able to combine the scanning/storage/retrieval aspects in a coherent format so negotiated a rate with this supplier and engaged with them on their Council's Terms and Conditions. Warwickshire County Council has also engaged with this supplier to provide this service.

**13.0 Background papers:**

13.1 Details of quotation recommended and also details of other Councils who use these products.

**14.0 Key decision information:**

14.1 Is this a key decision? No

14.2 If so, Forward Plan reference number:

14.3 If a key decision, is the decision required in less than five days? No

14.4 If **yes**, please describe the reason for urgency:

**15.0 Call-in information:**

15.1 Are there any grounds for urgency, which would cause this decision to be exempt from the call-in process? No

15.2 If **yes**, please give reason:

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

**16.0 Scrutiny Committee Chairman (where appropriate):**

Date informed: N/A

Date approved: N/A

**17.0 Declarations of interest (if applicable):**

17.1

**18.0 Executive decision:**

18.1

**18.2 Date of Decision:**

**19.0 Reason(s) for decision:**

**19.1 Date Decision published:**

**20.0 Executive Members in attendance:**

20.1

**21.0 Call-in:**

21.1

**22.0 Notes:**

22.1