

Report for: Cabinet Member Decision

Item number: To be added by the Committee Section

Title: **Variation to Unified Digital Platform Contract**

Report authorised by: Taryn Eves, Corporate Director of Finance and Resources

Lead Officer: Jenna Scott-Brining (Head of Digital)

Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non Key Decision: Key Decision**

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 To approve a variation to the award of the contract to Netcall Technology Ltd for the provision of a unified digital engagement platform to replace the council's existing Cisco telephony and Granicus systems.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

2.1 Not applicable.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources approves, in accordance with Contract Standing Order (CSOs) 18.03.3, 2.01(d) and 0.08 a variation to the original award report for the contract with Netcall Technology Ltd for the delivery of the unified digital engagement platform.

3.2 This variation seeks to increase the contract value from £1,545,000 by £772,500.00 bringing the total contract value to £2,317,500. The contract remains for an initial period of five years, with the option to extend for a sixth year and a subsequent option to extend for a seventh year, should it be deemed beneficial; this variation also enables for purchasing of professional services needed to deliver Service Modernisation outcomes and savings.

3.3 The contract commenced 21st February 2025.

4. Reasons for decision

4.1 This report seeks approval for a variation to the original award of contract to Netcall Technology Ltd for the unified digital engagement platform, increasing

the contract value by £772,500. While the original award set out the significant benefits of replacing the Council's outdated Cisco telephony and Granicus CRM systems, further work within the Service Modernisation Portfolio has identified that an uplift in investment is necessary to fully unlock the scale of financial and operational benefits.

4.2 The variation does not alter the fundamental case for change, which remains critical: our existing systems are no longer fit for purpose, contracts are expiring, and continuing with them would limit the Council's ability to deliver its strategic objectives. However, the additional investment will enable the Council to maximise the capability of the new platform, directly supporting delivery of the agreed £2.8m savings in the next financial year; savings which are projected to increase in subsequent years as the platform is embedded and further efficiencies are realised.

4.3 In addition, the variation addresses an urgent operational requirement to increase the number of concurrent users (licences) and SIP channels within the platform. The original contract assumed a lower level of capacity; however, demand modelling across Customer Services has demonstrated that higher capacity is essential if the Council is to meet resident demand effectively. Without this increase, there is a material risk of longer residents not being able to join queues & CSO's not being able to access the platform leading to longer call wait times, reduced service levels, and reputational damage due to poor resident experience.

4.4 The additional investment therefore ensures that the platform is not only capable of delivering the same baseline savings originally anticipated but is also positioned to deliver significantly greater value for money, improved customer service and resident experience and long-term resilience for the Council's digital services.

Resident Connect Programme Variation	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	TOTAL
	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	
Netcall Concurrent Users and SIP Channels (implementation)	£ 48,130	£ 116,340	£ 116,340	£ 116,340	£ 116,340	£ 513,490
Netcall Professional Services Packs (implementation)	£ 27,324	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 27,324
Contingency for deployment of additional modules and integrations	£ -	£ 57,922	£ 57,922	£ 57,922	£ 57,922	£ 231,686
TOTAL	£ 75,454	£ 174,262	£ 174,262	£ 174,262	£ 174,262	£ 772,500

5. Alternative options considered

5.1 No viable alternatives were identified. The Council is contractually committed to the Unified Digital Engagement Platform following the original award to Netcall Technology Ltd, and this variation represents the only practical and cost-effective means of delivering the required functionality and capacity. Procuring an alternative system or reverting to legacy platforms would incur significant additional expense, cause major disruption to business-as-usual

operations, and risk failure to deliver the savings and service improvements already built into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

6. Background information

6.1 This report seeks Cabinet approval for a variation to the existing contract with Netcall Technology Ltd for delivery of the Council's Unified Digital Engagement Platform, increasing the contract value by £772,500.

6.2 The proposal has been developed following detailed analysis through the Service Modernisation Portfolio, which was established by CLT to deliver digital transformation across Haringey. This additional investment will ensure the platform can deliver its full potential improving how residents contact the Council, strengthening operational resilience, and helping services achieve significant efficiency savings.

6.3 Context and Rationale

6.3.1 The Council's previous systems (including Cisco telephony and Granicus CRM) are no longer fit for purpose. Contracts expired on November 10th 2025 and continuing with legacy technology would have limited the Council's ability to meet its strategic objectives, particularly around improving resident experience, financial sustainability, and modernisation.

6.3.2 The original contract award commenced on 21st February 2025, following a mini-competition via the NHS Shared Business Service framework, and reflected the Council's intention to deliver a single, integrated platform to support customer contact across all channels, phone, web, and in-person. Since implementation began, further work within the Service Modernisation Portfolio has identified that higher levels of capacity and functionality are required to manage growing service demand and enable the next phase of transformation.

6.3.3 This variation therefore ensures that the platform can fully support delivery of £2.8 million in savings in 2026/27, with further savings expected in future years as efficiencies are realised.

6.4 Political and Strategic Alignment

6.4.1 The proposal supports several key Council priorities:

- Financial sustainability: delivering significant cashable savings through automation, channel shift, and more efficient contact handling.
- Resident experience: reducing call waiting times, improving responsiveness, and enabling residents to access services more easily and independently.

- The Haringey Deal: strengthening how the Council listens to and works with residents by improving accessibility and ensuring faster, clearer communication.
- Corporate priorities: supporting transformation across key service areas including Housing, Adults, and Children's Services, where better digital infrastructure will improve outcomes and efficiency (with further services to be redesigned over coming months).

6.4.2 The proposal has been developed in consultation with Customer Services, Digital, and Finance, with oversight from the Service Modernisation Portfolio Board, chaired by the Corporate Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer).

6.5 Resident and Stakeholder Impact

6.5.1 Improving how residents interact with the Council is central to this investment. The new system is already delivering measurable improvements in how calls are routed and managed and will soon enable new digital channels such as web chat, voice bots, and online forms; providing residents with faster, more convenient ways to access support.

6.6 Financial and Operational Context

6.6.1 The additional investment represents good value for money. The uplift of £772,500 will enable:

- Essential increased system capacity (more concurrent users and SIP channels) to meet current and forecast demand (already approved by spend panel and lines are operational)
- Contingency for deployment of additional modules and integrations where required to streamline contact and reduce manual handling (required to achieve agreed savings – approval to use contingency will be provided by Service Modernisation Board based on achievable savings)
- Improved resilience and scalability, ensuring continuity of service and compliance with contract and data standards

6.6.2 Without this variation, there is a material risk of reduced service levels, longer call waiting times, and reputational damage in an already failing Customer Service offering. It would also limit the Council's ability to achieve the projected financial savings already built into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).

6.7 Risk and Mitigation

6.7.1 A full risk assessment has been undertaken through the Service Modernisation governance process. Key risks include:

Operational risk – Insufficient system capacity leading to service disruption – residents will not be able to contact the customer queues (instead hearing 3 pips) and not all CSO's will be able to access the Netcall platform and answer calls. Creates additional resident complaints and dissatisfaction. Mitigation: increase SIP channels and concurrent user capacity.

Financial risk – Not realising planned MTFs savings if capacity issues are not resolved. Mitigation: ensure investment enables delivery of digital automation and efficiency plans.

Reputational risk – Poor resident experience due to system limitations. Mitigation: phased rollout with monitoring and real-time service performance tracking.

Compliance risk – Legacy systems unable to meet statutory data and accessibility standards. Mitigation: decommission legacy systems as the new platform goes live.

- 6.7.2 This variation strengthens Haringey's ability to deliver on its corporate priorities, improves resident experience, and protects the financial and operational benefits set out in the original business case. The additional investment is essential to ensure that the new platform operates effectively at scale, delivering long-term value and resilience for Haringey.

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes'?

- 7.1 This proposal directly supports delivery of the Corporate Delivery Plan by enabling more efficient, accessible, and responsive public services. The Unified Digital Engagement Platform underpins the Council's ambitions to modernise how residents interact with services, improve satisfaction, and deliver better value for money. It contributes to the strategic outcomes of a Council that lives its values, by improving transparency and accountability in service delivery; a Council that is financially sustainable, through reduced costs and increased automation; and a Council that works together with residents, by providing easier, faster, and more inclusive ways to access support. The investment also strengthens the organisation's digital and data foundations, ensuring that future transformation is evidence-based, equitable, and sustainable.

8. Carbon and Climate Change

- 8.1 While this proposal is primarily focused on improving digital infrastructure and customer service operations, it will also contribute indirectly to the Council's Climate Action Plan objectives by reducing Haringey's carbon

footprint. The Unified Digital Engagement Platform will enable more residents to self-serve online, decreasing the need for in-person visits and paper-based processes, and reducing energy use associated with manual handling and printing. Additionally, by consolidating legacy systems into a single, cloud-based platform, Haringey will reduce on-site server requirements and improve overall energy efficiency. Although the decision does not have a direct climate adaptation element, it supports broader sustainability goals through modern, low-energy digital solutions and smarter ways of working.

9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

9.1 Finance

9.1.1 A breakdown of the £772,500 increased contract value is shown at the end of section 4 above.

9.1.2 The £540,814 of spend on essential increased system capacity will be met from the Digital Services revenue budget, subject to Full Council approval of the 2026-27 Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2026-2031 which includes provision for the £116,340 per annum required for the additional licences and SIP channels as part of the new Digital Services pressures highlighted in that report.

9.1.3 The remaining £231,686 is contingency for future spend on additional modules and integrations. Any drawdown against this contingency would be subject to separate approval via the Service Modernisation Portfolio Board, with funding confirmed in advance of any commitment.

9.2 Procurement

9.2.1 The unified digital platform contract was awarded to Netcall Technology Ltd following a compliant mini competition under the NHS Shared Business service Framework in line with requirements of Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

9.2.2 Ordinarily under the Regulation any modification of contract would necessitate a new tender process unless it came with the permitted parameters of Regulation 75, where, inter alia a modification may proceed if additional services or supplies have become necessary which were not included in the original procurement where a change in of Contractor would cause significant inconvenience or substantial duplication of cost provided the is not more than 50%of the original price (72(1)(b) ii) The value of the proposed variation at £772,500 is less than 50% of the original price.

- 9.2.3 The contract with Netcall is in its first year of award. Since its inception the Council has undertaken a modernisation programme and additional capacity is required to deliver service objectives and council priorities as outlined at 4 above. A change of Contractor would not only be disruption and expensive but unfeasible, as the contract has only just begin.
- 9.2.4 In accordance with CSOs 0.08 (member decision) 18.03.3 (variation) and 2.01(d) the Cabinet Member for may approve the recommendation at 3.

9.3 Legal

- 9.3.1 The Director of Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) was consulted in the preparation of the report.
- 9.3.2 Pursuant to the provisions of the Council's Contract Standing Order (CSO) 18.03.3 and CSO 2.01(d), Cabinet may approve the variation of a contract where the value of the variation is £500,000 or more and as such Cabinet has power to approve the recommendation sought in paragraph 3 of the report.
- 9.3.3 Further to paragraph 9.3.2 above and pursuant to the Council's CSO 0.08, a decision reserved for Cabinet may be taken by a Cabinet Member with the agreement of the Leader and as such the recommendation seeking approval from Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources in paragraph 3 of the report is line with the Council's CSO so long as the Cabinet Member is taking the decision with the agreement of the Leader.
- 9.3.4 The variation is compliant with the provisions of Regulation 72(1)(b)(ii) of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 9.3.5 Legal and Governance (Monitoring Officer) see no legal reasons preventing the approval of the recommendation in the report.

9.4 Equality

- 9.4.1 The council has a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act (2010) to have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share protected characteristics and people who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.

9.4.2 The three parts of the duty apply to the following protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, race and ethnicity, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/faith, sex and sexual orientation. Marriage and civil partnership status applies to the first part of the duty.

9.4.3 Although it is not enforced in legislation as a protected characteristic, Haringey Council treats socioeconomic status as a local protected characteristic.

9.4.4 The decision in question is to approve the variation of the contract for the provision of a unified digital resident contact engagement platform.

9.4.5 The system enables the Council to deliver a better and more accessible customer experience, including:

- supporting greater 'self-service';
- providing a 'device agnostic' solution;
- providing better visibility for customers on progress with their queries and updates on when they can expect to hear back from us; and,
- better access to up-to-date information by both customers and customer service staff supporting them.

9.4.6 The Netcall platform adheres to WCAG 2.2 accessibility standards, meaning that users (both staff and customers) with visual impairments and other access issues will be able to navigate and interact with it. It also includes translation functionality in its 'chat bot' function for more than 100 languages, which should reduce barriers to service access for speakers of English as another language (EAL). As such, it provides accessibility for all residents, with particular benefits for some disabled people and for some members of global majority groups, who are more likely to be speakers of EAL.

10. Use of Appendices

Not applicable.

11. Background papers

- Award Decision Report – Unified Digital Engagement Platform v1.0*
- Award Decision Report – Unified Digital Engagement Platform Part B v1.0*