

HOUSING COMMITTEE

8 DECEMBER 2020

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Report Title	COUNCIL HOUSING – HOUSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION			
Purpose of Report	To inform the Committee of the limitations to the current Housing Management System (HMS) and to seek authority to procure a new system, in conjunction with the new in-house Property Care Service, which will allow Tenant Services to transform its interactions with customers and modernise ways of working.			
Decision(s)	<p>The Committee RESOLVES to:</p> <p>a) Approve the procurement of an integrated Housing Management System (HMS)</p> <p>And</p> <p>The Committee RECOMMENDS to Council to:</p> <p>b) Approve an additional revenue budget of £260,000 in 2020/21 to allow the Council to invest in a single integrated system encompassing the whole housing and repairs functions, as well as better integration with the wider Council.</p>			
Consultation and Feedback	<p>Consultation consisted of:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Briefings with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Housing Committee • Discussions with the Strategic Directors of Communities, Resources, and Transformation and Change • Discussions with Finance • Discussions with the Head of Housing Services • Discussions with the Head of Contract Services 			
Report Author	Sara J Weaver, Income & Systems Manager Tel: 01453 766321 Email: sara.weaver@stroud.gov.uk			
Options	<p>1. Re-procure a housing management system that meets the needs of the service in order to achieve the maximum benefits for the Council, our tenants and communities, rather than using multiple systems which need to be integrated; or</p> <p>2. Continue as we are at significant cost and continuing issues with data management across multiple systems.</p>			
Background Papers	n/a			
Appendices	<p>Appendix A – Housing Management System Business Case</p> <p>Appendix A – Attachment 1 - Gap Analysis Report</p> <p>Appendix A – Attachment 2 - Options Appraisal</p> <p>Appendix A – Attachment 3 - Investment Analysis</p> <p>Appendix B – Corporate Delivery Plan 2018-22</p>			
Implications (further details at the end of the report)	Financial	Legal	Equality	Environmental
	Yes	Yes	No	No

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council is currently undertaking an extensive business transformation programme, aimed at improving efficiencies, providing value for money and improving customer satisfaction.
- 1.2 There have been longstanding concerns with the current Housing and Repairs IT Systems and their ability to support the needs of the Council, our tenants and our communities and it is clear that the current situation cannot continue. Investing in a new HMS will address the current risks and issues and see benefits and efficiencies achieved for the Council, allowing us to deliver improved customer services.
- 1.3 The main housing system in use by the Council was procured 20 years ago. Since then, the needs of the service and of our tenants and communities have changed, as has the technology available to meet these needs, therefore, investing in a HMS is crucial to future-proofing the Council's housing service. The need for a single, modern, integrated HMS has become even more apparent during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 1.4 In April 2019, £175k towards essential repairs systems improvements was approved by Housing Committee as part of the project to move the repairs service in-house. We are now seeking an additional £260k to allow the Council to move forward with the procurement of a single integrated HMS.

2. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 2.1 Working jointly with Property Care would allow us to procure a HMS that meets current and anticipated business requirements across the service as a whole.
- 2.2 The main objectives are:
 - Cross-service working practices and processes to take place within one integrated IT solution
 - Integrated data and information for accessible reporting
 - Transformation of interactions with our customers
 - Modern, intuitive, future-proof IT
 - Cost effective solutions for the future
- 2.3 Benefits to the Council of a cross-service HMS are outlined in the Housing Management System Business Case. (Appendix A, page 2).
- 2.4 The main risks to the business of not progressing with a new HMS are outlined in the Housing Management System Business Case. (Appendix A, pages 4 and 5).

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 There is increasing pressure from the Regulator of Social Housing to deliver value for money. This is particularly relevant for the procurement and delivery of a new HMS as it is

more important than ever that all Council Services deliver and achieve better outcomes for our customers, as well as mobile working for staff and service efficiencies.

- 3.2** There are opportunities to apply a more agile approach to managing and future proofing the services we deliver. Not only will this be of benefit to our customers, through the delivery of a service they should rightly expect from their landlord, but also to our employees as workflows/processes will be streamlined allowing a more efficient way of working, as well as allowing managers to closely track and monitor workloads.
- 3.3** The implementation of a new HMS would support one of the “Delivery” objectives as set out in Council’s [Corporate Delivery Plan 2018-2022](#) which states “use IT investment to provide better customer access and enhance workforce productivity and service innovation.” (Appendix B, page 7).

4. IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial implications

The report sets out a requested increase in capital budget of £260k for a new Housing Management System, that would be added to the existing approved budget of £175k.

This initial capital outlay could be funded from the Major Repairs Reserve. This would have no impact on the financial position of the HRA in the short term, but would offset funds that are set aside for other capital projects within the HRA.

There are identified revenue savings of £15k from the ongoing annual software costs which would help repay this balance, along with staffing efficiencies that would help improve the service offer within the HRA by freeing up officer time.

Lucy Clothier, Accountancy Manager, Email: lucy.clothier@stroud.gov.uk

4.2 Legal implications

The procurement of the integrated Housing Management System will need to be in accordance with the Council’s Contract and Procurement Rules as set out in the Council’s constitution.

One Legal

Tel: 01684 272691

Email: patrick.arran@stroud.gov.uk

4.3 Equality implications

There are no specific changes to service delivery proposed within this decision.

However, it is noted that any new HMS procured should allow the Council to monitor tenants’ protective characteristics, particularly disability, so we can meet their specific needs as required.

4.4 Environmental implications

There are no significant implications within this category.