

Project Initiation Document

Housing Landlord IT System Replacement

Project Details

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Document Control

Revision Date	Version	Author(s) & Role	Comments
15 th September 2019	1	Stephen Boland	

Approvals

	Name	Role	Document Date
Prepared by:	Simon Lewis	Head of Customer	September 2019
Approved by:		(in order to progress through the PMO, HOF sign-off is required)	

The Council's current Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2016- 2046 (HRA) is structured around four strategic objectives:

- Providing quality homes;
- Supporting the most vulnerable;
- Better services; and
- Stronger business.

The pace of change and advances in technology have provided opportunities for housing providers to deliver services and work in a way that we could not have envisaged, even ten years ago.

These advances, that effect all of our lives, have meant that customer expectations have shifted to expect access to services and information in a way, at a time, and at a location that suits their individual needs. The customer expects to be able to access services using smart interactive technology.

These technologies are shaping the way that housing providers are delivering their priorities and local services. The "traditional" approach is no longer viable and leading housing organisations have already moved the way they work and how they deliver services. They are focussing on technology change to develop 24/7 digital solutions for customers.

New technologies are supporting the work of organisations in leaning their processes, policies and workflows across their business areas, helping with the streamlining of these to better meet customer needs more efficiently, quicker and at lower cost.

The current housing management IT system used by the Council to help delivery landlord services to circa. 5,700 tenants is Capita's Housing Academy system. The system was introduced in 2006/07 with an annual contract for Capita to provide software support and maintenance i.e. upgrades for the system. The system is central to the day to day operation of the Council's housing landlord function.

Capita has formally notified the Council that they will be ending Housing Academy System support and maintenance with effect from September 2020. In so doing there is a strong likelihood of our current system eventually failing (more probability as time goes by) where the severity of the consequences are thought to be extremely harmful for the Council and its customers.

The Council is now in a position where it needs to procure a new system that will allow the housing landlord function to continue to meet current and future business requirements.

Benefits of a new system:

Management of service:

- The new system will allow for analysis of workload, and allow managers to more effectively target and quickly prioritise resources. It will also significantly aid and speed up communication particularly across areas of the housing service and the council and thereby significantly reduce mistakes; and
- We will be able to add new system processes easily and quickly, updates by non-technical council staff will be achievable to facilitate speed of deployment to meet changing customer and service needs.

Benefits for customers:

- Customers to be able to self-serve and access information relevant to their specific requirements 24/7 using a wide variety of e-enabled devices including PCs, tablets, smartphones. With all information held in a central place accessible by all, tenants will be given better, quicker and more consistent responses to their queries, they will also be able to update their own information. Staff time will be freed up and will then be able to spend more time in direct contact with tenants and leaseholders. Mobile working for staff will enable them to access and update information 'in the field' visiting tenants.

Performance Monitoring:

- The new system will enable sophisticated management information reporting to aid the deployment of our staffing resources. Such reporting will all support our approach to problem solving and continuous improvement.

Web portal for tenants:

- A new system will provide a full interactive web-site for tenants and leaseholders. Examples of services that need to be built in the web site include: the ability to request services; send messages to officers; report repairs; view progress of repairs; look up rent account information; request a new swipe card; make an application for a transfer; view details of voids; make a complaint; interrogate mutual exchanges, update personal records.

Automation and streamlining processes:

- We will have the capability to automatic workflow. Automation is a key driver of efficiency and taking waste out of our service. Automation will mean higher quality services at lower cost, focusing on those highly repetitive tasks that add the least value.

Objectives

- Supply and delivery of a new housing landlord IT system that provides comprehensive IT integration across all the services;
- More effective management of services across the landlord function;
- Contribute to service delivery cost reductions;
- Customers to self-serve, and easily and quickly access services 24/7 using a variety of devices;
- Free up staff resource requirement in more general and routine service transactions;
- Enable mobile working with the functionality for staff to perform transactions out in the field of operation; and
- Automated workflow focusing on those highly repetitive tasks that add the least value.

Assumptions, Dependencies & Deliverables

Assumptions Description	Impact if not borne / accepted
The assumption is that significant numbers of tenants will embrace and engage with our services using modern technological routes.	It is clear that some level of technological channel shift amongst our tenants is possible. There will still be significant benefits for the landlord service without achieving the full extent of this shift. Staffing costs will need to be reviewed in the event of significantly low take-up.
Dependencies Description	Project / Programme
We are also progressing a project to lean housing service processes. It is sensible for the leaning processes to be completed first and then request the IT supplier helps us configure the new system.	Link to the Lean Partnership work.
Significant input will be needed for key members of staff. A range of Specialist, Case Management Leads and Case Managers from across the council will need to get involved in this project.	Many of these staff will have existing workloads and heavily involved in other key projects (HRA Business Plan Review; Process Leaning Project)
Significant input from staff will be needed to promote the new self-serve technology to our tenants and leaseholders. These customers will need to be supported and enabled to take-up our new service offer.	Low take-up and the extent of the positive impacts reduced. Likelihood of increased staffing costs as a result.
Deliverables Description	Target Date
<i>Supply and delivery of a newly configured, integrated and comprehensive housing landlord IT system.</i>	September 2020
<i>Systems training.</i>	September 2020
<i>Customer self-serve portal.</i>	September 2020
<i>Automated functionality.</i>	September 2020
<i>Mobile working functionality.</i>	September 2020

Project Costs, Resources and Benefits

Project Costs		
Cost Description	Budget	Actual
Total License, Services and 5 Year Support	Circa £600,000	

Project Resources		
Role	Utilisation %	Permanent / Contractor
Project Manager.	TBC	Permanent
A team of 'in service' specialists.	TBC	Permanent
A team of 'in service' case management leads and case managers.	TBC	Permanent
Supplier (contractor) personnel	TBC	Contractor
IT Team officers	TBC	Permanent
Independent IT Specialist	TBC	Contractor

Project Benefits	
Tangible	Intangible
Maximise the use of IT within the housing landlord service, in particular, to achieve efficiencies e.g. improve accuracy of data, improve management, exploit remote working, timely provision of information, operate customer self-serve.	Reputation of the service.
Meet statutory requirements.	Social and welfare impacts

Project Risks and Issues

Project Risks		
Risk Description	High / Medium / Low	Risk Response
Suppliers fail to delivery any of the procured systems on time.	Medium	Engage with the supplier and agree timetable. The strength of the contract could lessen this risk. Agree contingency plan with existing system supplier.
Implementation could be affected by lack of project resources.	Low/Medium	It is essential the housing service and our IT services provides adequate resources to test, check and approve the new system and data.
Staff reluctance to accommodate change and potentially low staff morale	Low	Engagement of staff in the project. Staff supported to get involved in the project.
Procurement of new IT and migration of data presents notable risks.	Medium	It is essential we manage the project effectively. Risk to be managed under project management principles

Project Issues

Issues Description	High / Medium / Low	Issue Response
Need to appoint a Project Manager and bring together a project team that meets regularly throughout the duration of the project.	Low	Engage programme manager to address as a priority.
Need to quickly progress the procurement process to appoint a new IT housing management system supplier.	Low	We will need to prioritise this and ensure that this is given sufficient status to secure required input.