

Subject:	Update on procurement of the main IT system for Housing	
Date of Meeting:	13 March 2019	
Report of:	Executive Director Neighbourhoods, Communities & Housing	
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Ward(s) affected:	All	

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT

1.1 This report updates Housing & New Homes Committee on progress made on the procurement of, and project to implement, a new housing management IT system for Housing services.

1.2 The report confirms which organisation has been awarded the contract for a provision of a new housing management system, and how the project will progress. The aim is to have the new IT system in place by September 2020. It should enable the service to introduce long term operational efficiencies, helping to ensure that resident services are provided as effectively as possible, and should also improve the customer experience - making a significant contribution to service delivery that is fit for the future.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS:

2.1 That Housing & New Homes Committee notes the contents of this report.

3 CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 The Council's current primary housing management IT system, Northgate Open Housing Management System (OHMS) is now over 20 years old. The current contract for this system was extended to January 2021 to enable a compliant and robust procurement process for the new contract to take place and to allow for a reasonable implementation period for the replacement system.

- 3.2 A budget for the replacement system of £1.2m was approved by Policy Resources & Growth (PR&G) Committee in July 2017. The proposed HRA capital programme for 2019/20 also includes a further £0.25m to cover the costs of new server hardware and IT and Digital (IT & D) staff support costs to assist with the build, implementation and licence costs. There is, as would be expected for major management system/IT projects, a contingency for unforeseen costs that could arise, e.g. if building the new system interfaces prove to be more challenging than anticipated, or further IT & D specialist staff resources are required.
- 3.3 The contract for the new system has now been awarded to Northgate Public Services (NPS) following a procurement process undertaken in accordance with the The Public Contracts Regulations 2015.
- 3.4 The following paragraphs explain in more detail how the successful supplier, NPS, was selected.
- 3.5 Each supplier was asked to demonstrate their system, and staff from across the user base met to see what each system could offer. Staff and residents then tested the functionality of all the systems by working through some common scenarios and scored how each performed. This fed into the overall scoring process.
- 3.6 The suppliers' bids were also scored by the procurement panel, which included officers with experience covering many areas. Panel members only looked at the quality of the bids and did not have access to information about the cost of the particular systems. Financial consideration of each bid was carried out separately.
- 3.7 IT & D colleagues evaluated the technical specification; and the evaluation panel were required to:
- Evaluate the suppliers in accordance with the specification developed by the Housing teams against a set of pre-defined criteria
 - Evaluate the demonstrations
 - Visit other landlords who are already using the suppliers' software
- 3.8 The council's Procurement team then collated all of the moderated scores and carried out a financial assessment of the preferred bidder. Finally, the Change Advisory Board (an internal IT & D group of technical staff) gave their final verdict on the system that had scored the highest points.
- 3.9 NPS scored consistently well across all stages of the procurement process and the evaluation panel is confident that they will provide the modern, improved housing management system that is very much needed.
- 3.10 The implementation of the new system is due to start in April 2019 with the first stage being the build of the new system.

- 3.11 The project will be delivered in three phases. The first will include the build and replacement of the current housing management system and housing customer portal, as well as the integration with Microsoft Outlook and text messaging. The second phase will include the introduction of mobile working, an enhanced customer portal, planned maintenance, as well as bed and breakfast placements. The third and final phase will introduce improvements to the billing process for leaseholders, access to the housing portal for leaseholders, graphical repairs reporting for customers, social media integration, and a contractor portal.
- 3.12 The aim is for the first phase deliverables to go live in September 2020, the second phase deliverables target date is in December 2020 (depending on how well the initial phase is bedded in), and the the third and final phase deliverables is March 2021.

4 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Residents were involved in the evaluation process for the new contract.
- 4.2 Those residents and others have indicated that they would be happy to be involved or indeed continue to be involved in the testing of the housing customer portal, as the implementation progresses.
- 4.3 Updates on the progress of the project will be featured in Homing In magazine and on our website for the benefit of all residents and to promote the enhanced customer portal.

5 CONCLUSION

- 5.1 This report provides an update on the award of a contract for a new housing management IT system and the implementation phases for the new system. The programme manager can provide this committee with further updates at key stages of the project as requested.

6 FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 Financial Implications:

PR&G Committee approved a budget of £1.2m for the delivery of a new Housing Management IT System. The proposed HRA capital programme 2019 (report to PR&G 14 February 2019) includes a further £0.250m for Housing IT including the costs of new hardware and IT and Digital (IT & D) staff support costs to assist with the build, implementation and licence costs. Both budgets (if approved) will be funded from HRA reserves. The latest forecast for HRA reserves confirms that the project can be funded at this level with sufficient reserves remaining to maintain the minimum HRA working balance of £3m.

6.2 Legal Implications:

There are no direct legal implications arising out of this report which sets out a recommendation for noting.

Lawyer Consulted: Isabella Sidoli

Date: 1-3-19

6.3 Equalities Implications:

Equalities considerations informed the specification for the new system, to meet equalities requirements for staff and customer users alike. This was tested in the scoring process and will be tested as part of the implementation of the new system. An Equalities Impact Assessment of the new system has been completed and will inform the testing to ensure full accessibility.

6.4 Sustainability Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

Any Other Significant Implications: None

6.5 Public Health Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

6.6 Crime & Disorder Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

6.7 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

6.8 Corporate / Citywide Implications:

None arising directly from this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices	None
Documents in Members' Rooms	None
Background Documents	None