

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Meeting of the Executive on 14th April 2025

Housing Management System

Report of the Assistant Director for Housing Management

Classification	This report is Open
Contact Officer	Victoria Dawson, Assistant Director Housing Management

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To enter into a contract with MRI Real Estate Software for ongoing support of the Open Housing system and to upgrade to "One Housing"

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 In 2017 Executive approved the significant investment of a housing management software upgrade to "Open Housing". This was a Capita product, and following a significant period of implementation, the new system went live in September 2020. This IT system is used to provide management and maintenance of the Council's housing stock, and tenancies, comprising 5,000 properties, garage sites, and leasehold properties.
- 1.2 The contract was signed in 2018, this was a 5-year contract with an option to extend which has been enacted. The current contract for ongoing software and maintenance expires on 30th April 2025.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 Whilst Open Housing provides repair, servicing, and programmed works functionality, the more stringent requirements of the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023, is imposing a greater governance, and data driven approach to the safety, maintenance, and improvement of the Council's Housing stock and our assets.
- 2.2 In recognition of the developing themes around housing and compliance, and the need for their clients to work in a more dynamic and agile way, Open Housing has been upgraded and rebranded as "One Housing".
- 2.3 This builds on the success of the Open Housing product, providing enhancements to functionality, improvements to the look and feel, navigation,

and ability for users to customise layouts and format displays and extract data more easily.

- 2.4 These higher requirements, and the even greater need to confidently evidence our compliance, maintenance histories, and data-driven decisions behind our improvement programmes, mean these activities would benefit from One Housing.
- 2.5 Additional modules are now available which ensure greater evidence of compliance with the latest legislative requirements and the Regulator for Social Housing Consumer Standards.
- 2.6 The proposal to migrate the current Open Housing to One Housing, with a number of additional modules will improve functionality as follows:
 - Workflow will be a bespoke design to reflect our processes and procedures and will be built around “trigger” points that will activate sets of workflow scripts. This will allow streamlining processes, ensuring information is cascaded to the relevant teams in an efficient manner. Due to inbuilt prompts, it will also hold designated users accountable to set timescales relevant to tasks, improving completion times and in turn tenant satisfaction.
 - TM Stock Condition - This module is required to interlink the current Open Housing stock condition module with Total Mobile. This will enable surveys to be conducted on site with information feeding back to Open Housing and updating component information where required. This will reduce manual inputting of data and create smoother and efficient processes for maintaining stock data.
 - Pro2 – Due to regulatory demand there is more requirement than ever to produce reports and analyse data held within our databases. The Pro2 solution will give us a real-time replication of our Open Housing database and allow reporting against real time data.
 - Tenant Portal / SMS - This provides expansion on our existing OpenAccess Portal that is currently used for Bolsover Homes. The tenant portal will act in a similar way, allowing the user to create an account to log in, from here tenants will be able to access their rent account via a secure login mechanism and interact with us on a self-serving basis to perform tasks such as managing tenancy/occupants, setting up a direct debit, raising a communication/viewing existing communication with the housing team and raising repairs/booking appointments. The SMS element is to facilitate outbound communication to tenants.
- 2.7 The procurement exercise was undertaken, supported by the Council's procurement team. This is available under the KCS (Kent Commercial Services) framework. The Procurement team supports a direct award under this framework, providing the Council best value for money, supporting a new contract term of 5 years. It should be noted that since this was undertaken MRI Real Estate Software has taken over Capita, yet the same terms and conditions, and costings apply.

- 2.8 The full cost of the 5-year contract, which includes annual licence and maintenance support, the purchase and implementation of additional modules and the upgrade to One is £464,599.65. The ongoing annual support totalling £274,879.65 is contained within existing revenue budgets. The Capital expenditure, £189,720 can be funded by available capital receipts.
- 2.9 The Housing Innovation Team will be responsible for working with MRI to help build the new modules to suit the Council's needs, including testing the system and data inputting/checking.

Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 It is essential that we have the required annual support for the housing management system. The new One housing system will give us greater functionality, and additional modules will ensure compliance with new legislative requirements.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 To not have annual support for the housing management system is not possible. By not having the additional modules we are reliant on manually updated excel documents which are at risk of non-compliance, loss of data and errors.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Council award a 5-year contract to MRI Real Estate Software for ongoing annual support of the Housing Management System and One System upgrade.
2. Council approves the capital programme be updated to include the capital cost of the One System upgrade, which can be funded by capital receipts.

Approved by Councillor Phil Smith, Portfolio Holder for Housing

IMPLICATIONS:

<u>Finance and Risk</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Details:		
<p>The ongoing annual support is contained within existing software budgets. The capital expenditure can be funded by available capital receipts.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">On behalf of the Section 151 Officer</p>		

Legal (including Data Protection)Yes ☒No ☐**Details:**

A compliant public procurement exercise has been followed.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

StaffingYes ☐No ☒**Details:**

The Upgrade and new module implementation will be delivered within existing staffing resource, the Housing Innovation Team.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

Equality and Diversity, and ConsultationYes ☐No ☒

Details: The Council's Housing Service policies incorporate equity and diversity considerations which are implemented by way of the Open Housing and One Housing systems when administering service arrangements.

EnvironmentYes ☐No ☒

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details: None arising from this report

DECISION INFORMATION:

☒ **Please indicate which threshold applies:**

Is the decision a Key Decision?

A Key Decision is an Executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more wards in the District or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:

Yes ☒No ☐

Revenue (a) Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more.	(a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Capital (a) Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more.	(a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
District Wards Significantly Affected: <i>(to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District)</i> Please state below which wards are affected or tick All if all wards are affected:	All <input type="checkbox"/>

Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
If No, is the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decision(s) proposed within this report? <i>(decisions may only be classified as exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer)</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation carried out: <i>(this is any consultation carried out prior to the report being presented for approval)</i>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment, Housing
Ambition: Customers Priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continuous improvement to service delivery through innovation, modernisation and listening to customers. ○ Improving the customer experience and removing barriers to accessing information and services ○ Promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and supporting and involving vulnerable and disadvantaged people
Ambition: Housing Priority: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Building more, good quality, affordable housing, and being a decent landlord

DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	Title
N/A	

Background Papers
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive, you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>
N/a