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**HOME-LINK SCHEME PROCUREMENT**

Committee: Corporate Governance and Finance Committee

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1.0 **ISSUE**

- 1.1 The current IT service contract for Home-Link the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) Scheme for Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk ceases on 31 March 2016.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members are requested to:

- (i) Instruct the Principal Housing Officer to undertake the procurement of the new IT supplier contract in the current financial year (2014/15) in partnership with the other local authorities in Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk, using the South Cambridgeshire District Council Procurement Service Team.
- (ii) Recommend to Full Council in February 2015 that a budget to cover implementation costs of up to £30,000 (should a different IT supplier to the existing one be appointed) be added to the 2015/16 capital programme.

3.0 **BACKGROUND/OPTIONS**

- 3.1 Home-Link is the Choice Based Lettings (CBL) for Cambridgeshire and West Suffolk. It has been in operation since February 2008 with the current IT supplier Locata Housing Services (LHS).
- 3.2 The Home-Link scheme enables the Council to fulfil a number of statutory duties including to provide advice and information to persons in the district about the right to make an application for an allocation of accommodation. The system underpins housing options and homelessness services, provides a Housing Register and provides a database for analysis that underpins a number of policies within the Local Plan.
- 3.3 The current contract with Locata Housing Services ends in February 2015. An extension on the existing terms has been negotiated to 31 March 2016 to allow adequate time to implement a new IT system, in case a new supplier is successful in bidding for the supply of the service.

- 3.4 Legal advice relating to the procurement process is being provided at no cost by Fenland District Council.
- 3.5 The total procurement costs for the IT service is £10,010 which equates to £1430 per partner.
- 3.6 The estimated contingency costs for implementing a new IT system is £210,000, when divided between the 7 partners this equates to £30,000 per partner. Although this figure is substantial, over the expected contract length of 8 years (5 years with an option to extend for a further 3 years) this calculates to £3,750 per year. Also, it is possible that new contract may cost less than the existing contract with the existing supplier, and these savings may offset the implementation costs.

#### 4.0 ARGUMENTS/CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 Without a new contract in place the current service to customers would cease on 31 March 2016 with no viable alternative available. This would leave the Council unable to adequately fulfil a number of statutory duties and functions.
- 4.2 A joint procurement exercise is the only practical way forward in procuring a new IT contract and provides the benefit of shared costs.
- 4.3 It is financially prudent for the Council to make provision for a budget to be added to the 2015/16 capital programme to cover the implementation costs, should a new IT supplier be appointed.

#### 5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS/EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 Based on South Cambridgeshire procurement team costs estimates the following financial implementations have been identified; £1,430 for procurement services in 2014/15 and possible implementation costs of £30,000 in 2015/16.
- 5.2 Equality Impact Assessment (INRA) will be updated to take into account any relevant changes, should they occur due to the procurement process.

#### 6.0 APPENDICES

- 6.1 None

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##### **Background Documents**

None

##### **Location**

Room 117  
The Grange,  
Ely

##### **Contact Officer**

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