

ARUN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO HOUSING & WELLBEING COMMITTEE ON 17 MARCH 2022

REPORT

SUBJECT:	Housing Management System Project Update
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REPORT AUTHOR:	Karen McGreal, Business Improvement Manager
DATE:	18 February 2022
EXTN:	01903 737656
AREA:	Residential Services

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:
This report provides Members with a progress update in relation to the implementation of the new Integrated Housing Management System – Civica CX and provides an update on the financial projections for delivering the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS:
It is recommended that the Housing & Wellbeing Committee:
a) Agree the financial projections and virements undertaken for delivery of the project; and
b) Note the progress of the project to date and delivery risks

1.0 BACKGROUND:
1.1 In October 2020 Cabinet approved the award and implementation of an Integrated Housing Management System and it was agreed at Full Council in May 2021.
1.2 The unprecedented demand for homeworking during the pandemic highlighted that the current system does not offer the reliable remote accessibility required to meet the business needs of the Housing service. The new system gives the council the opportunity to implement cloud hosting, a modern customer self-service portal, contractor portal and an asset management module. It will greatly enhance customer access to services, allow for greater self-service and be business ready for the requirements of data/management information and asset management contained within the Housing White Paper.
1.3 The new system will bring increased efficiencies in respect of replacing paper and

manually intensive processes with increased automated processes and self-serve opportunities for residents, resulting in more seamless service delivery and reduced transactional costs; savings in respect of postage and printing; savings in officer time and increased resilience and business continuity as a result of cloud-based delivery.

1.4 The initial budget for the project was set at £600k. Of this £500k was for procurement and maintenance of the system over a period of four years and £100k for project management costs. The project commenced in July 2021 with a phase one planned to go live in November 2022.

1.5 Since commencement of the project in July 2021, steady progress has been made however due to a number of issues it has become clear more resource is required to deliver the project.

The main issues are summarised below:

- a) Existing business critical functions still needing to be undertaken on top of the project work, taking resources away from the project.
- b) The quality of existing data is not fit for purpose and significant additional data cleansing is required.
- c) Processes maps and procedures being built from scratch.
- d) Integration costs of interfaces with other corporate and contractor systems.
- e) Implementation and build of system require more in house resource compared to previous and similar implementations.
- f) Remote working has impacted on the product knowledge transfer across the project team. Sharing the learning is taking longer.
- g) In preparation for document management and GDPR compliance significant additional work is required to correct historical anomalies.
- h) The project work is complex and the project team are inexperienced in project work.
- i) Following data pass one (an extract of data from existing system transferred to new system) and given the volume of data to be migrated further data passes are required to ensure quality testing and performance is assured before go live.

1.6 Given the complex and technical nature of the service and the under investment in systems and process over a prolonged period of time the project has highlighted the impact of this under investment.

- 1.7 The project team has cleansed approximately 80,000 documents or data sets since the project commenced. This is an enormously time hungry and on- going task.
- 1.8 An increased budget was incorporated in the budget setting for 2022/23. This budget was £1.058m and was covered in the budget reports presented to Housing and Wellbeing Committee on 24 January 2022 and Policy and Finance Committee on 10 February 2022. Since this, a further £150k of required resource has been identified. Officers have identified available funding in other budgets and the additional requirement will be funded by virement increasing the overall project budget to £1.208m. This is explained in the Financial Implications paragraph 6.2.
- 1.9 The virement is to support additional resources both expert and local, to assist with progressing the project in line with the planned go live date.
- 1.10 As the project has progressed, and with the addition of the asset management module it has become apparent that the project requires more resource. Day to day demands within the Housing Service are taking resource from the project team. This is impacting on meeting deadlines and project progress. Project team members are regularly drawn into their previous roles and activities due to service demands and resource issues across the service.
- 1.11 The housing teams do not have embedded established processes that can be transferred into the new system. Therefore, process mapping and business activities are having to be documented on a regular basis as the project progresses. This is additional work and takes more time than if an established process was being provided from the housing teams.
- 1.12 We currently have a vacancy in the project team and this will reduce progress until the post is filled which is likely to take around two months. This will set us back, with additional time to bring a new team member on board and up to speed.
- 1.13 The project is progressing but slower than we had anticipated for the reasons outlined. The go live date remains at November 2022 although this will be under regular review.

2.0 PROPOSAL(S):

2.1 Housing & Wellbeing Committee note the progress of the project and approve the budget for delivery.

3.0 OPTIONS:

3.1 Not applicable.

4.0 CONSULTATION:

Has consultation been undertaken with	YES	NO
Relevant Town/Parish Council		✓

Relevant District Ward Councillors		✓
Other groups/persons (please specify)	✓	
5.0 ARE THERE ANY IMPLICATIONS IN RELATION TO THE FOLLOWING COUNCIL POLICIES: (Explain in more detail at 6 below)	YES	NO
Financial	✓	
Legal	✓	
Human Rights/Equality Impact Assessment		✓
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime & Disorder Act		✓
Sustainability		✓
Asset Management/Property/Land		✓
Technology		✓
Other (please explain)		

6.0 IMPLICATIONS:

6.1 Legal – None identified

6.2 Financial

As discussed at paragraph 1.8, it has been necessary to review the budget for the project implementation. Officers will monitor the progress and costs of the implementation during the period outlined. An updated financial summary for the project is shown below:

	2020/21 £'000	2021/22 £'000	2022/23 £'000	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	Total £'000
Capital Costs	37	263	505	186	0	991
Revenue Costs	0	47	56	57	57	217
Total	37	310	561	243	57	1,208

The funding includes a number of virements from other budgets. These are shown below:

Budget	£'000
Salaries	51
Earmarked Reserve	71
Interest on Borrowing	28
New Burdens and Prevention Grant	109
Total Virement to Project	259

The virements will provide the necessary resource to support effective delivery of the project in the expected timeframe, while insuring day to day service provision is maintained. To ensure effective governance, this report recommends Member approval of the virements.

7.0 REASON FOR THE DECISION:

7.1 To update Members on the progress and financial commitments in implementing the replacement software.

8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS:

8.1 October 2020 Cabinet Report;

8.2 2022/23 Budget Reports to Housing and Wellbeing Committee, 24 January 2022 and Policy and Finance Committee 10 February 2022.

