

<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<i>Housing Options and Allocations Service –IT Provision</i>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<i>Councillor Liz Walsh – Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities</i>
<b>RESPONSIBLE OFFICER</b>	<i>Martin Holt – Head of Healthy Communities</i>
<b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>	<i>Michael Veryard – Housing Manager (01494 732200) mveryard@chiltern.gov.uk</i>
<b>WARD/S AFFECTED</b>	<i>Not ward specific</i>

## 1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to note an exemption that has been made to the Joint Contract Procedure Rules

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **That Cabinet note the exemption to the Joint Contract Procedure Rules that has been approved by Management Team.**

## 2. Content of Report

**2.1** AVDC (Aylesbury Vale District Council), CDC (Chiltern District Council), SBDC (South Bucks District Council) and WDC (Wycombe District Council) currently jointly procure and utilise an external web-based software system delivered by Locata (Housing Services) Ltd to manage the housing register, allocations and homelessness services within each district. This countywide approach to procuring and operating the system has generated significant benefits including reduced costs, shared resources and regularly sharing of good practice and information.

**2.2** The current agreement between the four district councils and Locata (Housing Services) Ltd comes to an end in January 2018 and the practitioners in the four District Councils have confirmed collectively that they wish to continue to utilise the system after that date.

**2.3** The joint Chiltern District Council and South Bucks District Council Contracts Procedure Rules makes provision for an exemption to the rules. The rules require that any exemption must be approved by Management Team and shall be reported to the next appropriate Cabinet meeting for information.

**2.4** Management Team has approved an exemption being made to the Contract Procedure Rules in accordance with Section A6 (Paragraphs 15 to 19) of the Rules in order for CDC (in partnership with the other District Councils) to proceed with entering into an Agreement with Locata (Housing Services) Ltd to continue to deliver the housing register, allocations and homelessness software requirements from January 2018.

**2.5** Management Team approved the exemption for the following reasons:

- (i) The existing system delivered by Locata (Housing Services) Ltd works effectively and has been significantly enhanced to meet CDC's specific requirements. Locata are already

advanced in developing new enhancements to meet the requirements of the new Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 when it is implemented next year.

- (ii) CDC needs to ensure that a system is in place from January 2018 to continue to support its statutory homelessness and allocations duties.
- (iii) Locata (Housing Services) Ltd is a specialist provider of Choice Based Lettings, Housing Register and Homelessness Management systems. There are only a limited number of providers delivering these integrated systems and a lack of genuine competition with no indication that any other provider would deliver better value for money than Locata.
- (iv) A transition to a new system would require a commitment of significant resources (costs and staff time) and generate considerable disruption to customers during the process.
- (v) The existing system already delivers significant self-service benefits to customers and reflects the aspirations of the Customer Experience Strategy that is currently being taken forward.

**2.6** In accordance with the Paragraph 16 of the Rules, this exemption is being reported to Cabinet for information.

### **3. Corporate Implications**

#### **Financial**

The exemption has been agreed in accordance with the joint Contract Procedure Rules.

#### **Legal**

The continued provision of the current software system will ensure that the Council can continue to meet its statutory housing, allocations and homelessness responsibilities.

### **4 Links to Council Policy Objectives**

Delivering cost- effective, customer- focused services

### **3 Next Step**

CDC (in partnership with the other District Councils) will proceed with entering into a new Agreement with Locata (Housing Services) Ltd

<b>Background Papers:</b>	None other than those referred to in the report
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