

# South Lakeland District Council

## Cabinet

Wednesday, 21st July 2021

### Cumbria Choice Based Letting Run Contract and Partnership Agreement

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**Portfolio:** Cllr Chaffey Housing Portfolio Holder  
**Report from:** Director of Customer and Commercial Services  
**Report Author** Vicky Mcdonald - Operational Lead People, Welfare & Income Maximisation  
Ben Wright - Lead Specialist for Digital Innovation

**Wards:** All

**Forward Plan:** Key Decision – Urgent Notice published

**Links to Council Plan Priorities:**

This decision will contribute towards the following Council priorities Working across boundaries – Delivering a balanced community -.A Fairer South Lakeland the improvements to the Cumbria Choice Based Letting system will directly impact on customers accessing Housing Services for accommodation. It will enhance the current service provided.

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#### 1.0 Expected Outcome

1.1 The Cabinet will agree to enter into the run contract for the Cumbria Choice Based Letting System as the Lead Authority. This will allow the Council and all its partners to implement a new Cumbria Choice Based Letting system which will improve the service provided to residents requiring accommodation.

#### 2.0 Recommendation

It is recommended that Cabinet;

- (1) **Delegates to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Director of Customer and Commercial Services and the Lead Specialist for Legal Governance and Democracy the authority to enter into the Run Contract with the selected provider.**
- (2) **Delegates to the Portfolio Holder for Housing and the Director of Customer and Commercial Services and the Lead Specialist for Legal Governance and Democracy the authority to enter into a new partnering agreement with the partners in light of the new contracts.**

#### 3.0 Background and Proposals

3.1 The Cumbria Choice Based Lettings (CCBL) is a partnership, comprising the 6 housing authorities in Cumbria and 6 housing associations. It enables local authorities to hold a housing register, users to seek accommodation using a single application, and providers to allocate properties. The CCBL Partnership is governed by a Partnership Board comprising representatives from all of the Partners. Previously, local authorities had nomination agreements with Registered Providers and customers were required to fill in several applications if they wished to access social housing. According to the Partnering Agreement dated 28 July 2010, the Lead Authority with responsibility for management of the CCBL scheme is South Lakeland District Council. All local housing authorities are required to have an allocation scheme for determining priorities and procedures for the allocation of social housing

in the authority area (regardless of whether the authority has its own housing stock). The Council is the Lead Authority for the Cumbria Choice Based Letting Partnership.

- 3.2 The Council last year was consulted on the changes proposed to Cumbria Choice Based Letting Policy and this was approved by the Board.
- 3.3 The Board identified a requirement to build a new IT platform and infrastructure for those using the system to allocate housing. Improvements were identified and a Build Contract was entered into with Civica last year. This report seeks approval for the support and maintenance contract to operate alongside the build contract.
- 3.4 The proposed contract is currently out to consultation with all partners and their officer teams.
- 3.5 The current contract is provided by Civica and officers have agreed an extension of the current contract to ensure continuity of customer service to our customers. The aim of the Board and its partners is to enter into the new contract on the 30th July 2021 with a communication plan delivered and ready for a go live date of September 2021.
- 3.6 Cabinet is being requested to delegate the final sign off of the Run Contract to the Director of Customer and Commercial Services, Portfolio Holder and Monitoring Officer.

#### **4.0 Consultation**

- 4.1 The Cumbria Choice Based Letting Board and partners.

#### **5.0 Alternative Options**

- 5.1 To do nothing is not an option, the Board identified a need to procure a new platform and support and maintenance contract. This will ensure that our customers can confidently use the system to access housing services.

#### **7.0 Implications**

##### **Financial, Resources and Procurement**

- 7.1 The Run Contract is valued at £225,000 over 4 years and while the Council as Lead Authority will sign the contract. The costs to the Council are nil. The Registered Providers are invoiced for these costs.

##### **Human Resources**

- 7.2 There are no Human Resources implications arising from this report.

##### **Legal**

- 7.3. External Legal support has been organised for the Board and the Councils Legal team have been co-ordinating the negotiations with the proposed provider. A number of matters are still the subject of negotiation and consultation with partners. The key decision threshold has been reached for this contract and as the Council is the contracting party it was considered prudent to bring the matter to Cabinet for transparency. The contract is on the procurement schedule that has been agreed by Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny and the Council meetings. An exemption from the Forward Plan requirements and from call in have been secured.
- 7.4 Alongside the new contracts for the new platform and the run contract (support and maintenance) there is a requirement to refresh the current partnering agreement. Legal Services have advised that we need to do this within 4 weeks of signing the run contract. Legal Services are also ensuring that an addendum to the agreement is signed to ensure there is clarity that the new contract obligations are covered by the partnership agreement.
- 7.5 A delegation is sought from Cabinet to secure completion of the new partnership agreement.

##### **Health, Social, Economic and Environmental**

- 7.4 Have you completed a Health, Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Assessment? No. It is not felt that a Health, Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Assessment is needed for this report. This proposal does not change the service being offered to the public or stakeholders. It changes the IT infrastructure.

##### **Equality and Diversity**

- 7.7 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? No.

7.8 If you have not completed an Impact Assessment, please explain your reasons: It is not felt that an Equality Impact Assessment is needed for this report. This proposal does not change the service being offered to the public or stakeholders it changes the IT infrastructure.

**Risk**

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Controls required</b>
The existing contract expires without new arrangements in place.	Disruption to productivity, impact on customers and key areas of the business not being covered.	An extension to the existing contract and the entering into of the new run contract with the proposed provider.
The partnership agreement becomes outdated due to the new contractual arrangements	Lack of clarity on responsibilities.	A new addendum to the existing partnership agreement will be entered into.  The entering into of a new partnership agreement within 4 weeks of the signing of the run contract.

**Contact Officers**

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**Tracking Information**

<b>Signed off by</b>	<b>Date sent</b>	<b>Date Signed off</b>
Legal Services	N/A	N/A
Section 151 Officer	12/07/2021	12/07/2021
Monitoring Officer	12/07/2021	12/07/2021
CMT	12/07/2021	12./07/2021

<b>Circulated to</b>	<b>Date sent</b>
Lead Specialist	N/A
Human Resources Lead Specialist	N/A
Communications Team	N/A
Leader	N/A
Committee Chairman	N/A
Portfolio Holder	12/07/2021
Ward Councillor(s)	N/A
Committee	N/A
Executive (Cabinet)	N/A
Council	N/A