

To: Cabinet

Date: 15 April 2026

Report of: Nerys Parry
Director of Housing

Title of Report: Procurement of a replacement housing and housing asset management system, including a mobile working solution

Summary and recommendations	
Decision being taken:	To seek project approval to procure ICT solutions for housing and housing asset management, including a mobile working solution and to seek delegated authority for the Deputy Chief Executive (City and Citizens' Services) to award the contract.
Key decision:	Yes https://oxfordcity.moderngov.co.uk/mglIssueHistoryHome.aspx?lId=42303&PlanId=583&RPID=75467261
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Linda Smith, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities Councillor Nigel Chapman, Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies
Corporate Priority:	Good, affordable homes A well-run Council
Policy Framework:	Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy

Recommendation(s): That Cabinet resolves to:

1. Grant project approval for the procurement of a 10-year contract for ICT solutions for housing and housing asset management, including a mobile working solution, with an option to extend for a further five years.
2. Approve a contract value of up to £2million (inclusive of VAT).

3. Delegate authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (City and Citizens' Services) in consultation with the Monitoring Officer, Section 151 Officer, the Director of Housing, Cabinet Member for Housing and Communities, the Cabinet Member for Citizen Focused Services and Council Companies to award the contract and finalise contractual arrangements.

Information Exempt From Publication
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Not Applicable	
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Appendix No.	Appendix Title	Exempt from Publication
Appendix 1	Risk Register	No
Appendix 2	EQIA	No

Introduction and background

1. The current Housing and Housing Asset Management System is the primary database and case-management system for housing and housing and asset management that is used by many departments across the Council including Tenancy Management, Rents, ASBIT, Property Services, Customer Services and across ODS.
2. The Council also has a form based mobile working solution used by both Council and ODS staff working in the field, providing two-way integration with the Housing and Housing Asset Management System. Within ODS, these forms are used across many service areas, not just compliance and repairs.
3. The current contract expires in February 2028, and it cannot be extended without breaching procurement law. With the current system contract ending, it is necessary to secure a long-term solution that meets current and future user needs, provides for technological advances, greater efficiencies and integrated AI solutions.
4. The current supplier has informed customers that it has placed the current system into "Management Mode" which means that the system remains supported but is part of their legacy product suite, with support largely limited to updates and bug fixes rather than major development. The supplier has advised that it will give customers a minimum of 3-5 years' notice of end of life for the product.
5. The supplier has confirmed that it is continuing its development of its mobile working solution as a strong element of their product suite.

6. Having robust and effective housing and asset management solutions in place is critical to the Council's statutory obligations (building safety, compliance, rent collection, repairs, asset management) and compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards, underpinning the corporate priority Good, Affordable Homes, and supporting the Council's wider digital and organisational transformation agenda

Housing Solution Providers

7. Across the UK social housing sector, technology investment is increasingly focused on improving data quality, strengthening regulatory compliance, and supporting more efficient, digitally-enabled services. Providers are generally moving toward ICT solutions that combine the stability of an integrated housing management platform with the flexibility of specialist modular tools.
8. Large integrated systems remain attractive because they provide a single, coherent source of housing, asset, and financial data but at the same time, the market has seen rapid growth in modular, cloud-based solutions, particularly in asset management, energy modelling, and compliance. These newer systems are highly configurable, integrate through open APIs, and often innovate more quickly, supporting advanced analytics, mobile working, and regulatory reporting. They reflect broader digital transformation trends that prioritise data-driven decision-making and modern resident-facing services.
9. Industry insight shows that most providers are now adopting hybrid models in which a strong integrated core system manages tenancies and finances, while modular specialist tools are used for areas such as building safety, energy performance, and mobile field operations. This blended architecture aligns with the sector's shift toward cloud-native, interoperable solutions capable of adapting to changing regulatory and service demands.
10. The industry direction of travel indicates that any future housing & asset management solution for the Council should combine a stable core platform with the ability to integrate modular components over time, ensuring flexibility, compliance, and long-term value. For these reasons, the intention is to seek a solutions provider, rather than necessarily a single integrated solution.

Procurement Proposal

11. At its simplest level, the rents and repairs functions of housing and housing asset management solution provide the functionality to collect almost £70m per in rental income and over 50,000 repairs and servicing works orders each year. All options have been explored but there is no legal basis to extend the current contract, and a new solution needs to be procured.

12. The initial phase of this procurement will focus on developing a comprehensive outcome-based specification for housing and housing asset management solutions, informed by detailed engagement with service areas and current regulatory requirements. This stage will also include structured market exploration to assess the capabilities of both integrated and modular solutions and identify the systems best aligned to the Council's operational, compliance and asset management needs. The evaluation criteria and weighting will be completed ahead of the tender launch.
13. The Council has appointed a consultant to assist with the procurement exercise and the key milestones are:
- soft market testing (May 2026)
 - specification finalisation (June 2026)
 - tender publication (July 2026)
 - award (late 2026)
 - Mobilisation (early 2027)
 - implementation (2027–Jan 2028)
 - go-live (Feb 2028)
14. Short to medium contract terms are not considered suitable with large ICT solutions as this leads to substantial disruption and costs of implementing new systems on a frequent basis, as well as additional risk. The contract term will be 10 years, with an option for a further five years, with relevant break clauses and a right to give 12 months' notice to terminate without reason

Alternative Procurement Options

15. **Option 1 In House System Development** Option 1 would involve developing a bespoke, in-house housing and housing asset management solutions tailored to the Council's operational, regulatory, and asset-related requirements. While this approach would offer full customisation and the ability to design functionality around local processes, it would require substantial investment in specialist technical expertise, project management capacity, cyber-security assurance, and ongoing support arrangements. It would also create long-term responsibilities for system maintenance, regulatory updates, and scalability that are typically managed by commercial suppliers who continuously invest in product development and sector compliance. Given these significant risks—especially when compared with established commercial platforms that already offer robust housing, asset, mobile working, and compliance capabilities—this option is not recommended.

- 16. Option 2 Consortium Procurement with other Local Authorities** Option 2 would involve the Council entering a joint procurement with neighbouring local authorities to commission shared housing and housing asset management solutions. While a consortium approach can, in principle, offer economies of scale and opportunities for regional collaboration, this option is not suitable especially in the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). None of the other local authorities in Oxfordshire undergoing LGR hold a Housing Revenue Account or maintain a significant stock of social housing. As a result, these authorities do not require a full landlord-facing Housing and Asset Management System, nor do they share the regulatory, operational or asset management demands placed on a stock-holding authority.
- 17. Option 3 Extend the Current Contract** Option 3 would involve exploring whether the Council could lawfully extend the existing Housing and Housing Asset Management System contract under the limited modification provisions of the Procurement Act 2023. While the former PCR2015 regime allowed minor contract modifications up to 10% of the original contract value for services, the Procurement Act 2023 retains similarly restrictive thresholds for permissible extensions without triggering a new procurement. This option has been explored and extending the current contract is not possible.
- 18. Option 4 Defer Procurement until LGR Decision in July** Option 4 would involve delaying the procurement of housing and housing asset management solutions until the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) decision is made in July. This option was rejected because delaying the start of the procurement would leave insufficient time to complete the end-to-end procurement, evaluation, contract award, and full system implementation before the expiry of the existing contract in early 2028. The current system underpins critical landlord functions, including rent collection, repairs, compliance management and building safety, and cannot be decommissioned or left unsupported without severe operational and regulatory consequences. A deferral would compress the delivery window to an unmanageable degree, heightening risks around data migration, integration development, testing, staff training, and mobilisation.

Implications of Local Government Reorganisation

19. The procurement of housing and housing asset management solutions falls squarely into the category of decisions that are necessary to maintain critical service delivery, because:
- Oxford City Council is the only authority in the proposed LGR footprint that holds a Housing Revenue Account or manages significant housing stock, meaning that housing and housing asset management solutions

are essential for ongoing statutory landlord functions (e.g., regulatory compliance, rent collection, health & safety compliance, repairs delivery, and building safety requirements).

- The existing contract expires in early 2028, leaving a fixed implementation window. Deferring procurement until after LGR risks a gap or cessation of key services, which the Government explicitly states must be avoided.

20. The procurement is therefore a continuity measure, not a discretionary expansion or policy shift. This procurement and contract award scheduled for post-LGR announcement (July 2026) is compliant with the guidance because:

- It ensures continuity of essential statutory services.
- It prevents a gap or cessation of key functions—something the Government explicitly instructs councils to avoid.
- It does not fetter the future unitary council, because any successor council would still require the same system to discharge housing duties.
- It aligns with the approved MTFP and is therefore consistent with financial governance expectations.
- It is being taken transparently and for the purpose of protecting residents and service users, not altering policy direction.

21. As part of LGR, Section 24 consent will be required only if the Secretary of State issues a Direction under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Such a Direction would apply to contracts of more than £1 million for capital and would apply to this system procurement.

Governance

22. The project will be overseen by the system Executive Oversight Project Board, with the Project Sponsor being the Group Financial Director / Section 151 Officer. The core members of the Project Board comprise:

- Group Financial Director / Section 151 Officer
- Chief Technology and Information Officer
- Landlord Services Lead
- System Project Manager
- Tenancy Services Manager
- Technical Solutions and Data Lead (ODS)
- Technology and Relationships Lead (ODS)

Financial implications

23. An HRA capital bid for £2,000,000 for 2026/27 has been approved by Cabinet to support the initial procurement and implementation of the solution. Whether further funds will be required in 2027/28 would depend on the outcome of the procurement exercise.
24. In 2026/27, capital funding will cover costs directly related to implementation and making the new system operational.
- Implementation and configuration services
 - Internal project team resourcing attributable to delivery
 - Consulting fees for system deployment and integration
 - Data migration and testing costs
 - Essential vendor support during mobilisation (pre-go-live only)
25. In 2027/28, additional capital funding may be needed to continue to cover costs directly related to implementation and making the new system operational, plus initial software licensing as required for go-live.
26. Revenue expenditure for the solutions will relate to activities that are not directly required to bring any new system into operation but are essential to ensuring its effective use and long-term sustainability. This will include staff training, organisational change management, ongoing system support, and maintenance following implementation. These revenue costs will be managed within existing budgets where possible or incorporated into future revenue planning arrangements as part of the Council's medium-term financial planning.

Legal issues

27. By virtue of Rule 18.12 at Part 18 of the Constitution and Part 4.5 (10) at Part 4 of the Constitution, Cabinet is the authorising body for projects valued at £750,000 or over. Under Part 4.5 (11) and Rule 19 (17) of the Constitution Cabinet is responsible for the award of contracts valued at £750,000 and over. Under section 9E(3)(c) of the Local Government Act 2000 Cabinet is empowered to delegate its functions to officers.
28. Due to the estimated value of spend, the procurement of the housing and asset management system must be carried out in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 and the Council's Constitution. Legal services are instructed to support and advise on the procurement process and provide the contractual documentation needed. This will include consideration of LGR implications.
29. Any decision, following the procurement process, to award a contract of £750,000 or greater will be a Key Decision and will need to comply with the procedure for taking Key Decisions set out in the Council's Constitution. John Coffey 9.3.26/80972-CP)

Level of risk

30. See Risk Register at Appendix 1. The procurement and implementation of the housing and housing asset management solutions carry several strategic and

delivery risks. These include risks associated with data security during migration, particularly given the volume and sensitivity of asset, compliance, and tenancy data held within the current system. There is budget uncertainty and potential cost escalation, especially as market pricing will not be confirmed until tender submissions are received. The project is also exposed to limited internal capacity across Housing, ICT, Data, and Finance, which may affect the continuity and pace of delivery during the specification, procurement, and mobilisation stages.

31. The mitigations are that the tender submissions will be received before the end of the budget setting window for 2027/28 and an assessment of any additional resources will be carried out at that point. The internal capacity may need to be supplemented by additional temporary resource to deal with service pressures.
32. Additional risks include potential disengagement from the incumbent supplier, who has placed their system into “management mode” and may have restricted capacity or willingness to support complex data extraction or transitional arrangements.
33. The project must also navigate the implications of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Although the other councils in scope for potential merger do not hold a Housing Revenue Account or significant housing stock, LGR may still require adjustments to project scope, governance, and integration readiness. Furthermore, the Government’s guidance on financial decisions before LGR introduces potential restrictions on entering major new contracts, including ICT-related contracts, though these constraints allow necessary decisions to maintain essential services.
34. Failure to deliver housing and housing asset management solutions would have severe operational and compliance consequences. The existing contract cannot be extended beyond early 2028, and failure to implement a new contract in time would jeopardise critical statutory landlord functions. This includes rent collection, building safety compliance, asset and stock condition management, responsive repairs, and regulatory reporting. A failure to have a functioning system in place would put the Council at significant risk of regulatory breach, disruption to repairs and safety workflows, loss of service continuity, and reputational harm.
35. Any significant delay in commencing procurement would also compress the delivery window between contract award (targeted for late 2026) and go-live in early 2028. This would undermine the Council’s ability to complete data cleansing, data migration, integration development, staff training, and full end-to-end testing. It would also increase the risk of emergency procurement, higher costs, and a sub-optimal implementation approach. As the future unitary authority arising from LGR will manage housing stock, the Council must retain fully operational and compliant housing and housing asset management solutions beyond 2028; therefore, the system must be procured with appropriate break clauses, scalability provisions, and safeguards to ensure long-term flexibility.
36. In addition to the risks set out above, there are further concerns relating to underlying data quality, the scale of the change required across Housing and

ODS operational teams, supplier performance during implementation, integration with corporate systems, and ongoing compliance with data protection legislation. These risks will be actively mitigated through robust governance, early data-cleansing activity, structured stakeholder engagement, comprehensive testing phases, and clear contractual protections.

37. The housing and housing asset management solution will align with the Council's Data Strategy by providing a secure, cloud-hosted platform that improves data quality, resilience and governance across all housing and asset functions. The solution will be required to meet robust cyber-security standards, ensuring compliance with national frameworks and protecting sensitive tenancy, asset and safety data. Modern solutions platforms also rely on open API architecture to reduce data silos, support real-time information sharing and integrate seamlessly with the Council's wider ICT environment.

Equalities impact

38. The EQIA is attached as appendix 3. The procurement and implementation of housing and housing asset management solutions (including mobile working solution) is expected to maintain or enhance existing levels of equity, accessibility, safety, and service consistency across Oxford City Council's housing functions. The Council already operates an established housing and housing asset management system, and digital interactions are already a core part of service delivery. The proposed procurement does not introduce new equalities risks, but rather provides an opportunity to reduce existing inequalities through:

- improved digital accessibility (WCAG 2.2 AA compliance)
- better capture of vulnerabilities and language needs
- more consistent service workflows
- enhanced support for field-based officers interacting with vulnerable residents

39. While digital inclusion considerations remain important, they relate to ongoing service design rather than to the procurement activity itself. OCC's multichannel approach (telephone, in person, assisted digital options) already mitigates potential accessibility issues, and this project does not remove or diminish those routes.

40. Equalities impacts will be monitored during system configuration, implementation and post go live review.

Carbon and Environmental Considerations

41. A modern housing and housing asset management solution (including mobile working) provides the data, modelling tools and operational intelligence needed to support the Council's carbon-reduction and environmental commitments. It enables detailed analysis of EPC and energy-efficiency data, long-term planning for retrofit and decarbonisation works, and compliance with emerging

environmental and building-safety standards. The system supports low-carbon operations through mobile working, improved scheduling, and reduced duplication, helping to streamline repairs and asset workflows efficiently. By providing accurate, real-time asset insights, a modern housing and housing asset management solution strengthens the Council’s ability to meet Net Zero objectives and plan sustainable investment across its housing stock.

Conclusion

- 42. Procuring housing and housing asset management solutions, including a mobile working solution, is a strategic requirement to ensure continuity of critical landlord, compliance, and asset-management services beyond the current contract expiry in early 2028. The recommended procurement timetable provides sufficient time for a phased transition, data migration, and safeguarding core functions such as rent collection, repairs, and building-safety compliance during implementation.
- 43. The proposed procurement approach will:
- 44. Ensure the Council meets public procurement requirements
- 45. Maintain uninterrupted delivery of housing, asset, repairs and compliance services for tenants, leaseholders, and operational teams across the Council and ODS.
- 46. Deliver a modern, integrated solution that enhances operational efficiency, data quality, regulatory reporting and the overall user and resident experience.
- 47. This investment mitigates significant operational, financial and compliance risks, ensures the Council can meet its statutory landlord obligations beyond 2028, and provides a secure, modern, and future-proof housing and asset management system capable of supporting service continuity and organisational change.

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Background Papers:	
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