SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

Report

Report to:	**Housing and Technical Resources Committee**
Date of Meeting:	**08 December 2021**
Report by:	**Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)**
	Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

Subject:	**Additional Posts to Implement and Support the New Integrated Housing and Property Management System (IHPMS)**

1. Purpose of Report
1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

♦ Seek approval to increase the establishment of the current System Support Team to continue the implementation and ongoing support of the new Integrated Housing and Property Management System

2. Recommendation(s)
2.1. The Committee is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

(1) to increase the establishment by the addition of 1.0 FTE Systems Officer and 3.0 FTE Strategy and Support Assistants on a permanent basis;

(2) to extend the increase of the establishment by 1.0 FTE Project Adviser, on a fixed term basis, for 6 months; and

(3) to increase the establishment by the addition of 1.0 FTE Systems Co-ordinator for a fixed term period of 23 months.

3. Background
3.1. As part of the overall Strategy and Support section structure review in July 2016, a review of existing IT systems was undertaken. The review also considered functions which had been delivered by Finance and Support Services including, data management, information governance, ITC support and year end processes.

3.2. As an outcome of the review, the current System Support Team was established to ensure ongoing support to the current ICT systems, as well a number of third-party databases and standalone spreadsheets.

3.3. The team has also taken on responsibility for additional functions including data management, information governance, ITC support and year end processes. The scope of the System Support Team has continued to expand with the team now responsible for a number of service areas previously provided by others.

3.4. Since 2018, the Systems Support Team has been augmented by the introduction of the Systems Transition Project Team, a temporary team established to facilitate the development and implementation of the new Integrated Housing and Property Management IT System (IHPMS). Both teams work in conjunction to support the development of the new system.

3.5.   The new system will replace the functionality of 11 outdated legacy systems which currently operate within the Resource and for the first time, support for all systems will be consolidated within the Team.

3.6.   The proposal within this report seeks to ensure that the Systems Support Team has the capacity and resilience to ensure effective continuous delivery and development of all Resource ITC systems.

3.7.   It is proposed that all current temporary staffing arrangements, except for the Project Advisor post, in place for implementation of the new IHPMS, come to an end on 31 March 2022, with the responsibility then passed to the expanded Systems Support Team.

4.   Current Service Provision
4.1.   The Systems Support Team currently has 5 permanent full-time employees who provide ongoing support to the "legacy" systems, third party databases and standalone spreadsheets and contribute to the development of the new IHPMS. This team currently has a dual focus of ensuring system access and continuity alongside playing a vital role in supporting the development and implementation of the new IHPMS.

4.2.   The Resource currently provides little or no support in relation to 10 of the 11 "legacy" systems, with the support provided direct from the suppliers at a cost or from IT Services.

4.3.   The current Systems Support Team also supports other functions of the Resource; including:-

♦   Invoicing and Contracts - ensuring all contracts are maintained and all invoices are paid timeously to ensure continuing support and maintenance to all relevant systems
♦   Internet/Intranet updates - ensuring all information relating to Housing and Technical Resources is both relevant and up to date
♦   Year-end processes (October – April) – preparing and testing letters, running reports, testing uprating of rent accounts and amounts etc., ensuring all statutory timescales are achieved
♦   Resource reporting requirements – writing, running, and amending performance and statistical reports for the Resource
♦   Corporate Reporting Module - updating Improve calendars, writing, running, and amending reports for the Resource and maintaining scheduler to allow automatic production of reports on specified dates/times
♦   IT requests - creation of new users and amending permissions for various systems including DWP Landlord Port, Abritas, Academy, My Account access etc and the first point of contact for any IT issues

4.4.   The temporary Systems Transition Project Team, comprising 8 employees, was established to work on the full development and implementation of the new system. These employees will return to their substantive posts on 31 March 2022.

5.   Proposal for Future Service Delivery
5.1.   Following a review of the current establishment and associated work of both the Transition Team and the Systems Support Team, it is now proposed to establish one team (further detailed in section 6.1).

5.2. In order to support the new integrated system and provide ongoing support to the existing standalone applications, additional resources are required. The additional resources proposed are:-

♦ 1 Systems Officer
♦ 3 Strategy and Support Assistants

The additional staff will ensure effective continuous delivery and development of all systems on a continuing basis over the longer term.

5.3. As well as the additional staff detailed in 5.2 above, it is proposed that a temporary Co-ordinator post is added to the establishment. This would support the existing Co-ordinator with a particular focus on ensuring the continued implementation of the new IHPMS and take on the responsibility of monitoring the project moving forward as the Project Advisor post comes to an end. It is proposed this would be for a period of 23 months, or until the new IHPMS is fully operational.

5.4. It is also proposed that the current temporary Project Advisor post be extended for up to a period of 6 months, this would provide for continuity of project management as the new integrated system is introduced and the revised Systems Team proposals are implemented. The temporary Co-ordinator will take on the role of monitoring the project going forward when this post comes to an end.

5.5. This Team would support the ongoing development of the new system beyond phase 1 of 'go live'. This will ensure that the right skills and knowledge base are in place for the new integrated system as well as existing business applications which are not being replaced.

5.6. The Team will take responsibility for developing and supporting any new system requirements in relation to national, regional, and local strategy and policy context for housing, homelessness, factoring, repairs (housing and non-housing), capital projects, asset management, energy/decarbonisation and community engagement.

6. Employee Implications

6.1. It is proposed that the following are added to the Housing Services establishment as detailed in tables below: -

Post	No of Posts (FTE)			Grade/SCP	Hourly Rate	Annual Salary	Gross Cost (inc on costs 30.3%)
	Existing	Proposed	Difference				

Systems Team – Proposed (Permanent)							
Systems Officer	1	2	1	Grade 3 Level 2 - 4 SCP 63 - 74	£18.08 - £21.25	£32,994 - £38,779	£42,991 - £50,529
Strategy and Support Assistants	3	6	3	Grade 2 Level 2 – 4 SCP 39 - 57	£12.68 - £16.52	£23,139 - £30,147	£90,453 - £117,843
Total Systems	4	8	4				£133,444 - £168,372

Systems Team – Proposed (Temporary)							
Project Advisor	1	1	1 (Extend for 6 months)	Grade 4 Level 2 - 5 SCP 82 - 88	£23.92 - £26.18	£43,651 - £47,775	£28,439 - £31,125 (6 months)
Systems Co-ordinator	1	2	1 (Temp for 23 months)	Grade 3 Level 8 SCP 79 - 80	£22.89 – £23.24	£41,771 – £42,410	£98, 142 - £101,257 (23 months)
Total Systems	2	3	2				£126,581 - £132,382

7. Financial Implications

7.1. The financial implications of the proposed changes to the establishment are contained within section 6.1. This includes £168,372 of recurring costs and £132,382 one off costs across the next two years.

7.2. The additional staffing costs will be offset by the costs currently incurred to support the legacy systems, in the long term.

8. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Services

8.1. There are no implications for climate change, sustainability or the environment in terms of the information contained in this report.

9. Other Implications

9.1. Failure to appropriately support the new integrated IT system could significantly impact upon the ability to deliver services within Housing & Technical Resources.

9.2. The content of this report will contribute to the evidence to support the requirements of the Annual Assurance Statement.

10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements

10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore, no impact assessment is required.

10.2. Consultation will take place with Housing and Technical Resource Personnel, all affected employees, Corporate Personnel Services and the appropriate Trade Unions.

Daniel Lowe
Executive Director (Housing and Technical Resources)

Paul Manning
Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)

22 November 2021

Link(s) to Council Values/Objectives
♦ Ambitious, self-aware and improving
♦ Achieve results through leadership, good governance and organisational effectiveness
♦ Improve the availability, quality and access to housing

Previous References

♦ Housing and Technical Resources Committee 17 February 2021
♦ Housing and Technical Resources Committee 20 March 2019
♦ Housing and Technical Resources Committee 13 July 2016

List of Background Papers

♦ None

Contact for Further Information

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

Cameron Mitchell
Strategy and Support Manager
Ext: 845 4862
E-mail: cameron.mitchell@southlanarkshire.gov.uk