

REPORT TO:		Cabinet	
DATE:		30 July 2025	
PORTFOLIO:		Councillor Melissa Fisher - Deputy Leader of the Council (Housing and Communities)	
REPORT AUTHOR:		Chris Gregory, Housing Strategy & Policy Manager	
TITLE OF REPORT:		Procurement of Locata Pro Homelessness, Prevention and Advice (HPA2) software system	
EXEMPT REPORT (Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A)	No	Not applicable	
KEY DECISION:	No	If yes, date of publication:	

1. **Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek approval to waive the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in respect of the direct procurement of the Locata Pro Homelessness, Prevention and Advice (HPA2) software, which is currently the homelessness management and reporting software system used by the Council.

2. **Recommendations**

I recommend that Cabinet:

- 2.1 Agrees to waive the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in respect of the purchase of Locata Pro Homelessness, Prevention and Advice software from Locata (Housing Services) Ltd
- 2.3 Delegates authority to the Head of Regeneration and Housing in consultation with the Executive Director (Legal and Democratic Services) to draw up, finalise and execute a contract with Locata (Housing Services) Ltd in respect of the purchase.

3. **Reasons for Recommendations and Background**

- 3.1 The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017(HRA) placed new legal duties on local authorities and amended existing homelessness legislation set out in the Housing Act 1996.

- 3.2 The HRA (enacted in 2018) places prevention at the heart of homelessness service delivery. It introduced new duties for local housing authorities to intervene earlier and work to prevent and relieve homelessness, regardless of whether or not households are in priority need.
- 3.3 The Council entered into a contract with Locata (Housing Services) Ltd in 2018 for a 2 year term with an option to renew annually for a further 2 years. This contract expired in April 2022. The Council has continued to use this system on an out of contract annual fee with Locata (Housing Services) Ltd.
- 3.4 The Council needs a homelessness management system on a daily basis to manage all homelessness casework. The Locata system provides reports on homelessness statistics, data and information on active and closed homelessness cases. Continuous software system support is essential to ensure continuity of service delivery, compliance with the requirements of the H R A and a tool which supports auditing of the service. The data is also used to understand the level of homelessness both locally and nationally, informs policy making and can support grant funding and bids for new interventions.
- 3.5 The Housing Advice and Homelessness service is currently facing significant pressures, which include the additional work of dealing with homeless applications from asylum seekers who have received a positive asylum decision, households arriving under the family reunion scheme and an increasing number of very complex homeless cases. Therefore, this is not an ideal time to consider changing an essential software. In addition, given the prospect of local government reorganisation, the disruption of a possible move to a new provider does not appear to be an appropriate use of time and resources. The new agreement with Locata will run for 2 years (at a cost of £12,000 per annum), with an option to extend for a further 2 years. This fits well with the reorganisation timescale and will enable a successor organisation to easily move to a single provider of this information.
- 3.6 The Council requires a homelessness case management and reporting system to ensure it can report on all statutory homelessness assessments in compliance with the requirements of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

4. Alternative Options considered and Reasons for Rejection

- 4.1 A procurement exercise for a homelessness management and reporting system was considered but rejected for the reasons set out in 3.5 above. Cabinet could ask for the contract to be procured but this is not recommended for the reasons given.

5. Consultations

- 5.1 No consultations have taken place other than with the Housing Advice and Homelessness team who support the retention of the Locata software system.

6. Implications

Financial implications (including any future financial commitments for the Council)	<p>There is no direct revenue implication for the Council. The cost of the software system will be met through the Council's Homeless Prevention Grant (HPG):</p> <p>£12,000 fee for 2025/ 2026 to be met from the HPG Grant for 2025/2026. (Hyndburn's award confirmed via a grant determination letter dated December 2024.)</p> <p>£12,000 fee for 2026/2027 to be met from the Homeless Prevention Grant (HPG) award for 2026/27.</p>
Legal and human rights implications	<p>The Council's Legal Services Department will draw up a contract to reflect the requirements of the software system and role and obligations of Locata (Housing Services) Ltd.</p>
Assessment of risk	<p>The Council's biggest risk is to ensure a software system supports the delivery of the homelessness service and our legal duties under the Homelessness Reduction Act. The contract with Locata (Housing Services) Ltd will specify the requirements of the Council and responsibilities of Locate and how the contract will be monitored.</p>
Equality and diversity implications <i>A Customer First Analysis should be completed in relation to policy decisions and should be attached as an appendix to the report.</i>	<p>No customer services analysis completed for the continuation of existing services.</p>

7. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985: List of Background Papers

- 7.1 *Copies of documents included in this list must be open to inspection and, in the case of reports to Cabinet, must be published on the website.*

8. Freedom of Information

- 8.1 The report does not contain exempt information under the Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12A and all information can be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.