

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL -

Source DIRECTOR OF HOUSING
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Committee INTERIM EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to consider a short-term IT Strategy towards the establishment of common IT Systems to support the housing service.

2.0. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. Housing IT Systems will play a crucial role in providing corporate management information which will be essential to develop and implement future housing strategy. Existing systems could quite feasibly continue to operate on a stand alone basis supporting each of the existing District areas however the absence of a common hardware and software platform will make the consolidation of management information extremely difficult and could lead to operational problems maintaining such a diverse range of systems as is illustrated at Appendix 1. There would be considerable benefit in moving to a common system subject to this system being able to support the current policy and objectives of each of the merging authorities in the short term.

3.0. OPTION APPRAISAL

- 3.1 Earlier this year the IT Working Group appraised the options available to rationalise existing housing IT Systems and concluded that the MDIS system running on upgraded hardware within Motherwell District Council would be the most cost effective solution. (Appendix 2 refers). This recommendation has subsequently been endorsed by the Housing Officer Working Group and the recently appointed Head of IT Services.

4.0 SHORT TERM IT STRATEGY

- 4.1. It is recognised that there will require to be a phased transfer of existing systems to the MDIS platform and it is proposed that this be progressed as detailed at Appendix 3.

- 4.2. The implications of this proposal are summarised as follows :

Strathkelvin (Moodiesburn etc.)

This will involve the transfer of 2,100 properties and tenancy records to the MDIS rent accounting, housing benefits and repair systems and the installation of AT&T Cash Receipting packages prior to 1 April 1996. Options to maintain the existing allocation system are currently being appraised with the most likely interim solution being the provision of the existing system on an agency basis by East Dunbartonshire Council.

Cumbernauld & Kilsyth

By 1 April 1996 it is intended to transfer 3,500 properties and tenancy records to the MDIS rent accounting and housing benefit system and amend the existing Cash Receipting system to link with the MDIS rent accounting package. During 1996/97 steps will be taken to transfer the repairs and allocation systems to be fully operational by 1st April 1997. The transfer of the allocation system will be subject to the MDIS system being capable of supporting the policy in operation in the Cumbernauld area at that time.

Monklands

No implications prior to 1 April 1996 with all systems transferring to the MDIS platform prior to 1 April 1997. This will be subject to the same provisions as apply to the Cumbernauld system in that the MDIS system must be capable of supporting the allocation policy which is in operation in the Monklands area at that time.

Motherwell

No implications in the short-term.

- 4.3. The costs involved in pursuing the changes recommended prior to 1 April 1996 are estimated as follows:

	£ 000
Communication Software	1
Disc Upgrade	3
Terminal Service	4
	—
	8
	=

It is envisaged that these costs can be contained within existing budgets.

- 4.4. To complete the transition to MDIS during 1997/98 it will be necessary to further upgrade disc capacity at an estimated cost of £35,000 and enter into a revised software licence agreement with MDIS for a two year period 1997/98 and 1998/99 at an additional cost of £25,000 per annum

These costs will be offset by savings of approximately £29,000 in current licence fees (from 1998) and more importantly a reduction in future management costs as a consequence of maintaining one, as opposed to four different systems.

5.0. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- The phased transfer to the MDIS system does not imply continuation of the Facilities Management (FM) contract to support these systems. This is a separate issue which will require to be considered by Committee at some future point.
- MDIS is currently marketing a new integrated system, the proposal in the short term is to transfer to the stable and proven system currently in operation within Motherwell District and only consider any upgrade after all systems are on a common platform and beyond the immediate pressures of Local Government Re-organisation
- Not all aspects of the MDIS system are superior to those currently in operation in certain packages. The transfer of systems should however proceed given the overall benefit of operating one common system.

6.0 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Committee approves the short-term IT system strategy as detailed at Appendix 3 to this report based on the extension of the MDIS Housing systems and authorises the Officials to progress arrangements to meet the timescales established. This will be subject to further examination of the cost and technical implications of the proposals with further reports submitted to Committee as required.



G S Whitefield

5 IT Systems	<i>Motherwell</i>		<i>Monklands *</i>		<i>Cumbernauld & Kilsyth</i>		<i>Strathkelvin (part)</i>	
	Type of System	Date Installed	Type of System	Date Installed	Type of System	Date Installed	Type of System	Date Installed
5.1 Allocations/Waiting Lists/ Void Management/ Homelessness	MDIS (Bespoke)	1988	In-House (DRS 300)	1989/90	Quadra (NCR developed system) PC Network (Voids/ Homeless)	1984 1993	Bull (Bespoke)	1992/93
5.2 Repairs and Maintenance	MDIS	1989	In-House	1992	PC Network developed in-house	1993	Bull (Crawley) Developed on site	1988
5.3 Rent Collection/Cash Receipting	NCR (ATT)	1993	Spectrum Cash Receipting Software	1990	NCR Cash Receipting System	1991	Bull (Crawley) IMASYS (PC based)	1988 1988
5.4 Rent Arrears	MDIS	1988	CAPITA LTD	1990	BSL	1991	Bull (Bespoke)	1990
5.5 Rent Accounting	MDIS	1988	CAPITA LTD	1990	NCR	1975	Bull (Crawley)	1988
5.6 Housing Benefits	MDIS	1988	CAPITA LTD	1990	BSL	1988	Bull (Crawley)	1988

• Investigating implementation of MDIS for Housing Systems

Appendix 2
**LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION O.W.G (I.T.)
Software Cost Options for Housing Feb 21 1995**
**Monklands District Council
Computer Services**

	Users	Hardware	Developed	System Software	Applications Software	Annual Costs	5 Years
Current Costs							
Strathkelvin							
Housing data to transfer to one of the other systems						No residual software costs	0
Cumbernauld & Kilsyth							
Waiting Lists	3	AT&T 3455	Quadra	Unix 5.4/Galaxy	Cobol 85	£nil	0
Rent Arrears	2	AT&T 3455	Benefit Systems	Unix 5.4/Galaxy	Cobol 85	1500	7500
Benefits	6	AT&T 3455	Benefit Systems	Unix 5.4/Galaxy	Cobol 85	2700	13500
Rents Managements	15	AT&T 3455	AT&T(NCR)	Unix 5.4/Galaxy	Cobol 85	2370	11850
Repairs (Client)	6	Compaq	In-house	Novell 3.11	Dataease	£nil	0
Monklands							
Allocations	16	DRS300	In-house	Unix 3.2	Microfocus Cobol	£nil	0
Rents	64	ICL Series 39	Academy	VME,TPS	Cobol	4000	20000
Benefits	16	ICL Series 39	Academy	VME,TPS	Cobol	4500	22500
Repairs	40	PC	In-house	DOS/Netware	dBASE IV	£nil	0
Motherwell							
Integrated Housing System		MDIS Series X	MDIS	Unix, Reality		26000	130000
						Current Total	41070
							205350

Options for North Lanarkshire

						Year 1	Year 2+	5 Years
MDIS								
Integrated Housing System	192	MDIS Series X	MDIS	Unix, Reality	Reality	40000	40000	200000
Additional Hardware						10400	960	14240
Conversion & training						30000	0	30000
						Total Option 1	40960	244240
ACADEMY								
Integrated Housing System	200		Academy	Unix	Ingres Windows	60000	60000	300000
Housing Benefits			Academy	Unix	Ingres Windows	73200	18300	146400
Hardware(assume port to upgraded MDIS Series X)						10400	960	14240
Conversion & Training						40000	0	40000
						Total Option 2	79260	500640

Comment

The above figures show that in Software costs the move to a single system will increase the Unitary Authority's costs by £38,890 over 5 years.

On the costs presented here it would be appropriate to recommend the MDIS Integrated Housing System running on the upgraded Motherwell hardware as cost effective solution for North Lanarkshire, subject of course to the requirements of the new Housing Department being met.

Note

Current hardware costs (excluding necessary upgrades) have been excluded as has system software. Neither In-house or Facilities Management support costs are shown.

SUGGESTED PHASED INTEGRATION OF IT SYSTEMSTarget Position at at 1st April 1996

	<u>Cumbernauld & Kilsyth</u>	<u>Monklands</u>	<u>Motherwell</u>	<u>Strathkelvin</u>
Rent Accounting & Arrears Control	MDIS	CAPITA Ltd	MDIS	MDIS
Cash Receipting	NCR	Spectrum	NCR	NCR
Housing Benefits	MDIS/ BSL	CAPITA Ltd	MDIS	MDIS
Repairs	PC Network	In House	MDIS	MDIS
Allocations	Quadra	In House	MDIS	Agency

Target Position as at 1st April 1997

Rent Accounting/ Arrears Control	MDIS	MDIS	MDIS	MDIS
Cash Receipting	NCR	Spectrum	NCR	NCR
*Housing Benefits	MDIS	MDIS	MDIS	MDIS
Repairs	MDIS	MDIS	MDIS	MDIS
Allocations	MDIS	MDIS	MDIS	MDIS

Target Position as at 1st April 1998

Fully Integrated MDIS Housing Management System.

*Subject to full evaluation of alternatives identified by Sub-Group.

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