

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

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## **Advantage South West (ASW) membership**

### **Report summary:**

Members to note the benefits of membership of Advantage South West and to support the continuing membership of the organisation.

### **Is the proposed decision in accordance with:**

Budget Yes ☒ No ☐

Policy Framework Yes ☒ No ☐

### **Recommendation:**

To continue paying the annual subscription to maintain the membership to Advantage South West.

### **Reason for recommendation:**

To maintain properties to a good standard whilst achieving good value for money.

To assist in achieving continuity of components and services across the Property & Asset service.

To assist in the ongoing training and upskilling of staff through regular product review workshops and CPD (Continuing Professional Development) events.

To provide a platform for networking with other Authorities and Housing providers across the South West

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Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- ☐ Climate Action and Emergency Response
- ☐ Coast, Country and Environment
- ☐ Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- ☐ Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- ☐ Economy and Assets
- ☐ Finance
- ☐ Strategic Planning
- ☒ Sustainable Homes and Communities
- ☐ Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

**Equalities impact** Low Impact

## **Climate change** Low Impact

**Risk:** Low Risk; .

**Links to background information** HRB Agenda 29 April 2021 (Item 15)

**Link to [Council Plan](#)**

Priorities (check which apply)

- ☒ Better homes and communities for all
  - ☐ A greener East Devon
  - ☐ A resilient economy
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### **Report in full**

1. Advantage South West is a Limited Liability Partnership owned by four Housing Associations, Abri, LiveWest, North Devon Homes and Ocean Housing. Created in 2004, Advantage South West exists to improve homes and lives through collaboration and innovation.
2. Advantage South West carries out a range of activities including:
  - Procurement consortium
  - New home designs
  - Offsite manufacture & modern methods of construction
  - Credit Union Sustainability Partnership
  - Skills & recruitment development
  - Advantage South West has two permanent full time employees, Neil Biddiscombe (Procurement Manager) and Mark Dobner (Contracts Manager).
3. **Membership:**
  - Abri
  - Alliance Homes
  - Coastline Housing
  - Corner Stone
  - Cornwall Housing
  - Cornwall Rural Housing Association
  - East Devon District Council
  - Exeter City Council
  - Homes in Sedgemoor
  - LiveWest
  - Magna Housing Group
  - Mid Devon District Council
  - North Devon Homes
  - Ocean Group
  - Plymouth Community Homes
  - Somerset Council
  - Shal
  - Teign Housing

Other organisations continue to and are always welcome to join.

### **4. Frameworks:**

5. Frameworks are awarded on the recommendation of product groups. These product groups work on a participative basis. Product Groups are chaired by a senior manager from a Member organisation. Each Member has a representative who is responsible for bringing that Member's requirements to the project, contributing to key stages in the process such as creating the specification, deciding how tenders will be assessed and assessing the tenders.
6. Tenants also have played an important part in the process. It is essential to emphasise that without the input of the Member representatives and tenants the projects could not have been a success.
7. The Procurement Consortium Group directs and oversees the work of the Procurement Consortium. East Devon District Council on the Procurement Consortium Group.

#### **8. Areas of Activity:**

9. ASW have many areas of activity that members have involvement in and can benefit from, typical examples are:
  - Off-site manufacture of new homes.
  - Energy Efficiency & Decarbonisation.
  - Disrepair.
  - Property Compliance.
  - Voids.
  - Policies & procedures
  - Financial inclusion; continued development and expansion of the Credit Union Sustainability Partnership with Westcountry Savings & Loans.
  - Recruitment & Skills

#### **10. Benefits for East Devon District Council:**

11. Whilst delivering savings through a range of frameworks is at the heart of our relationship with Advantage SW, we must not underestimate the benefits that our membership has brought in terms of access to the formal network of Members that provides valuable advice and guidance, as well as the specific procurement expertise that Advantage SW itself has.

#### **12. ASW Frameworks:**

13. ASW have a number of Single Supplier Product Frameworks which are available to and already being used by EDDC:
  - Aids & Adaptation Equipment
  - Air Source Heat Pumps
  - Bathroom Suites
  - Consumer Units
  - Extract Fans
  - GRP Doors Supply and Supply & Install
  - Heating Valves
  - Kitchen Units
  - Positive Input Ventilation
  - PVCu Windows
  - Radiators
  - Slip Resistant Safety Flooring
  - Taps

They also have a number of Multi-Supplier Frameworks which are available to and already being used by EDDC:

- Asbestos Surveys
- Asbestos Removal
- Fire Risk Assessments
- Fire Prevention & Protection
- Passive Fire Protection
- Legionella Risk Assessment
- Legionella Services
- Radon Services
- Legal services (Development)
- Legal Services (Governance & Treasury)
- Electrical testing & Inspection
- Cavity Wall Insulation & Extraction
- Cavity Wall & Loft Insulation Installation
- Gas heating Installation
- Gas Heating Servicing & Repair
- Heat Pump Installation
- Heat Pump Servicing & Repair
- Merchant Services
- Internal Fire Door sets Supply & Install
- Fire Door set Inspection & Maintenance
- Tree Surveys

14. As well as the procurement Frameworks ASW also have a number of Dynamic Purchasing Systems that are available for use:

- Window & Gutter Cleaning
- Cleaning
- Grounds maintenance
- Scaffolding
- Roofing Replacement & Repair
- Energy Efficiency & Decarbonisation
- Insurance
- Waste

#### 15. **Summary:**

16. Membership of Advantage South West continues to be beneficial for East Devon District Council. Through the efforts of all involved, Advantage South West delivers:

- sharing of information and good practice
- access to procurement knowledge and technology
- value for money
- good products
- an increasing range of multi-supplier frameworks
- opportunities for resident involvement
- access to the wider strategic priorities of Advantage South West

17. As can be seen there are many services provided by Advantage South West and these could be used by Housing as a whole rather than predominantly by Property & Asset which is currently the case.

18. EDDC already get great value for their annual subscription but with more collaboration across the Housing team there more services available that could be tapped into and ultimately achieve even more benefit/value for our annual subscription.

**19. Recommendation:**

20. It is recommended that membership of the group continues for 2023/2024 at a cost of £13,861.08 ex VAT.

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**Financial implications:**

The financial implications are within the body of the report.

**Legal implications:**

There are no legal implications on which to comment.