Decision Notice

Delegated Decision

Decision No:	**DD13**
Subject:	**ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FUNDING FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCIL IN THE FORM OF ACCESS TO SOFTWARE FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION**
Date of Decision:	**11 August 2022**
Notification Date:	**12 August 2022**
Implementation Date:	**11 August 2022**
Decision taken by:	**Mike Davis, Strategic Director (Corporate Resources)**
Delegated Authority:	**Delegation C79 of Section 6 (Scheme of Officer Delegations) of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Constitution to the Section 151 Officer: 'To make application for and to accept grants or other assistance on behalf of the Council'**
Decision Type:	**Executive Non-Key Decision**
Call-In to Apply?	**No (*call-in does not apply to non-Key Officer Decisions*)**
Classification:	**Unrestricted**
Reason for the Decision:	Dover District Council has been invited, as one of a small number of Kent Authorities, to pilot the use of a software product that uses predictive analytics to help target homelessness prevention work. The cost for the one-year pilot cost will be met by Kent County Council. The project also includes funding from Kent County Council for a full-time member of staff on a one-year fixed-term contract to undertake the homelessness prevention work.
Decision:	To accept grant funding from Kent County Council in the form of licensed access to a predictive analytics software product, Xantura, and financial resource to recruit a member of staff on a one-year fixed term contract to undertake homelessness prevention work.

1. **Consideration and Alternatives** *(if applicable)*

1.1 Early intervention to prevent homelessness is a key priority for Dover District Council.

1.2 Kent County Council has used Covid recovery funding to obtain licensed access to a software product that uses data analytics to predict households approaching crisis point and at possible risk of losing their home.

1.3 Dover District Council has been invited, as one of a small number of Kent Authorities, to pilot the use of this product, the cost of which for the pilot year will be met by Kent County Council.

1.4 The project also includes funding from Kent County Council for a full-time member of staff on a one-year fixed-term contract to undertake the homeless prevention work.

1.5   If the pilot work is successful, Dover District Council would need to fund the cost of the project from its own resources. Access to the software would be in the region of £20,000 per annum.

2.   **Introduction**

2.1   Early intervention to prevent homelessness is a key priority for Dover District Council. The outcome for individual households is better if successful interventions can be delivered before crisis point and there is a correlating reduction in households requiring urgent support and temporary accommodation.

2.2   OneView is the product of the data science company, Xantura. It brings together large amounts of information from different data sets and uses predictive analytics to help identify households that might require targeted support for a variety of reasons. Maidstone Borough Council has already used Xantura OneView as a predictive model in relation to homelessness and believe that this has allowed it to identify people at risk of this between 6 and 9 months in advance. This provides the opportunity for the Council to offer additional support to those households to help prevent this.

2.3   Kent County Council has used Covid recovery funding to invest in the greater use of data analytic software and is keen to see the use of Xantura across the County. Dover District Council has been invited to be one of a small number of pilot authorities for the first phase of this project and has been offered access to the software and funds to resource its use for 1 year. The intention is that if this delivers the results and savings that are anticipated, District Councils will invest in this service directly in year 2 at an estimated cost of £20,000 for licences for the product per authority.

2.4   For the purposes of the pilot project, DDC will be using Xantura to help identify families who are considered to be at greater risk of losing their homes and becoming homeless.

3.   **Information Governance**

3.1   This project is underpinned by comprehensive Information Governance to ensure secure, appropriate and controlled data sharing as agreed with data owners. All data sharing will be managed through a set of data sharing agreements and protocols.

3.2   For this project, data will be taken from the Civica Revenues and Benefits system, the in-house housing management system Northgate, the Housing Options System (currently Locata) and from Kent County Council.

3.3   Where data sets are identified that sit within another partner or within Kent County Council, we will engage with the relevant party to discuss the sharing of such data and have in place appropriate information sharing agreements.

3.4   All data transmissions between Dover District Council and Xantura will be through IG-Bridge, a standalone software component that pseudonymises and encrypts data on-site to ensure a safe and secure transmission of information. No personal data is held against special categories of data at any point after leaving the council. This process ensures the privacy of individuals is maintained while still allowing for targeted interventions to be possible for individuals where appropriate.

3.5   Pseudonymisation is the separation of data from direct identifiers, so that Identification of an individual from the data is not possible without additional Information that is held separately. Pseudonymisation significantly reduces the risks associated with data processing while still maintaining usefulness of the data and is encouraged by the GDPR.

3.6   The preferred process for partners to provide data would consist of the IG Bridge being installed on the partner site so they can directly transfer data to Xantura (as

data processors); there would be a data sharing checklist agreed with Dover (as data controller), governing how and when the data is to be used.

3.7   Data will include a range of types of information, but all data sets are required to include personally identifiable information to enable the data matching process. This includes:

- Name, address, postcode, and other personal identifiers where available.

- Some data will include special categories of information. This may include:

- Health and social care data

- Age

- Gender

- Disability

- Marriage status

3.8   All data used will have a defined data sharing agreement and protocol so that personal information is carefully managed. Data held within the platform may only be used for purposes outlined in the Information Sharing Agreement (ISA). The pseudonymisation approach ensures personal information is only used when a defined risk threshold is met.

3.9   By assigning a random, encrypted unique reference number to each record at the point of receipt at the local authority site, it becomes possible to receive pseudonymised information and hold it separately from the personal data while being analysed. No information leaves the UK at any point - information is transferred between Xantura and its data centre across a Virtual Private Network.

3.10 All data in transit and at rest is encrypted and is held as pseudonymised data. This pseudonymised data is held at Xantura's data centre in Newbury. The data centre has high-level security certifications, being both ISO27001/PSN/ISO9001 accredited, holding Cyber Essentials (CE) and UK Digital marketplace certifications. These certifications have been provided separately.

3.11 Xantura is registered with the ICO and only at the point where it becomes appropriate to surface the data (i.e.when a council-defined 'risk threshold' is met) does the sensitive data get sent back to the council to be re-matched and presented to a case worker. Through this process, no human outside of the local authority ever comes into contact with the data while the personal identifiable information and the sensitive data are still together.

4.   **Who Will Have Access to the Data**

4.1   Access for Dover front-line professionals and staff is managed by a set of tightly controlled access rights, which dictate who has access to the system and what they are able to see, with specific restrictions able to be placed all the way down to field level if necessary. Rights are reviewed on an ongoing basis with council and service teams to ensure access is kept to a minimum, requiring all users to log in through a unique username and password combination.

4.2   Access should always remain restricted only to those that require it as part of their role. Access rights can be graded, allowing certain people to have access to the entire platform, while others are able to see a certain level of detail. At initial setup, Xantura will set up access and restrictions. On an ongoing basis, Dover will be responsible for the ongoing management of access rights to the platform, and as such can amend these to ensure only those who require access as part of their role are able to view the platform.

4.3   Data should never be shared with external organisations unless explicitly stated by the local authority. As such, data will never be sold or shared outside of the project to anyone other than local authority professionals. We will ensure that the public is able to find information about the project and the way in which their data may be used and privacy statements will be updated.

4.4   Training and guidance on how to use the system will be provided to all users to ensure it is used appropriately and to make it clear that the platform should be complementary to ongoing work rather than as a replacement. Once the system is operationally live, we will revisit this training and guidance to encourage appropriate use of the system and will refresh this DPIA to reflect any changes in instruction.

5.   Identification of Options

5.1   Option 1: Approve and agree the offer from Kent County Council of access to the Xantura, One View product and grant to support implementation for a period of 12 months.

5.2   Option 2: Reject the offer of KCC funding for the project and withdraw from the phase 1 implementation.

6.   Evaluation of Options

6.1   Option 1 is the recommended option. Access to Xantura One View offers a unique opportunity to deliver more homeless prevention work and funding for implementation can be used to secure staff resource to do this work through.

6.2   Option 2 Reject the offer and withdraw from phase 1 implementation. This is not the recommended option as in future years all Kent authorities may be persuaded to use Xantura one view and the offer of funds to cover implementation may not be available at that point.

7.   Resource Implications

7.1   System integration and set up can be delivered within existing Council resources. Funding of £40,000 is being provided by Kent County Council to cover the costs of the officer to conduct the follow-up work with cases identified as at risk.

7.2   If the project is successful and Dover District Council wishes to continue to access the software package it is estimated that there will be an annual cost of £20,000 for this.

8.   Climate Change and Environmental Implications

8.1   There should be no environmental or climate change implications as a consequence of this decision being taken.

9.   Corporate Implications

9.1   Comment from the Director of Finance (linked to the MTFP) 'Accountancy have been involved in the writing of this report and have no further comment to add (AC)'

9.2   Comment from the Solicitor to the Council: The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has not further comments to make.

9.3   Comment from the Equalities Officer: This report does not specifically highlight any equality implications, however in discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149'

10.   Other Officers (as appropriate): None received.

11.   **Any Conflicts of Interest Declared?**

         None.

12.   **Supporting Information** *(as applicable)*