



Report of Head of Projects and Programmes

Report to Chief Officer Employment and Skills

Date: 23 November 2016

Subject: Re-Making Leeds – Appointment of Specialist Provider

Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: 10.4 (3)		
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

- 1.1 Re-Making Leeds aims to address heritage construction skills shortages within the city, primarily in relation to the maintenance, repair and refurbishment of the plethora of traditional pre-1919 buildings in the city. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) under the Skills for the Future Programme, the project is delivered by Leeds City Council in partnership with Leeds College of Building and York College.
- 1.2 To date, the project has supported circa 300 individuals to improve their heritage skills through training activities including a range of Level 2 and 3 qualifications delivered by the Council's appointed training providers, Leeds College of Building, York College and Heritage Craft Alliance (HCA) as part of a framework agreement.
- 1.3 In response to local demand among SMEs in the sector, the Council is now seeking to deliver a Level 3 NVQ Diploma Heritage Skills (Construction) in Façade Preservation. This involves the assessment of skills such as pointing, repair and cleaning of the significant number of heritage buildings in the city and includes on site assessments. Delivery of this qualification will ensure the Council is able to meet key contractual targets.

- 1.4 The Council's three preferred training providers on the framework have indicated that they do not currently have assessors qualified to deliver this particular qualification, and due to the niche nature of this provision, no other local provider has been identified.
- 1.5 Another company based in Nottingham, Priestman Associates LLP has been identified and is able to deliver the on-site assessment element of the Level 3 NVQ Diploma in Façade Preservation. Priestman have confirmed that they would be in a position to deliver this provision in Leeds within the required timescales. This report is seeking to appoint this specialist provider to deliver a one off low value contract on behalf of the Council.
- 1.6 The information outlined in this report will contribute to the achievement of the Best Council Plan 2016-17 priorities, namely to support economic growth and access to economic opportunities, supporting communities and raising aspirations, by providing skills programmes and employment support.

Recommendations

The Chief Officer Employment and Skills is asked to:

- approve the award of a low value contract through the invocation of Contract Procedure Rule CPR 7.1, to a specialist heritage assessment and training provider, Priestman Associates LLP, to deliver the Re-Making Leeds assessment of Level 3 NVQ Diploma Heritage Skills (Construction) in Façade Preservation
- authorise expenditure not exceeding £10,000 to Priestman Associates to deliver this qualification which is externally funded by the Re-Making Leeds Project.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval from the Chief Officer Employment and Skills to award a one off low value contract not exceeding £10,000 to Priestman Associates LLP to deliver the assessment of Level 3 NVQ Diploma Heritage Skills (Construction) in Façade Preservation as part of the Re-Making Leeds Project.

2 Background Information

- 2.1 In March 2014 Leeds City Council was awarded up to £810,300 by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to deliver the Re-Making Leeds (RML) Project. Forming part of the HLF's Skills for the Future Programme, RML is a three year programme delivered in partnership with Leeds College of Building and York College and focused on developing the practical heritage skills required to maintain, repair and refurbish pre-1919 residential, commercial and institutional properties in Leeds.
- 2.2 Managed by the Employment and Skills Service, RML provides 12 months bursary placements for trainees seeking to establish a career in heritage construction. The project also works with small to medium sized construction companies (SMEs) to develop heritage skills among their workforce, delivers short courses to trainees, SMEs and Leeds residents wishing to develop heritage construction skills and knowledge, and offers a train the trainer provision for skilled professionals wishing to move into teaching.
- 2.3 The project is in the final year of implementation. As of October 2016, 300 individuals have developed heritage skills on the programme and 18 x 12 month bursary placements completed.

3 Main Issues

- 3.1 The Council must achieve a number of outcomes under the Re-Making Leeds Project as part of its contractual obligations with the HLF. One of the key deliverables is the achievement of 8 x Level 3 Heritage NVQ qualified employed craftspeople through on site assessment and training (OSAT) over the three years. So far, 5 individuals have registered and are working towards this qualification - 3 in wood occupations and 2 in masonry.
- 3.2 In response to local need identified by SMEs, the Council is now seeking to train a further 5 individuals minimum on the Level 3 NVQ Diploma Heritage Skills (Construction) in Façade Preservation through OSAT. This involves the assessment of skills such as pointing, repair and cleaning of the significant number of heritage buildings in the city. Although, the HLF target is 8, the Council is seeking to register a total of 10 individuals to mitigate against any potential drop-out or failure to achieve the qualification.
- 3.3 As part of the delivery of this project, Leeds College of Building, York College and Heritage Craft Alliance were appointed to a preferred provider framework to deliver specific heritage training including Level 2 and 3 NVQ assessments

as set out in the RML Training Plan. However, none of the providers on the framework currently have staff qualified to assess this specialist qualification. In the event that specialist heritage skills cannot be fulfilled by the providers on the existing framework, the Chief Officer Employment and Skills can take a decision to invoke CPR 7.1 to make a direct appointment of an alternative specialist heritage skills training organisation to deliver specialist provision, provided the cost is under £10k.

- 3.4 A local soft market testing exercise undertaken by the Employment and Skills Service identified only one viable provider of this niche service, Priestman Associates LLP of Nottingham. This specialist provider is acknowledged as the leading trainers of heritage skills assessment services by industry experts, the National Heritage Training Group (NHTG) and the Stone Federation. Priestman also worked with the awarding body, Cskills, on the development of the Level 3 NVQ Diploma Heritage Skills (Construction) in Façade Preservation.
- 3.5 The proposed activities are time critical as the achievement of all 8 x NVQ 3 qualifications must be completed by the end of the delivery phase of the project in September 2017. If approved, implementation of this specialist training is anticipated to commence in December 2016 in line with the project delivery plan. The assessment process generally takes several months but based on these timescales should be completed and qualifications awarded by September 2017.

4. Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 The Heritage Lottery Fund's Senior Grants Officer and the RML Project Board including representatives from the Council's Employment and Skills Service, Regeneration Services, Leeds College of Building and York College, have been consulted on these proposals and support the Council's intention to appoint this specialist provider.

4.1.2 The Projects, Programmes and Procurement Unit (PPPU) has also been consulted and advised on this waiver.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

4.2.1 An equality impact assessment was carried out on 23 November 2016 which established that there are no equality issues relating to this decision.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

4.3.1 The information outlined in this report will contribute to the achievement of the Best Council Plan 2016/17 priorities, namely to support economic growth and access to economic opportunities, supporting communities and raising aspirations by providing skills programmes and employment support.

4.3.2 The RML Project will also help to deliver outcomes under the More Jobs, Better Jobs Breakthrough Project by supporting people to progress into better jobs through skills development and supporting business growth.

4.4 Resources and value for money

4.4.1 The activities proposed will be funded through the 2014-17 Re-Making Leeds grant, allocated to the Council by the Heritage Lottery Fund to support the delivery of heritage construction training activities.

4.4.2 The expected course tariff rates for heritage training provision are comparable with other learning provision commissioned by the Council's Employment and Skills Service. Payments made to the provider will be subject to the submission of invoices and satisfactory evidence of delivery and learner achievement.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 The proposals in this report comply with the Contract Procedure Rules and do not contain confidential information. This is a Significant Operational Decision and is not subject to call in.

4.5.2 This decision relates to a low value contract through the invocation of Contract Procedure Rule CPR 7.1

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 The Employment and Skills Service has robust contract management and quality assurance procedures in place. The performance of the successful provider will be overseen by the RML Development Manager and monitored by the RML Project Board, chaired by the Council's Head of Projects and Programmes.

4.6.2 The HLF has set the Council a target to achieve 8 x Level 3 Heritage NVQ qualified employed craftspeople through on site assessment and training (OSAT) over 3 years. To date, 5 individuals are currently working towards this qualification. Subject to approval, a further 5 individuals will be recruited on the Level 3 NVQ Diploma Heritage Skills (Construction) in Façade Preservation through OSAT. Although, the HLF target is 8, the Council is seeking to register a total of 10 individuals to mitigate against any potential drop-out or failure to achieve the qualification.

4.6.3 There is no financial implication to the Council if this specific target is not achieved. However, the Council is currently bidding for further funding under the HLF's Skills for the Future round 3 programme, which could potentially be put into jeopardy should the Council fail to deliver on its existing contract.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Re-Making Leeds aims to address heritage construction skills shortages within the city, primarily in relation to the maintenance, repair and refurbishment of the plethora of traditional pre-1919 buildings in the city. Set up in 2014 and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) under the Skills for the Future Programme,

the project is delivered by Leeds City Council in partnership with Leeds College of Building and York College.

- 5.2 The Council has put in a place in preferred training provider framework to support delivery of specific training and qualifications in response to local sector demand. However, none of the current providers, Leeds College of Building, York College and Heritage Craft Alliance currently have the capability to deliver assessment services in relation to a Level 3 NVQ Diploma Heritage Skills (Construction) in Façade Preservation.
- 5.3 Soft marketing has identified only one specialist provider able to deliver these services within the Council's timescales, recognised by industry experts and under the value of £10,000. This report therefore seeks approval to award a one off low value contract to Priestman Associates LLP through the invocation of Contract Procedure Rule (CPR) 7.1.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 The Chief Officer Employment and Skills is asked to:
 - approve the award of a low value contract through the invocation of Contract Procedure Rule CPR 7.1, to a specialist heritage assessment and training provider, Priestman Associates LLP, to deliver the Re-Making Leeds assessment of Level 3 NVQ Diploma Heritage Skills (Construction) in Façade Preservation
 - authorise expenditure not exceeding £10,000 to Priestman Associates LLP to deliver this qualification which is externally funded by the Re-Making Leeds Project.
- 6.2 The timescales for the delivery of this provision will be between December 2016 and September 2017. The Head of Projects and Programmes in the Employment and Skills Service will be responsible for the implementation of the decision.

7. Background documents

- 7.1 None.