

Request for approval to carry out a competitive tender exercise in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rule (CPR) 9 for the procurement of a new Ergonomic and Assistive Technology Products and Services Framework Agreement

Date: 10th January 2021

Report of: Service Centre Team Leader, Cloud & Platforms

Report to: Chief Digital & Information Officer

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- The Council currently has a contract in place - DN307454 - ITS200094 Ergonomic and Assistive Technology Products and Services Framework Agreement. This contract ends on 31st August 2022 and there are no options to extend.
- This Framework provides specialist Ergonomic and Assistive Technology (E&AT) Products and Services and takes the form of a catalogue of individually listed prices for a range of E&AT products and services. The Framework Agreement also allows for the pricing of specific unique requirements which will be based upon the agreed catalogue pricing structure which includes (but is not limited to):
 - Supply of E&AT Hardware products.
 - Supply of commercial off the shelf AT Software products.
 - Provision and delivery of Training Courses.
 - Technical Support & Consultancy Services.
 - Helpdesk Support Services.
 - Workplace Assessments
- The Council requires on-going use of a Framework to enable it to fulfil the needs of its users in a timely and cost-effective manner. To ensure compliance with Public Contract regulations 2015 (PCR's) and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules (CPR's) a new procurement will be commenced to award a new contract for the next 4 years with an anticipated total contract value around £420k.

Recommendations

- a) The Chief Digital & Information Officer, Integrated Digital Services (IDS) is recommended to approve the commencement a competitive tender exercise in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rule 9.3 for the procurement of a new Ergonomic and Assistive Technology Products and Services Framework Agreement.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to tender for a new Framework Agreement for the provision of Ergonomic and Assistive Technology Products and Services to the Council.
- 2 The Council believes that there is an opportunity to improve the service offered to its staff and achieve greater value in this area through awarding a Framework Agreement specifically focused on the provision of E&AT Products and Services to a Contractor with the appropriate knowledge, experience and specialist skills relating to E&AT Products and Services. The Council is seeking a Contractor who can add demonstrative value and deliver the required levels of service whilst driving cost savings through process improvements.
- 3 Equally, given the reductions in staffing, the Council requires a light-touch approach to the day-to-day relationship by contracting with an E&AT Contractor who can provide support and specialist E&AT knowledge directly to those members of staff who use or may require the use of E&AT products and services.
- 4 The chosen E&AT Contractor will therefore be required to demonstrate excellent assessment and customer service skill in advising staff about "best fit" technology to meet their individual needs in line with the Council's values.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 5 No detrimental impact is anticipated from continuing this goods and service provision.
- 6 The Council has as strong commitment to offering equality of opportunity. Equality is about real freedom and substantive opportunity to live in the ways people value and would choose. The Council's commitment to equality and diversity in the workplace is set out in our key documents:
 - the Business Plan
 - the Aspirational Culture
 - Core Management Standards
 - Social Model of Disability
- 7 IDS works closely with the Council's Disability and Wellbeing Network (DAWN). The function of DAWN is to promote equality in the workplace and to identify and pro-actively seek improvements to the service provided by IDS to users in relation to the supply and support of E&AT Products and Services. It also acts to provide advice to managers and support to those members of staff who require the use of these services.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 8 As this is an ongoing requirement based on the existing framework, consultation has taken place with the IDS Strategic Sourcing Team and relevant IDS Operational Services staff.

What are the resource implications?

- 9 A compliant tender will be undertaken to ensure value for money, which will be benchmarked against current costs. To carry out a full procurement will represent best use of Council funds and resources. A change of such a key service provision requires an extensive procurement exercise and the support of the Service Centre Team Leader (Cloud & Platforms) to resource and manage the implementation and any migration as necessary.

What are the legal implications?

- 10 The decision to undertake a competitive procurement exercise at the anticipated value is a Significant Operational Decision and not subject to call-in.
- 11 The procurement of the contract will be conducted in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 12 There are no identifiable risks in relation to carrying out a competitive tender exercise to procure a E&AT Products and Services Framework Agreement.
- 13 The contract agreement will be managed by an appointed contract manager in line with the contract management plans and any risks which are highlighted through the term of the contract will be managed and mitigated through regular account management/supplier review meetings.

Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

- Inclusive Growth Health and Wellbeing Climate Emergency

- 14 Assistive Technology can help compensate or alleviate an injury, disability or illness or to replace a physical function. The main purpose is to maintain or improve an individual's functioning and independence to facilitate participation at work and to enhance overall wellbeing. It can also be used as a tool to improve productivity.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 15 The Council does not have the capacity to carry out this work ourselves, so the options were to identify any possible Purchasing Organisation Frameworks or carry out our own tender exercise. No other suitable Frameworks could be identified to fulfil the Council's requirements, therefore, carrying out a competitive tender exercise to procure a new solution is the most appropriate course of action.

How will success be measured?

- 16 The system needs to operate so that it is convenient for customers and cost effective for the Council. The IDS Service Centre will monitor performance to ensure that this is measured and managed effectively.

What is the timetable for implementation?

17 Due to the current Framework Agreement expiring on 31st August 2022, a new single supplier is required to provide a compliant route to market to meet the Councils requirements for the next 4 years. The estimated total cost of the Framework Agreement will be up to £420k, dependent upon utilisation.

Appendices

18 None.

Background papers

19 None.