

To approve the extension of call off contracts with Temporary ICT staff provided by Rullion Recruitment Ltd, Care Futures Limited, Castlefield and Hays

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Report of: Senior Resourcing Officer

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

## Brief summary

Integrated Digital Service (IDS) currently has a Framework Agreement in place Temporary ICT Staff Framework – for the supply of ICT resource, which came into effect on 14/01/2020 and will run until 13/01/2024. There are 6 approved recruitment agencies on the Framework.

A number of legacy contractors continue to be supplied through agencies on a previous framework (DN189804) and we request approval to continue with these contractors until their skills are no longer required.

This report identifies the services required and seeks approval to extend contracts with the following suppliers:

- **Rullion Recruitment Ltd**– For the provision of temporary ICT staff. The contract to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 with an estimated contract sum of £309k per annum.
- **Care Futures Limited** - For the provision of temporary ICT staff. The contract to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 with an estimated contract sum of £112k per annum.
- **Castlefield**- For the provision of temporary ICT staff. The contract to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 with an estimated contract sum of £124k per annum.
- **Hays** - For the provision of temporary ICT staff. The contract to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 with an estimated contract sum of £44k per annum.

## Recommendations

- a) The Chief Digital and Information Officer is recommended to approve the extension of contracts with the suppliers named in this report to supply the legacy contractors and also source suitably qualified and experienced ICT resource where these cannot be provided by the suppliers on the Temporary ICT Staff Framework.

## What is this report about?

- 1 Leeds City Council has a Framework Agreement in place for the recruitment of Temporary ICT Staff which expires on 31/01/2024.
- 2 A number of legacy contractors continue to be supplied by agencies on a previous framework. It would not be cost effective to release these contractors and to recruit the skills again through the new framework.
- 3 The reason for this report is to ensure compliance with Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations. Producing one report for these services saves time and resources involved in obtaining individual waivers for each contract.
  - a) The suppliers listed below are covered under this report:
    - i. **Rullion Recruitment Ltd**– For the provision of temporary ICT staff. The contract to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 with an estimated contract sum of £309k per annum.
    - ii. **Care Futures Limited** - For the provision of temporary ICT staff. The contract to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 with an estimated contract sum of £112k per annum.
    - iii. **Castlefield**- For the provision of temporary ICT staff. The contract to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 with an estimated contract sum of £124k per annum.
    - iv. **Hays** - For the provision of temporary ICT staff. The contract to expire on the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 with an estimated contract sum of £44k per annum.

## What impact will this proposal have?

4. Failure to source suitable skilled contractor staff has a direct impact on delivery of critical Council projects, which in turn could affect front line services.

## How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

## What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

5. Consultation has taken place with IDS Senior Management to consider the most effective and flexible way IDS can ensure that a comprehensive, effective, efficient and economic service for the supply of temporary ICT resource can be provided.

## What are the resource implications?

6. The Council spends in excess of £3m per year on the use of specialist ICT contractors. IDS contractor staff are generally employed to work on specific projects or to backfill for a member of staff who is working on a specific project. Funding is provided within project budgets to cover this temporary headcount increase and the use of contractor staff is the most effective way of managing these short/medium term resourcing demands, which often require specific technical skills for the duration of the project. Failure to source suitable skilled contractor staff has a direct impact on delivery of critical Council projects, which in turn could affect front line services.

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

7. The supply of IDS resource is monitored by the IDS Senior Leadership Team to ensure it is appropriate for the requirements. The individual appointments and recruitment agencies will be managed and reviewed on a regular

basis by the Senior Resourcing Officer and approval will be requested from IDS Senior Leadership Team for any ad-hoc recruitment requirements via recruitment agencies not on the Framework for specific ICT resource.

## **What are the legal implications?**

8. This is a Key Decision and was subject to Call In. There are no grounds for treating the contents of this report as confidential under the Council's Access to Information Rules. Whilst the risk of legal challenge is considered low due to the nature the way the recruitment market operates, awarding the contracts direct to the providers in this way could leave the Council open to a potential claim from other providers, to whom these contracts could be of interest, that it has not been wholly transparent. In terms of transparency it should be noted that case law suggests that the Council should always consider whether contracts of this value could be of interest to contractors on other EU member states and, if it could, the opportunity should be subject to a degree of European wide advertising. It is up to the Council to decide what degree of advertising would be appropriate. In particular, consideration should be given to the subject-matter of the contract, its estimated value, the specifics of the sector concerned (size and structure of the market, commercial practices, etc.) and the geographical location of the place of performance. The Chief Digital and Information Officer has considered the above and, due to the specialist nature of the services required, is of the view that the scope and nature of the services is such that it would not be of interest to providers in other EU member states. There is a risk of an ombudsman investigation arising from a complaint that the Council has not followed reasonable procedures, resulting in a loss of opportunity. Obviously, the complainant would have to establish maladministration. It is not considered that such an investigation would necessarily result in a finding of maladministration however such investigations are by their nature more subjective than legal proceedings. In making the final decision, the Chief Digital and Information Officer should be satisfied that the course of action chosen represents best value for money.

## **Options, timescales and measuring success**

### **What other options were considered?**

9. IDS relies on temporary ICT resource to work on specific projects, or to backfill for members of staff, who are working on projects which are capital funded. Funding is provided within project budgets to cover this temporary headcount increase, and the use of external temporary ICT resource is the most effective way of managing these short/medium term resourcing demands which often require specific technical skills for the duration of the project. Failure to source suitably qualified and experienced ICT resource in a timely manner directly affects project delivery on critical Council projects. An effective solution for the provision of temporary ICT resource is to continue to use the Temporary ICT Staff Framework, with the ability to use the recruitment agencies listed in this report to continue for the sourcing of ICT resource where suitably qualified and experienced staff cannot be provided by the suppliers on the Temporary ICT Staff Framework.

### **How will success be measured?**

10. Success will be measured by the continuing to deliver critical council projects.

### **What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?**

11. N/A

## **Appendices**

None

## **Background papers**

None