

# Waiver report for Recruitment Job Board Procurement

Date: May 2023

Report of: Deputy Head of HR

Report to: Chief Officer HR

Will the decision be open for call in?  Yes  No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?  Yes  No

## Brief summary

The pandemic has not only changed the size of available talent pools but also the way in which talent seeks prospective job roles. The council has long relied upon its web presence to attract candidates; however, talent pools no longer rely on knowing an organisation or business and where to seek their roles, but instead expect roles to find them. To be able to tap into the widest market possible and compete with other organisations, we need to seek out our talent rather than wait for it to come to us.

This report seeks to waive procurement rules, following in-depth research into appropriate job boards that can instantly boost the Council's presence across wider talent pools, to fill vacancies faster and decrease cost and time spent on failed recruitment attempts.

## Recommendations

- a) To waive CPR 8.2 for Intermediate value procurements and award a contract to LinkedIn in the sum of £15,500 for 12 months, with a 12 month extension. The contract shall commence on the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023 and expire on the [31<sup>st</sup> May 2024]
- b) To waive CPR 8.2 in respect of Intermediate value procurements and award a contract to Indeed in the sum of £18,000 for 6 months, with a 6 month extension. The contract shall commence on the [1<sup>st</sup> June 2023] and expire on the [30<sup>th</sup> Nov 2023]

## What is this report about?

- 1 The pandemic has not only changed the size of available talent pools but also the way in which talent seeks prospective job roles. The council has long relied upon its web presence to attract candidates; however, talent pools no longer rely on knowing an organisation or business and where to seek their

roles, but instead expect roles to find them. To be able to tap into the widest market possible and compete with other organisations, we need to seek out our talent rather than wait for it to come to us.

- 2 The most obvious and immediate route to do this is via social media. Some services have on occasion sought to share posts about roles on an ad hoc basis, sharing with their own contacts and networks. However, reach is limited to personal networks and sporadic in its approach.
- 3 The Council already has a number of corporate social media accounts which are public facing and aim to engage residents on a wide range of services and subjects. These allow the council to get vital information out to the public quickly and the success of these accounts rely on carefully curated content that works with the various algorithms. Because of this, we're unable to simply use these accounts to post all our council vacancies and a more sophisticated approach is needed.
- 4 This report seeks to waive procurement rules, following in-depth research into appropriate job boards that can instantly boost the Council's presence across wider talent pools, to fill vacancies faster and decrease cost and time spent on failed recruitment attempts.
- 5 CPR 1.3 states that CPR rules 8.2 (namely entering into a contract with a value of between £25,000 and £100,000 without seeking competition) may be waived.
- 6 This report seeks to waive CPR 8.2 for the purpose of awarding contracts to two of the leading job board companies nationwide, namely LinkedIn and Indeed. This would be at a cost of £15,500 for LinkedIn, that would secure 11 job slots per month and job wrapping (that would pull the jobs from our website into the job board) and £18,000 for Indeed, that would provide further job slots and data management and provide access to the widest talent pool.

#### a) LinkedIn

- Advertise jobs on LinkedIn via Job Slots with the ability to edit or swap the ads dynamically based on our open positions. LinkedIn uses the algorithm to ensure jobs in Job Slots are automatically shown to relevant talent via the LinkedIn news feed, by email and via the mobile app. This will give us increased exposure.
- **Cost: 11 x job slots plus Job Wrapping. Total cost = £15,500 for 12 months**

#### b) Indeed

- Sponsored jobs: Advertise jobs on Indeed/Glassdoor as sponsored posts. We would have 20 Job Slots per month to use. We can switch jobs out every 2 weeks or have some that stay on continuously. Indeed makes sure our roles are getting seen and we'd have bi-weekly meetings to track success of our jobs and adjust things where necessary. All job ads would be properly branded as LCC.
- **Cost: Featured 20 jobs per month package: Total £18,000 for a 6 month trial period**
- Branded page: Every employer gets a company page on Indeed and Glassdoor. All of our current vacancies on Indeed can be viewed on this page, as well as reviews about the employee experience etc. You can pay to tailor this page so that it is branded and includes videos and information about what it's like to work here, the benefits, values etc. Stats from Indeed show that candidates are 6x more likely to apply for a job if the employer has a branded/enhanced profile. It is recommended that we trial without the branded page in the first instance and switch to the branded page at month 3, so we can analyse the difference in traffic and determine the value of the longer term spend.
- **Cost: We will begin the contract without the branded page and add it at the 3-month mark for the final 3 months of the contract (cost has been included in total price below).**

- 7 This would enable a suitable spread of the market for both technical/professional and non-technical roles. At a total of £33,500, this would meet the requirement of CPR 8.2.
- 8 A previous report to HRLT showed that we have completed a competitive analysis of the market by obtaining more than 3 quotes, essentially reviewing the job board market. These quotes including those from Broadbean (who further link to Total jobs and Monster), Blue Octopus, LinkedIn and Indeed.
- 9 This process was not conducted as per CPRs 8.2 due to the pressing need to have something in place in a short timescale. We are unable to rectify the issue through a competitive process via YORtender, again due to these tight time scales. We believe that thorough research has been done into these providers and that LinkedIn and Indeed provide the best value for money for the Council at this time.
- 10 We will formally enter into a contract with LinkedIn and Indeed, using their Terms and Conditions which will be checked before signing by our procurement Legal team.

### **What impact will this proposal have?**

- 11 The proposal will immediately raise the Council profile in the labour market, improve our employer value proposition and reach wider talent pools in marketing our opportunities. This will boost the council's ability to build capacity to deliver services in a more effective way, and also enable greater employment opportunities for those seeking roles.
- 12 Once approval to award has been obtained a contract will be entered into using the council's standard tender documentation as well as being registered on YORtender and Contracts Finder.
- 13 The consequences of the proposed action not being approved would include delays brought about by the full tender exercise, causing an onward delay to the offer being available for services to advertise critical roles in order to fully deliver essential services to the citizens of Leeds. Further delay would impact on failed or further delayed recruitment campaigns, including loss of manager time and costs.

### **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?**

- 14 A report was written and presented at HRLT which outlined the necessity of this programme and urgent progression was agreed. This information was provided to the leadership team following feedback from services outlining their problems and impacts of being unable to recruit through the Council's website alone.
- 15 A number of providers were approached and consulted as to their services, offers and the best ones were recommended.
- 16 The Director of Resources is aware of the intentions and supportive of our approach.

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

### **What are the resource implications?**

- 17 The funding for the first year of this contract has been agreed from strategic reserves, following agreement of a business case to invest in a recruitment and workforce capacity team with associated marketing budget.
- 18 On being able to prove success of these measures after the first year, a further business case will be developed to secure on-going funding.

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

- 19 The key risks are that we spend money with these job boards and that in doing this, the attraction to our roles does not increase as predicted. However, given the level of support we are procuring, we will meet with representatives from the job board companies to review and assess tracking data, and tweak our usage of the boards accordingly to improve attraction to our roles.

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

- 20 This is a Significant Operational Decision which is not subject to call-in but will be published on the register of decisions by the Council. The report does not contain any exempt or confidential information under the Access to Information Rules.
- 21 The values of the contract awards to LinkedIn and Indeed are below the UK services threshold for the application of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and therefore not subject to the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. However, the Contracts Procedure Rules 8.1 and 8.2 require competition for procurements valued up to £100k and the invitation of at least three written tenders. A waiver of these Contracts Procedure Rules is required to award the contracts.
- 22 Awarding contracts direct in this way could leave the Council open to a potential claim from other potential providers, to whom this contract could be of interest, that it has not been wholly transparent
- 23 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.
- 24 The Chief Officer HR has considered this and, due to the nature of the services being delivered is of the view that the scope and nature of the services are such that it would not be of interest to other providers.
- 25 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.

26 Although there is no overriding legal obstacle preventing the award of these contracts, in making their final decision, the Chief Officer HR should note the above comments and be satisfied that the course of action chosen represents best value for the Council.

## Options, timescales and measuring success

### What other options were considered?

27 Table one sets out the other options that were considered. However, after further discussion with the relevant companies and reviewing the further wrap around support and data that was supplied, plus their current reach in the market, it was agreed that a combination of LinkedIn and Indeed would give the Council the best, widest audience for the greatest cross section of its roles.

28 The proposal to combine LinkedIn and Indeed will provide the significant audience reach of Indeed, over other similar providers such as Total Jobs. Total jobs has a reach of 11million, whilst Indeed dominates the market with a 65million reach. It was therefore determined that, the offers provided by Indeed and LinkedIn combined, were the best value for money at this given time, for the greatest return for the Council.

29 There are no Internal service providers' available for this service. Whilst there are other contractors available we believe a thorough investigation of these options has been obtained outside of the procurement process.

**Table 2 - Summary of other options considered**

<b>Solutions</b>	<b>Option1 Broadbean</b>	<b>Option 2 LinkedIn plus Benchsmart</b>	<b>Option 3 LinkedIn plus Blue Octopus</b>	<b>Option 4 Cost if all preferred options were progressed including LinkedIn Careers page</b>
LinkedIn Job Slots (£1350 per slot)	Yes - 12	Yes - 12	Yes - 12	Yes - 12
LinkedIn Showcase page (Free)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Job board solution (Varies)	200 credits Monster 200 credits Total Jobs (branded ads)	100 credits with option to buy more as we go. Each ad posted on multiple premium job sites. (unbranded ads)	50 credits. Each job posted on 5 premium job sites. (branded ads)	200 credits Monster 200 credits Total Jobs (branded ads)
Recruitment Video	Yes – already spent	Yes – already spent	Yes – already spent	Yes – already spent.
LinkedIn recruiter license (Varies dependant on whether direct	Yes	No	No	Yes

from LinkedIn or through a provider)				
LinkedIn career page (can be added on to any option)	No	No	No	Yes
LinkedIn Job wrapping (can be added on to any option)	Yes	No	No	Yes
<b>Total costs (exclusive of VAT)</b>	<b>£47,267.40</b>	<b>£33,100</b>	<b>£39,650</b>	<b>£62,267.40</b>

### How will success be measured?

- 30 LinkedIn and Indeed will be able to provide regular data on how many clicks and interactions each of our roles have had and whether successful candidates are secured via these routes. A pilot use of Indeed in IDS already proved a successful increase in applicants for technical roles where we were previously struggling to attract candidates.
- 31 Indeed have offered an opportunity to create a branded page from which our jobs will be collated and advertised. We have agreed that we will start without this for a few months, in order to ascertain the difference between having and not having a branded format. This will hopefully inform longer term funding commitments based on the increase in attraction.
- 32 It is hoped that after utilising these routes for the given periods, we will be able to show significant success in order to be able to establish longer term ongoing partnerships with these providers to support the Council’s future commitment to improving recruitment and talent management.

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

- 33 It is hoped that this can be implemented immediately (May 2023), following sign off and therefore establish fast effective advertising for roles that are critical to the delivery of council services.

## Appendix 1

### What is your reason for waiving CPRs?

There is a genuine, unforeseeable emergency meaning there is no time to go through a procurement process e.g. to deal with the consequences of extreme weather.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
To purchase supplies or services on particularly advantageous terms due to liquidation/administration.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Requirement to put a contract in place with a current provider whilst a review of the services is completed.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Ran out of time to undertake a new procurement exercise	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Other (please provide summary here)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No

Background Papers – N/A