

Report to Cabinet

11 September 2019

Report of Director of business services

Subject Award of a contract for revenues and benefits remote processing resource

Item

15

KEY DECISION

Purpose

To seek approval to award a contract for revenues and benefits remote processing resource.

Recommendation

- 1) To award the contract for Revenues and benefits remote processing resource to Liberata UK Ltd for the one year period 01 October 2019 to 30 September 2020 together with the option to extend on an annual basis until the period ending 30 September 2024; and
- 2) Delegate authority to the director of business services in consultation with the portfolio holder for resources to exercise the extension options as they arise.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority Great neighbourhoods, housing and environment

Financial implications

Funding is provided through Government Funding including DWP New Burdens funding and from unspent salary budgets arising from vacancies.

Ward/s: All Wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Kendrick - Resources

Contact officers

Adrian Mills, Anglia Revenues Partnership, strategic manager

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Anton Bull, director of business services□

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Background documents

None

Report

1. The revenues and benefits service requires the ability to access external processing resource to supplement the established team resource. This will ensure that the key performance indicators and the required level of performance throughout the year is achieved; providing a legislatively compliant and prompt level of service to vulnerable customers
2. Remote processing resource is required for the completion of Housing Benefit, Council Tax Support and Council tax processes using the Northgate Revenues & Benefits Platform and the Civica document management system.
3. The Government continually reviews benefits provision and introduces specific initiatives which councils are obliged to implement locally, the Government in most cases will provide funding to support this additional work load.
4. Therefore due to fluctuating demands and these Government initiatives, it is not always possible to manage within existing establishment. These can be short term funded requirements so there is a need for remote resource on an ad-hoc basis to deliver the required level of service.
5. Generally due to the nature of the initiatives experienced staff are assigned to this work, thereby reducing available resource to complete business as usual work that directly affects the performance of the service. This temporary remote resource is used as backfill.
6. Typically, timeframes to seek approval to recruit directly employed temporary staff, interview, appoint and train new starters before they can commence working in the team inevitably means gaps in resource cause performance issues and it is likely they would leave the council at the end of the piece of work. This approach is costly to the council and is an inefficient use of the funding and our resources.
7. It is considered a more efficient approach is to utilise the services of specialist agency staff who are able to start immediately and do not require any technical or systems training. Typically these staff can work remotely, securely accessing our systems with the council determining their work allocation and performance, whilst closely monitoring value for money.
8. To illustrate indicative volumes during the last 12 month period the council has used 500 days in revenues and benefits remote processing resources. The majority of resource for remote benefits processing with 368 hours and the remaining 132 being for remote revenues processing.
9. It is expected that the use of this service will result in the following benefits for the council and its customers:
 - (a) Cost savings through lower processing resource rates, utilising the correct level of resource to match the requirements at the correct time

- (b) Meeting demands from central Government, by prompt increase in resource when required
 - (c) Ensuring the required level of performance throughout the year and achievement of key performance indicators.
10. The contract term will initially be a one year period with the option to extend on an annual basis until 30 September 2024.

Procurement process

11. The procurement process was concluded in August 2019.
12. To ensure an open, fair and transparent procurement process, adhering to the Public Contract Regulations 2015 an OJEU tender opportunity was advertised on the council's e-tendering portal, Contracts Finder and OJEU on 18 July 2019.
13. Ten expressions of interest and two tender submissions were received and opened on 21 August 2019.

Evaluation Criteria

14. Tenders were evaluated with a maximum of 30% of the available marks awarded for price and 70% of the marks awarded for quality criteria.
15. Suppliers were evaluated on four quality questions regarding skills, knowledge and experience; quality control; operational processes and equality and diversity and provided a fixed daily rate

Evaluation Outcome

16. The cost and quality scores achieved by the tenderers are set out in the table below:

Company	Price per day	Price score	Quality Score	Total Score
Liberata UK Ltd	£136.95	30.00	70.00	100.00
Losing supplier	£147.47	27.70	61.67	89.36

17. The recommended supplier following evaluation is Liberata UK Ltd representing best value for money

Budget and other considerations

18. The anticipated annual cost for this service based on an estimated 500 days is £68,475 and therefore an estimated full value contract of £342,375 over the five years.
19. There shall be no service spend under the contract unless there is Government Funding provision or surplus underspend salary budget.
20. The award is over £25,000 therefore as per the Public Contract Regulations 2015 it will be published in Contracts Finder.

Integrated impact assessment



NORWICH
City Council

The IIA should assess **the impact of the recommendation** being made by the report

Detailed guidance to help with the completion of the assessment can be found [here](#). Delete this row after completion

Report author to complete

Committee:	Cabinet
Committee date:	11 September 2019
Director / Head of service	Anton Bull
Report subject:	Procurement of temporary services for revenues and benefits
Date assessed:	21 August 2019

	Impact			
Economic (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Finance (value for money)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Capacity for temporary resource will fulfil DWP grant funding requirement.
Other departments and services e.g. office facilities, customer contact	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
ICT services	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Economic development	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Financial inclusion		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vulnerable customers will get paid the correct benefit in a timely manner
Social (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Safeguarding children and adults	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
<u>S17 crime and disorder act 1998</u>	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Human Rights Act 1998	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Health and well being	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

	Impact			
Equality and diversity (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Relations between groups (cohesion)	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Eliminating discrimination & harassment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Advancing equality of opportunity	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Environmental (please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Transportation	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Natural and built environment	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Waste minimisation & resource use	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Pollution	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sustainable procurement	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Energy and climate change	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(Please add an 'x' as appropriate)	Neutral	Positive	Negative	Comments
Risk management	X	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Recommendations from impact assessment
Positive
Acceptable
Negative
Acceptable
Neutral
Acceptable
Issues
None