

## **WIRRAL EMPLOYMENT LAND AND PREMISES STUDY - APPOINTMENT OF CONSULTANTS**

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### **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report informs Members that consultants have now been appointed by the Director of Corporate Services under delegated powers to undertake an Employment Land and Premises Study for the Borough.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 Cabinet on 24 January 2007 resolved that an independent employment land study for Wirral should be commissioned (Minute 245 refers).
- 2.2 The Study is intended to provide a thorough market assessment of the Borough's existing employment land and premises and to recommend the most appropriate spatial strategy for the delivery of the Council's employment and investment aspirations.
- 2.3 The findings of the Study will be used to inform the preparation of the Local Development Framework, the Sustainable Community Strategy and the delivery of the Council's Investment Strategy.

### **3. Procurement Process**

- 3.1 The Corporate Procurement Unit advised procurement by Request for Quotation as the procurement exercise was valued less than £50,000.00. This advice supports the Constitution and Standing Orders for the Authority.
- 3.2 Requests for Quotation were sent to a list of seventeen consultants, active in the North West and known to offer appropriate services, on 1 August 2007 for reply by 12 noon on 31 August 2007. By the close of the period, six quotations had been received, from the following consultants: Arup, Atkins, BE Group, Drivers Jonas, DTZ and GVA Grimley.
- 3.3 Following analysis of the quotation submissions against the technical and financial criteria set out in the Request for Quotation, Arup, BE Group and DTZ were short listed for interview on 12 September 2007.

### **4. Decision**

- 4.1 The decision to appoint BE Group was taken on 14 September 2007 by the Director of Corporate Services using delegated powers under paragraph 14.4 of the Contract Procedure Rules of the Council's Constitution and was formally confirmed in writing on 17 September 2007.

4.2 The bid from BE Group not only offered best value in terms of monetary value but was also the most economically advantageous, in terms of the content and quality of the work being offered and the quality and experience of the consultant team.

4.3 The Inception Meeting for the Study was held on 18 September 2007 and the Study is expected to conclude by 31 January 2008.

## **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 £50,000 has been set aside from existing resources within Corporate Services. The Director of Finance has confirmed the availability of these resources. The price for the Study will be £46,370 excluding VAT.

## **6. Staffing Implications**

6.1 The Study will be steered by officers drawn from the Corporate Services Department (Strategic Development, Forward Planning and Economic and European Unit), the Technical Services Department (Development Control and Traffic Management), the Regeneration Department (Head of Housing and Regeneration), and Wirral Direct.

## **7. Equal Opportunity Implications**

7.1 There are no equal opportunity implications arising from this report. It was a requirement of the Quotation process that bidders operated an appropriate equal opportunities policy.

## **8. Community Safety Implications**

8.1 There are no community safety implications arising from this report. The Study will, however, consider the suitability of employment areas for the types of uses proposed and the implications of a revised strategy for employment development on patterns and levels of traffic.

## **9. Local Agenda 21 Implications**

9.1 The Request for Quotation requires the consultants to specifically assess the impact of their recommendations on the promotion of sustainable development.

## **10. Planning Implications**

10.1 The findings of the Study will be used to inform the preparation of a Core Strategy Development Plan Document and an Employment Allocations Development Plan Document, as set out in the Local Development Scheme approved by the Secretary of State on 24 April 2007, and may be a material consideration in future decisions under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

## **11. Anti Poverty Implications**

11.1 The promotion of an effective spatial strategy for employment uses will have a direct impact on the delivery of the Council's anti-poverty aspirations. The Request for Quotation specifically requires the consultants to address the income and employment needs of local communities.

## **12. Social Inclusion Implications**

- 12.1 The promotion of an effective spatial strategy for employment uses will have a direct impact on the Council's aspirations for the promotion of social inclusion. The Request for Quotation specifically requires the consultants to consider the spatial distribution and accessibility of new job opportunities.

## **13. Local Member Support Implications**

- 13.1 The Study findings will have potential implications for all Ward Members.

## **14. Background Papers**

14. Request for Quotation Order Number CSC0710

## **15. Recommendations**

- 15.1 That the appointment of BE Group for the sum of £46,370 under the delegated powers of the Director of Corporate Services be noted.

This report was written by the Forward Planning Section who can be contacted on 691 8218.

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