

CABINET**30 SEPTEMBER 2019****TRANSPORT PROFESSIONAL SERVICES – CONTRACT AWARD AND
APPOINTMENT OF SPECIALIST ADVISORS TO PROVIDE NETWORK
MANAGEMENT SUPPORT**

Councillor Julie McManus, Cabinet Member for Community Services, said:

“Providing support services in highways development control, traffic management and road safety is a key role of the council and additional support is required to ensure we are able to meet our obligations.

This proposal will, in the short term, enable the Council to source additional knowledgeable staff under a secondment arrangement and for commissioning high quality stand-alone project work, while also giving us the flexibility to change the level of resources to address peaks and troughs in our workload.

But there is more to be done. Specialist roles such as these are hard to fill. On Wirral we are fortunate to have a great number of high achieving schools and colleges and, in keeping with the Community Wealth Building policy of putting our residents and businesses first; by working with our colleagues in education we are keen to develop our young people in the borough who may be considering taking a different route to a degree or HND level of education and, an apprenticeship with Wirral Council would enable them to do just that whilst earning a good salary, helping their community to prosper and the opportunity of a career path in a sort after discipline within the public sector.”

REPORT SUMMARY

In accordance with the Council’s updated Executive Decision Making process, this report seeks approval to appoint external resource to provide ad-hoc support in the Network Management service to support the delivery of regeneration/growth objectives and ensure our statutory obligations in relation to network management and road safety are met.

This report is not a Key Decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that Cabinet:

Approve the appointment of advisors via the Merseytravel Consultancy Services Multi Party Framework Agreement 2019, subject to completion of Contract Procedure Rules, to provide ad-hoc support services in highways development control, traffic management and road safety up to a value of £450,000 as set out in section 4.0.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Specialist advisor resource is required to provide ad-hoc support services in highways development control, traffic management and road safety, supporting the Council's in-house Network Management resources.
- 1.2 The Council's updated Executive Decision Making Process approved by Cabinet on 24th June 2019 (Minute 7 refers) requires the appointment of consultants over £50,000 to be approved by Cabinet.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Do Nothing: this option has been rejected as failing to progress and establish a Professional services Contract would compromise Wirral Council's ability to meet statutory obligations, deliver Capital programmes and support the aspirations of the Wirral Growth Company.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 The in-house Network Management (NM) service team is generally fully engaged in delivering statutory functions to ensure the Council is complying with the Traffic Management Act and Network Management Duty, delivering outcomes identified within Wirral's Road Safety Plan and managing / planning delivery of the Transport Plan for Growth Capital programme.
- 3.2 The Council has significant regeneration plans which are being driven by the newly formed Wirral Growth Company. The Highways Development Control team will be fundamental in providing technical advice on proposed developments affecting the highways network and assessing and negotiating improvements on any new proposals to mitigate impacts on the network and developing policies.
- 3.3 The wider NM team have a backlog of Traffic Regulation Orders, traffic management engineering schemes and casualty analysis work to progress. To maintain continuous service delivery a multi-disciplinary external specialist advisor is required to support the Council's in-house resource.
- 3.4 The recruitment of staff within NM has been challenging for officers. Various vacancies for highways development control, road safety and traffic management officers have existed within NM for several months and have been advertised on numerous occasions at a competitive remuneration package. In spite of this, appointments have not been possible.
- 3.5 Appointing specialist advisors through the established Merseytravel Consultancy Services Multi Party Framework Agreement enables the Council to source competent staff under a secondment arrangement and for commissioning high quality stand-alone project work. It gives us the flexibility to change the level of resources to address peaks and troughs in our workload.

- 3.6 Using established specialist advisors rather than traditional employment agency agreements reduces the risk of agency staff moving on at short notice, potentially leaving us under resourced at critical times.

4.0 PROPOSAL

- 4.1 Procurement of specialist advisor resource is proposed via the Merseytravel Consultancy Services Multi-Party Framework Lot 7. The hourly rates offered through this framework are considered to represent good value for money in the present market. The framework has already been successfully used by Wirral Council for engineering services over the past 14 months and it is likely to offer better value than alternative procurement routes. At this stage it is envisaged that the services may be required up to a maximum total fee value of £450,000 between November 2019 and November 2021, extendable by a further 12 months subject to performance, but there will be no guarantee of the type, timing, quantity or value of work that will be issued through the contract.
- 4.2 A mini-competition between interested specialist advisors within the relevant framework lot will be administered by the Council's Procurement team through the Due North electronic tendering portal, The Chest. The competition will be on a 50/35/10/5 price/quality/social value/GDPR basis, and will be based on an assumed schedule of hours for each staff grade in the framework, generating an indicative price offer, with an optional discount provision, together with a quality statement and social value submission, which will be assessed in accordance with instructions that will be provided at the time of tender invitation and agreed with Procurement colleagues in advance.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This commission would be funded from the vacant post salaries within the annual revenue budget for Network Management which is currently £217,000.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The procurement exercise for the contract award has been carried out in accordance with the Council's Constitution (Contract Procedure Rules) and European Procurement Regulations.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

- 7.1 ICT: As part of this commission, access to the Council's ICT systems will be required for staff working on secondment.
Staffing: additional ad hoc transport professional services support as outlined in section 4.0 will be required to supplement existing staffing resource to ensure the successful delivery of various work streams.
Assets: No implications.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 8.1 Project delivery risks will be managed via the additional transport professional services support outlined in section 4.0.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

9.1 Engagement has been undertaken with the Procurement team. There is no statutory consultation required as part of this commission.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no equality implications.

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APPENDICES

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
None	