

OFFICER DECISION FORM

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY: DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND PLACE

KEY DECISION YES

DIRECTORATE: REGENERATION AND PLACE

WARDS AFFECTED: ALL

SUBJECT: BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES AND CAREERS EDUCATION SUPPORT PROCUREMENT OUTCOME

1.0 DECISION:

- 1.1 The Director of Regeneration & Place awards the contract, within approved budget and to the highest scoring tenderer and in accordance with the Most Economically Advantageous Tender criteria for the delivery of Business Support Services (Lot 1) to Wirral Chamber of Commerce.
- 1.2 The Director of Regeneration & Place awards the contract, within approved budget and to the highest scoring tenderer and in accordance with the Most Economically Advantageous Tender criteria for the delivery of Careers Education Support (Lot 2) to Career Connect.

2.0 REASONS FOR THE DECISION

- 2.1 The selected suppliers represent the most economically advantageous tenderers for each service.

3.0 STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

- 3.1 The recommendations are made further to legal advice from the Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer has confirmed that they do not incur unlawful expenditure. They are also compliant with equality legislation and an equality analysis and impact assessment has been completed. The recommendations reflect the core principles of good governance set out in the Council's Code of Corporate Governance.

4.0 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

- 4.1 No declarations

Signed:



Officer: Alan Evans

Title: Director of Regeneration and Place

Date: 01 December 2021

A list of background papers on this issue is held with:

Contact Officer: Ben Lavell

Date: 16 November 2021

Date of Publication:

Date of Expiry of Call-In Period:



Report Title:	BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICES AND CAREERS EDUCATION SUPPORT PROCUREMENT OUTCOME
Report of:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR – CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

REPORT SUMMARY

This report details the outcome of the procurement process for selection of the Business Support Service and Careers Education Support suppliers and seeks authorisation to proceed to contract.

The approved permanent annual budget for business support services is £396,000 per annum, based on a fully benchmarked viable cost per output for the current contract and savings made to date. This budget is supplemented with a £50,000 contribution from Public Health to provide a series of support services for not-for-profit and community sectors.

The Wirral Plan 2021-2026 sets out a vision for a prosperous, inclusive economy where local people can get good jobs and achieve their aspirations. It states that we will support inclusive economic growth and increase community wealth. The recommendations in this report will support businesses in the delivery of these aspects of the Wirral Plan.

The value of the Business Support Services procurement is £876,100 for two years, with the option to extend for a further two years. The total expected value is £1,752,200.

The approved budget for Careers Education Support is £45,000 per annum and is funded by Children, Families and Education. The value of the Careers Education Support procurement is £90,000 for two years, with the option to extend for one year plus a further one year.

The proposals within this report affect all wards.

This is a Key Decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS (DECISION)

The Director of Regeneration and Place is recommended to award the contract, within approved budget and to the highest scoring tenderer and in accordance with the Most Economically Advantageous Tender criteria, for the delivery of Business Support Services (Lot 1) to Wirral Chamber of Commerce.

The Director of Regeneration & Place is recommended to award the contract, within approved budget and to the highest scoring tenderer and in accordance with the Most Economically Advantageous Tender criteria for the delivery of Careers Education Support (Lot 2) to Career Connect.

OFFICER DECISION NOTICE SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 At its meeting on 4th March 2021, the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee (agenda item 11 refers) authorised the Director of Regeneration and Place, in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons of the Economy and Regeneration and Development Committee to:
- Commence procurement and select the most economically advantageous supplier(s) to deliver the commissioned services, and;
 - Conclude the final contract award.
- 1.2 The selected suppliers each represent the most economically advantageous tenderer for their Lot.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Tender submissions from other bidders were scored as part of the tender evaluation exercise. These submissions scored lower than Wirral Chamber of Commerce in accordance with the Most Economically Advantageous Tender criteria.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Details of the Business Support Service were detailed in a report of 4 March 2021 to the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee:
- 3.2 In summary, the paper summarised performance of Business Support Services to date and requested authority to commission a new Business Support Service to provide frontline support services for businesses in Wirral.
- 3.3 Frontline business support is key to the delivery of Wirral's economic recovery, and its significant programme of regeneration and future growth. The specification for business support services was designed in consultation to ensure that it reflected the current needs of Wirral businesses, accounted for external support provision and reflects the Council's priorities for Community Wealth building, regeneration and economic development.
- 3.4 The specification included a contribution from Public Health to support businesses in not-for-profit and community sectors. A separate lot (Lot 2) was included for the provision of careers enterprise support. Careers Enterprise Support contract is managed by Children, Families and Education.
- 3.5 The Business Support Service specification was approved by the Director of Regeneration and Place in consultation with the Chair and Spokespersons from the Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee.

Tender Publication

- 3.6 On 6 October 2021, an Invitation to Tender was published via the North West Procurement Portal, The Chest, with a closing date of 13 October 2021.

Tender Evaluation for Lot 1: Business Support Service

- 3.7 The tender evaluation panel was made up of suitably experienced officers from the Council's Regeneration Service with oversight from the Council's Procurement Team.
- 3.8 The panel reviewed three submissions and concluded that the tender submitted by Wirral Chamber of Commerce was the most economically advantageous to Wirral Council.
- 3.9 In reaching its decision the Council considered the following criteria for the award of the contract. Against each criterion the Wirral Chamber of Commerce score was as follows:
- I. Price (with a weighting of 35%)
Price points achieved as a percentage of the highest score = 91.07.
Price score adjusted to 35% weighting = **31.87 points**
 - II. Quality (with a weighting of 50%)
Quality points achieved as a percentage of the highest score = 100.
Quality score adjusted to 50% weighting = **50 points**.

Quality Points Breakdown:

Section	Weighting	Wirral Chamber of Commerce Scores	
		Actual	Weighted
Method Statement 1: Skills, Knowledge & Experience	10%	4	0.40
Method Statement 2: Service Structure, Location & Access	10%	4	0.40
Method Statement 3: Service Delivery	35%	4	1.40
Method Statement 4: Contract mobilisation & Service Outcomes	20%	4	0.80
Method Statement 5: Performance, Quality & Data Management	10%	4	0.40
Method Statement 6: GDPR	5%	4	0.20
Method Statement 7: Interim Economic Strategy, Community Wealth Building Strategy & Social Value	10%	4	0.40

Totals	100%	28	4.00
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- iii. Social Value (with a weighting of 15%)
Social value point score achieved = 90.
Social value score adjusted to 15% weighting = **13.5 points**

3.10 In accordance with the above weightings and criteria, the Wirral Chamber of Commerce total score was **95.37**. This was higher than any other tenderer.

Total points summary for all bidders

	Weighting	Wirral Chamber of Commerce	Bidder 2	Bidder 3
Price score	35%	31.87	31.64	35.00
Quality score	50%	50.00	38.13	42.19
Social value score	15%	13.50	9.64	10.03
Total	-	95.37	79.41	87.22

Tender Evaluation for Lot 2: Careers Education Support

- 3.11 The tender evaluation panel was made up of suitably experienced officers from the Council's Children's, Families and Education Department with oversight from the Council's Procurement Team.
- 3.12 The panel received one submission from Career Connect and concluded that the tender submitted met the requirements for price, quality and social value.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The value of the Business Support Services procurement is £876,100 for two years, with the option to extend for a further two years. The total expected value is £1,752,200. The value of the tender is in line with the approved funding.
- 4.2 The value of the Careers Education Support procurement is £90,000 for two years, with the option to extend for one year plus a further one year. The value of the tender is in line with the approved funding.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Director of Law and Governance has prepared the contractual Terms and Conditions of Service relating to this contract in line with the requirements of the Council and project funders.
- 5.2 The procurement process was conducted via an Open Procedure in accordance with Regulation 27 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

5.3 The award of contract will be made on the basis of the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) scoring. The meaning of MEAT is currently governed by the Public Contract Regulations 2015. As criteria for the assessment of tenders on the basis of the best price-quality ratio, MEAT will always predominantly contain a cost or quality element, but the MEAT criteria may also include assessment on the basis of various other criteria linked to the subject-matter of the contract in question, including lifecycle costing and environmental or social aspects. For example, particular award criteria may take into account the inclusion of vulnerable and disadvantaged people, local wealth building, training and educational aspects or the use of non-toxic substances in the production process to deliver the requirement. The Council's Contract Procedure Rules set out how contracts are to be awarded by the Council, which will include reference to the Council's Procurement Strategy and Social Value Policy.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 This commissioned service for Lot 1 will be contract and performance managed by officers in the Place and Investment Team.

6.2 This commissioned service for Lot 2 will be contract and performance managed by officers in the Children, Families and Education.

6.3 No Council assets, ICT equipment or recharged services are proposed for supply/transfer as part of the commissioned model.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 The procurement process is subject to scrutiny and at risk of legal challenge. Regard is given to contract procedure rules and relevant legislation at all stages of the process, while legal and procurement advice and support is obtained to ensure compliance.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 Wide-ranging consultation has taken place with stakeholders that include local businesses, representative bodies, council officers, business support providers, Liverpool City Region Growth Platform representatives and third sector organisations to develop the Business Support Service specification.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision or activity. Equality considerations are embedded in the procurement procedure. There are no direct equality implications from this report,

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The Wirral Plan 2021-2026 includes a set of goals and objectives to create a sustainable environment which urgently tackles the environment emergency.

- 10.2 The community wealth building and local supply chain development aspects of the new BSS commission will support the transition to a low carbon economy.
- 10.3 The Energy & Environment Sector Network, delivered as part of the Wirral Business Support Services contract, is key to facilitating the exchange of best practise, information, and knowledge transfer across the business community.
- 10.4 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are therefore expected to reduce emissions of Greenhouse Gases.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING

- 11.1 The new Business Support Service will embed local priorities that include Community Wealth Building into business support services.
- 11.2 The Business Support Service specification has been developed in partnership with the Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES) to support Community Wealth in many ways, including:
- Harnessing local wealth to increase investment in local communities.
 - Ensuring that residents can access secure and quality employment with progression opportunities and good terms and conditions.
 - Supporting key sectors to grow and develop in ways that ensure local businesses and residents are prepared, supported and enabled to access local opportunities.
 - Bringing together knowledge and understanding of the VCSE sector and the areas where entrepreneurial activity and energy can be supported to flourish.
 - Leveraging support and funding from external providers.
 - Harnessing the power of anchor institutions to understand their commissioning intentions and how these can be met from the local economy.

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APPENDICES: n/a

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Invitation to Tender
 Tender Submissions

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Economy, Regeneration and Development Committee	4 March 2021
Policy and Resources Committee	17 March 2021
Officer Decision Business Support Services Contract Extension	24 February 2020