

BUSINESS TRAVEL

REPORT TO; the Assistant Chief Executive Business Support (CS); Trudy Forster and the Head of Business Support (CS); Stuart Robinson.

DECISION DATE: 9th August 2024

SUPPORTING ANNEX; Not required.

PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Authority undertake a procurement for Business Travel. The scope of the procurement is to establish a contract with a Travel Management Company (TMC) to support the Authority's operational requirements.

BACKGROUND TO SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATION

The Authority requires the provision of business travel which includes rail, accommodation and air and car hire.

In December 2020, the Authority entered into a call-off agreement via the NEPO507 Travel Management Service Framework. The contract term was 22nd February 2021 – 23rd February 2023 with an option to extend for 2 x periods of 12 months we have extended for the final time to 24th January 2025, therefore a procurement exercise is required to establish a new contract. We wish to go to Competitive Tender rather than use a Framework Agreement, so we test the market and establish Value for Money with a plan to use the Open Procurement Process which has a longer lead time than using a Framework agreement.

This procurement is above the Threshold for Goods and Services (excluding Social & Other Specific Services):

Above WTO GPA Threshold (currently £214,904 inclusive of VAT)

Estimated Value over the Life of the contract £ 1,430,863.08

LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE

As per the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules, procedure as set out in Rules 11 and 12 states.

- 11.2 Where the estimated value of the Contract exceeds the WTO GPA Threshold, Above Threshold Tenders shall be invited and awarded in accordance with the PCRs and as prescribed in Rule 11 and 12.
- 11.3 Before an Above Threshold Tender is requested the evaluation criteria to be applied to the Above Threshold Tender must be recorded in writing in the SQ and/or ITT document. The evaluation criteria must be identified and the weighting between price and quality established and stated in the SQ and/or ITT sent to Participants.
- 11.4 Irrespective of the procurement process being undertaken a notice must be published on the Find a Tender Service system and Contracts Finder, where

possible this should be through the E-Sourcing system or an appropriate alternative system as agreed with the HoP.

- 11.5 All Participants invited to submit Above Threshold Tenders shall be provided in all instances with identical instructions and information.
- 11.6 Where considered appropriate, the HoP may, in consultation with the SCM, permit Participants to submit variant Above Threshold Tenders (i.e. tenders which do not comply with some or all of the requirements of the primary tender). The same opportunity to submit variant Above Threshold Tenders shall be given to all Participants. Variant Above Threshold Tenders shall only be considered if the Participant also submits a compliant primary tender.
- 11.7 The evaluation of the Above Threshold Tenders shall be carried out by Officers who are considered appropriate having regard for the subject matter and value of the Contract.
- 11.8 All procurements undertaken in accordance with Rule 11 shall have a minimum of 3 appropriate Officers (excluding the Procurement and Contract Management Service representative) to undertake the evaluation process. The evaluation process shall include:
 - Individual evaluation assessment and scoring
 - Consensus marking exercise, chaired by a member of the Procurement and Contract Management Service
 - Independent review by SCM, where required
 - Moderation by evaluation panel, where required
- 11.9 All evaluation panel members must have completed the evaluation training prior to completing any evaluation process.
- 11.10 Where a Contract is terminated within the first 6 months of the Contract commencement date, the Council may award the contract to the second placed supplier with agreement from the HoP in consultation with the Monitoring Officer provided that this demonstrated Best Value and the original award criteria have not changed.
- 11.11 The Responsible Officer must follow the Council's Access to Information Rules, for example the Responsible Officer must complete the Key Decision process where applicable, and publish a decision record.

12. OPTIONS FOR ABOVE THRESHOLD PROCESS

- 12.1 Rule 12 does not apply to Contracts for Health Care Services or Grants
- 12.2 The Gateway Process shall identify which Above Threshold Tender Procedures shall be used to invite tenders for Contracts with a value in excess of the relevant WTO GPA Threshold.
 - (i) the Open Procedure (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 27)
 - (ii) the Restricted Procedure (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 28)
 - (iii) the Competitive Procedure with Negotiation (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 29)
 - (iv) the Competitive Dialogue Procedure (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 30)
 - (v) the Innovation Partnership Procurement (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 31)
 - (vi) use of the Negotiated Procedure without prior publication (as prescribed by PCR Regulation 32)
 - (vii) Social and Other Specific Services (Light Touch Regime) (as prescribed by PCR Regulations 74-76) and such identified process

shall be used for the invitation of Above Threshold Tenders in accordance with the requirements of the PCR's.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Authority undertakes a procurement exercise to establish a new contract for the provision of Business Travel.