

Cabinet – 18 April 2007

Staffordshire Construction Framework Contract

Portfolio: Councillor John O'Hare, Resources

Wards: All wards

Service: Built Environment

Key decision: Yes

Forward plan: Yes

Summary of report

This report follows the Cabinet report of September 2006 which recommended that the Council establishes a number of Framework Contracts to provide construction and engineering professional services and utilising the SCAPE/Wilmott Dixon National Framework for Mary Elliot School.

This report seeks authority to develop the available suite of frameworks by utilising the Construction Framework established by Staffordshire County Council. This will enable the delivery of smaller projects which fall between the maintenance projects of the proposed Walsall Council Framework Contracts and the SCAPE/Wilmott Dixon National Framework arrangement for larger projects, and facilitate choice on the larger projects.

It is likely that the first projects to utilise this Framework will be three projects in the Children's Centre phase 2 programme.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet authorises the use of the Staffordshire County Council Framework to deliver projects in the Children's Centre Phase 2 programme and future significant projects as identified above £150,000 in value.
2. That, subject to satisfactory conclusion to feasibility of the legal access to the framework, the Executive Director, Neighbourhoods, or his nominee, enters into the appropriate form of contract documentation for access to the Framework.
3. That subsequent reports are presented to Cabinet on a project by project basis to approve final costs prior to placing of a project order via the Framework.

Resource & legal considerations

This proposal sets out to make better use of the Council's professional, technical and support staff employed within Property Services and, further to the replacement of current outdated procurement arrangements, to develop Partnering arrangements through best practice in construction. The proposal will also substantially reduce the quotation/tendering

process and enable work to be procured promptly. The departure from traditional procurement practices does require that Legal Services and Internal Audit are closely involved in the process and early discussion has taken place to enable the recommendation to use the Staffordshire County Council Framework.

The Staffordshire frame has been procured in a manner which might allow other Public bodies to access the framework. The benefit of this to Walsall is the saving in procurement time and costs, and therefore improving value for money. Confirmation is currently being sought as to Walsall Council's ability to take advantage of this contract.

Citizen impact

Walsall residents will benefit from reduced procurement costs and better value for money by entering into partnering arrangements for the delivery of building and engineering works. The council tax payer should see an improvement in quality with projects completed on time and within budget estimates.

Community safety

As identified in the December 2006 report, the construction industry has a poor record in respect of health and safety issues and it is important that the Council appoints contractors that have invested in maintaining high standards. The procurement of the Staffordshire Framework has ensured that health & safety is a high priority criteria.

Environmental impact

All Framework Contracts will require that consideration be given to deliver sustainable energy efficiency given the limitations of individual budgets.

Equality implications

All contractors have been required to satisfy officers that they have good equality policies and practices.

Consultation

Consultation has taken place with Education Walsall to explain the proposed improvement process and has received support for providing additional choice in frameworks for future procurement.

Vision 2008

Procurement cost and time will be cut for the initial project. These benefits will help the Council in moving forward with its objective of transforming Walsall into an excellent Local Authority and making our schools great.

Background papers

Partnering & Frameworks Contract Cabinet Report - 27 September 2006

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4 April 2007



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4 April 2007