

OFFICER DECISION RECORD SHEET

Name of decision maker: Assistant Director – Revenues and Resources Nigel Howcutt.

Service Area: Revenues and Benefits

Title of Decision

Approval to award a 1 year extension to the contract for Council Tax & Business Rates annual billing printing & associated services.

Decision made and reasons:

Decision: To award a 1 year extension to the contract with DSI for Council Tax & Business Rates annual billing printing & associated services. This is for 2023/2024, covering annual billing in March 2024.

Reason:

This contract is for the printing, folding, enclosing/packaging and posting of annual Council tax bills, Business rates bills, Housing benefit decision notices, Council tax support decision notices and Housing rent notifications with appropriate inserts.

Copies of all the bills and letters sent are also provided by DSI in PDF form in order to import into the Council's document management system.

The initial contract duration was 3 years with the option to extend the contract for a further year.

The yearly annual billing process is a statutory requirement. Collection and enforcement of Council Tax and Business Rates could not be carried out without the bills being issued in line with the Council Tax legislation.

If the contact was not extended, the Council would not be able to collect Council Tax and Business Rates promptly from its residents and businesses in the borough, nor rent payments from our tenants as we do not have the capacity to deliver the contract ourselves.

Commissioning process:

Report was presented to the Commercial board on 13 July 2023 and approval was given to extend the contract for 1 year.

Tender process:

The original contract was tendered in September 2020 using an open tender process, as the value was below the OJEU threshold, it was only advertised on the Supply Hertfordshire e-tendering portal and Contracts Finder.

Commercial Board:

Approval was given 13 July 2023.

The recommendation was approved to extend the contract with DSI for one year to ensure

OFFICER DECISION RECORD SHEET

2023/2024 annual billing is achieved.

The contact offers value for money, requires no additional upfront costs, or additional set up fees.

Extending the contract will enable us to carry out a full commissioning and procurement process during 2023/24.

Reports considered:

The Procurement report attached (to be completed by Procurement).

Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders Consulted:

- Chris Baker Head of Service for Revenues and Benefits
- Kevin Bradly Corporate Applications Lead Officer
- Michelle Fox Rent and Income Lead Officer
- Sue Foster Procurement Manager

Financial Comments:

Current Postage Budget in RD110 is £19,620

Current General Office Expenses in RD050 is £22,060

Total Revs & Bens available funding would be £41,680 – assuming that these funds are not going to be spent elsewhere.

Revs & Bens also intend to recharge £5,850 to Housing.

Nikita Patel Bhagalia Accountant (Financial Planning & Analysis)
28/06/2023

Monitoring Officer Comments:

No further comments to add to the report.

S151 Officers Comments:

The proposed contract extension has been subject to internal scrutiny via presentation at commercial. The proposed extension is considered to offer enhance value for money compared to alternative procurement processes.

Implications

Value for Money:

The original evaluation considered factors relating to the quality of delivery as well as price.

This is a high profile service for the Council, and any mistakes could bring substantial financial consequences and reputational damage.

DSI have administered the contact over past three years efficiently and professionally. They have achieved every deadline given to them.

OFFICER DECISION RECORD SHEET

They have been able to adapt quickly when changes have been required at the last minute and their attention to detail has ensured no errors and extra costs have been borne by the Council.

Financial:

The cost of the contract extension will be funded by existing budgets. The contract value is £45,000 per year, subject to any postal increases.

Risk:

The yearly Annual billing process is a statutory requirement and if this extension is not awarded then the Council would not be able to collect Council Tax and Business Rates payments promptly from its residents and businesses in the borough, nor rent payments from our tenants.

A liquidated damages clause has been included in the contract terms and conditions

Officer Signature:

Date: