

Portfolio Holder decision record sheet

Name of decision maker:

Cllr Adrian England

Portfolio:

Corporate and Commercial Services

Date of Portfolio Holder decision:

16/10/2024

Title of decision: Approval to award contract for Council Tax & Business Rates annual billing printing & associated services

Part II:**Part II reason:****Background to report:**

The existing contract for the Council Tax, Business Rates, and Housing rent letters annual billing printing & associated services expired on 31 March 2024. It was originally awarded in 2021 to DSI and run for four years.

At this point we would normally carry out a commissioning and procurement process in order to determine our service need and consider what our annual billing contract requirements are moving forward.

However, currently all printing and posting including production of our annual bills and Housing Rent letters is corporately undergoing a review, and a corporate project plan is in place to award a new corporate printing contract by April 2026.

Therefore, whilst the project board determines the outcome of the corporate printing and posting solution, a two year contact with our current providers DSI needs to be in place.

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

This service is a high profile one to the Council, and any mistakes could bring substantial consequences. Ensuring our data is kept confidential and secure is paramount to this contract. Data processing agreements have been signed between both parties and there have always been adhered.

Any data breach would be catastrophic and the reputation of the Council would be affected.

DSI over the past four years has demonstrated their ability to handle and process data, they have a robust quality assurance process, have been able to separate customers details from the next when enveloping, have achieved deadlines, and have been able to handle additional tract

With the introduction of the digital platform, this will also enable e billing, and at this time we are unable to offer this service

Decision made and reasons:

Decision: To award a two year contract for Council Tax & Business Rates annual billing printing & associated services to DSI

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Reasons: Until such time that the corporate project board have established what the printing solution should be, the Commercial board on 29th August 2024 approved the recommendation to award a two year contact with our current providers. By this time we will have the new corporate contract in place.

Reports considered:
The Commercial Board reports has been provided.

Officers/Councillors/Ward Councillors/Stakeholders consulted:

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

Monitoring Officer comments: No comments to add to the report

Chief Financial Officer comments: The Revenues service will ensure that the cost of this contract is met from within existing approved budgets.

Financial Implications:

The contract value is £57,000 per year, subject to any postal increases.

Last year the invoice for the processing our bills was £11,000 with an additional £46,000 postage due to the substantial postage increases.

Risk:

The yearly Annual billing process is a statutory requirement and if this Contract 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

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 four years efficiently and professionally. They have achieved every deadline given to them.

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.

Options considered and reasons for rejection:

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- Award the contract to another supplier for two years
- Not award a contract
- In –House solution

All three of this options are not variable. Having worked with DSI over the four year contract they have administered the contact efficiently and professionally, the contract offers value for money and extending for a further two years provides no additional set up costs.

An in House solution is not variable as we do not have the resources or equipment to carry out such a high risk and time sensitive task.

Portfolio Holder's signature:



Date:16/10/2024

Details of any interests declared and any dispensations given by the Standards Committee:

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Date decision record sheet received from portfolio holder: 16/10/2024

Date decision published: 16/10/2024

Decision no: PH-025-2024

Date of expiry of call-in period: 23/10/2024

Date any call-in received or decision implemented: