

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM'S
REPORT TO**

Cabinet
18 July 2023

Report Title: Procurement of Temporary Agency Personnel – Sustainable Environment

Submitted by: Service Director of Sustainable Environment

Portfolios: Sustainable Environment

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To ask cabinet for authority to undertake a procurement process and establish a new framework for the supply and delivery of temporary staffing for both Recycling and Waste, and Streetscene services for a period of two years plus possible two one year extensions.

Recommendation

That

- 1. Cabinet approve the process for procurement for the supply and delivery of temporary staffing for both Recycling and Waste, and Streetscene service areas;**
- 2. Cabinet approve and delegate authority to the Service Director – Sustainable Environment for the award of contract on the completion of the procurement process to be undertaken.**

Reasons

- The current contract arrangements are at an end and need to be re-procured on the same Council framework for the supply of temporary staff in both recycling and waste collection / streetscene services following its expiry.

1. Background

- 1.1 For a number of years agency staff have been used to support recycling and waste collection services, which were under resourced prior to the new recycling collection service becoming operational in 2020, and Streetscene for their seasonal staff requirements.
- 1.2 Given the value in spend, particularly when running the previous resource intensive recycling collection service, a full procurement exercise was undertaken by the Council in 2017 to establish the Borough Council's own framework agreement of providers who met the criteria the Council required in terms of employment standards, training and aptitude, and financial costs.

1.3 Agency staff are utilised as a more effective alternative to seasonable temporary staff as they are more efficient to call on, to cover peaks in demand, short term shortages, and covering for sickness which remains a concern for the two services. Any agency staff are still able to apply for any permanent roles when vacancies arise, as internal candidates.

2. **Issues**

2.1 The current contract arrangements are now at an end following an extension, and there is a need to develop and procure new arrangements.

2.2 Although the annual spend on agency workers is a lot lower now than in 2017 when the original contract was formally agreed, it is still significant at over £100,000 per year.

2.3 An option was considered and trialled through a national framework with Eastern Shires Procurement Organisation (ESPO) around utilising the 653F_19 Managed Services for Temporary Agency Resources (MSTAR) Framework - Lot 1a Neutral Vendor Service as an alternative to the Council's own framework for the supply of both Recycling and Waste, and Streetscene temporary staffing.

2.4 Unfortunately this trial failed to deliver temporary staff as originally envisaged, and required as much officer input as that using the Council's own existing framework, and therefore is not been taken forward.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 That an open procurement process be undertaken to establish a new framework arrangement for the supply and delivery of temporary staffing for both Recycling and Waste, and Streetscene be undertaken.

3.2 That approval is agreed, on completion of the procurement and evaluation process for the award of contract be delegated to the Service Director for Sustainable Environment in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Environment.

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 Utilising an existing framework saves time and valuable resources in procurement of providers for agency staff for both Recycling and Waste, and Streetscene and subsequently a range of Council services.

4.2 The preferred supplier will offer a digital solution in terms of management of the contract, submission of authorised timesheets, and the ordering of personnel which will save valuable time from a management perspective compared to the current system, and provide useful management reports and statistics which will allow the Council to more accurately monitor the value of the contract and the use of temporary agency personnel.

5. **Options Considered**

5.1 Another option to the use of temporary agency staff, would be to employ seasonal staff on temporary contracts, to cover the high peak of operations in both Recycling and Waste with increased garden waste collections, and Streetscene especially on the grounds maintenance element of their activities. However when this approach has been utilised in the past, sickness and other issues has meant that at times the numbers of additional staff have not had the desired impact in supporting increased work demand. Utilising temporary agency staff on a fixed term basis resolves the issue of none availability of staff, as there is a contractual requirement to provide staff on a daily basis to the satisfaction of the Council

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

6.1 The proposed open tender process offers a compliant procurement process in line with Public Contract Regulations 2015.

6.2 Regularity and Assurance Compliance is established as part of the methodology offered by both suppliers proposal/s.

7. **Equality Impact Assessment**

7.1 An equality impact assessment will be developed with the successful provider as part of the utilisation of their service delivery and joint recruitment methodologies.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 A financial revenue budget is available in both Recycling and Waste, and Streetscene for the supply of temporary staffing to respond to fluctuating needs for staffing to respond to absenteeism, increases in demand and additional services requests.

8.2 Based on historic spend the aggregated value of this contract based on a four year framework will be in the region of £850,000 (around £212,000 a year) but may fluctuate based on the ongoing need to supply appropriate cover for each of the services.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 The procurement and provision of a compliant framework agreement to procure a solution for temporary staffing minimises possible procurement challenges.

9.2 The timely and controlled processes that will be provided as part of the solution for the supply of temporary staffing is intended to minimise the risks caused to service delivery to residents as a result of any shortfalls in staffing due a range of factors.

9.3 Regularity and Assurance Compliance will jointly be established with the chosen service provider and officers of the Borough Council.

10. **UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)**

10.1 The procurement of a framework for the provision of ongoing temporary staffing will support the delivery of the following UNSDG:



11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This is a key decision as expenditure over the life of the contract will exceed £100,000 revenue.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 There are no earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions.

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 There are no appendices.

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 There are no background papers.