



Key Decision Report of the Corporate Director for Community Wealth Building

Officer Key Decision	Date: 28 September 2021	Ward(s): All
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Delete as appropriate	Exempt	Non-exempt
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SUBJECT: Extension to arrangements for the Supply of Office and Commercial Furniture

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to extend arrangements for the Supply of Office and Commercial Furniture, procured via a call-off contract between the Council and Unique Office Solutions, pursuant to the Hertfordshire County Council framework agreement.
- 1.2 Arrangements need to be extended to take account for additional spend incurred as a direct result of the COVID-19 epidemic and to support plans for the safe return to work making council workspaces COVID-19 safe as a hybrid model with continued remote working, as necessary.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To approve the variation to the value of the call-off contract with Unique Office Solutions for the supply of office and commercial furniture pursuant to the Hertfordshire County Council framework (agreement number HCC1710101), to increase the call-off contract value by £700,000 until the end of the existing approved commercial arrangements 28 February 2023.
- 2.2 To note that the increase in the call-off contract value by £700,000 increases the overall value of the call-off contract to £1.5M.

3. Date the decision is to be taken:

11 October 2021

4. Background

4.1 Nature of the service

The council has an call-off contract with Unique Office Solutions at a value of £800,000 via an access agreement with Herfordshire County Council for their framework agreement for the supply of office and commercial furniture (reference number HCC1710101) which will expire on 28 February 2023.

The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the council implementing a remote working hybrid model in order to meet government home working requirements. Ensuring essential Council services could safely operate remotely resulted in additional spend being incurred. The Council must now address the safe return to buildings to meet the needs for our residents, customers and staff, in accordance with current health guidelines to make spaces as COVID-19 safe as possible.

4.2 Estimated Value

In December 2020, existing arrangements had £500k remaining. £221k was spent between January and July 2021, accounting for the majority of remote working spend, allowing essential services to continue to be delivered. Additional maintenance spend is expected to not exceed £15k per month for the remainder of the 17 months of the agreement until 28 February 2023, when it is due to end, in line with the original agreement.

The FutureWork redesign of our public buildings and services to deliver a risk assessed safer environment, facilitating delivery of effective public services, accommodating work and meeting spaces. A hybrid model of working, enabling front facing delivery with buildings and remote working forms part of the overall programme. The costs of this programme are expected to be £800k for this agreement if all pilot and full programmes complete. However, in light of continuously changing guidelines, approval for up to £1.5million is sought.

Budgets for existing provision is contained within existing service revenue budgets. Approval of any additional funds would be subject to normal funding approval requirements.

4.3 Timetable

The existing agreement runs until 28 February 2023. Services are expected to increasingly return to delivery from public buildings from 1 October 2021. Arrangements will run in accordance with existing agreements.

4.4 Options appraisal

The Council would require the service in order to provide essential public services to residents and businesses, including statutory services. The Council does not have the ability production capability to provide office and commercial furniture in-house, thus needs to procure the service.

Additional provision, including full or partial replacement of existing furniture would need to in line with the same characteristics to minimise incompatibility, increase changeability and interoperability and to avoid disproportionate technical difficulties between maintenance of stock.

The Council's Procurement Rules, Rules 18.1.2 which allows an amendment up to £2,000.000 in the case of a revenue contract. The existing framework agreement allows for direct call-off to the current provider, the result being the same as a variation to extend the scope of the existing contract.

4.5 Key Considerations

The Council must address the safe return to buildings to meet the needs for our residents, customers and staff, in accordance with current health guidelines to make spaces as COVID-19 safe as possible. The supply of office and commercial furniture is needed for the Council's FutureWork redesign of our public buildings and services to facilitate delivery of effective public services in light of the pandemic.

Considerations include access and egress, cleaning and hygiene practices, building safety, display screen equipment, facilities, ventilation, meeting rooms and common areas. A priority area is to ensure equality of access for all for our residents, customers, businesses and staff. Services must operate both from public buildings and remotely seamlessly, insofar as is possible. The relationship between the Council and provider will be subject to continuous monitoring for performance and best value.

4.6 Evaluation

Arrangements with Unique Office Solutions have been procured in accordance with an access agreement with Hertfordshire County Council for their framework agreement for the supply of office and commercial furniture (reference number HCC1710101). The key decision was taken 11 May 2018 and the existing agreement expires 28 February 2023. The extension of arrangements will remain with this contract expiry date. The framework agreement covers all equipment, desks, tables, storage and collaborative furniture, allowing the continued delivery of Council services from public building or remotely until the agreement end.

The Council's call-off contract from the framework agreement supports the Council in delivery of its commitments in regards to social value, for example:

- implementing proactive environmental requirements with the supplier performing its contractual duties in accordance to our aims to conserve energy, water, wood, paper and other resources to reduce waste and phase out the use of ozone depleting substances and minimise the release of greenhouse gases, volatile organic compounds and other substances damaging to health and the environment;
- Works include minimising the amount of packaging delivered to site, with recycling redundant items in accordance to the council's expectations on zero carbon;
- Materials used are within ethical and sustainable supply chains to ensure non exploitation or detrimental effect to the environment.

4.7 Business Risks

The service is needed for a coordinated and managed response to implementing actions on the safe return to delivery of more services from public building for our residents, customers and services users, in combination with remote working delivery models. A safe environment, which minimises the risks from COVID-19 insofar as is possible reduces anxiety, improves confidence, performance and service delivery and minimises detrimental risks to the public. The health, safety and welfare of all our public building users needs to remain a priority for the Council.

The council has the opportunity via the corporate contract to implement a plan of action for the safe return to work utilising its current centralised contract and project management teams, and thus maintain and implement continuous efficiencies through its existing relationship with the provider.

4.8 The Employment Relations Act 1999 (Blacklist) Regulations 2010 explicitly prohibit the compilation, use, sale or supply of blacklists containing details of trade union members and their activities. Following a motion to full Council on 26 March 2013, all tenderers will be required to complete an anti-blacklisting declaration. Where an organisation is unable to declare that they have never blacklisted, they will be required to evidence that they have 'self-cleansed'. The Council will not award a contract to organisations found guilty of blacklisting unless they have demonstrated 'self-cleansing' and taken adequate measures to remedy past actions and prevent re-occurrences.

4.9 The following relevant information is required to be specifically approved in accordance with rule 2.8 of the Procurement Rules:

Relevant information	Information/section in report
1 Nature of the service	Supply of office and commercial furniture to support safe continuation of essential public services in keeping COVID-19 guidelines. See paragraph 4.1
2 Estimated value	As outlined within the report. See paragraph 4.2
3 Timetable	As outlined within the report. See paragraph 4.3
4 Options appraisal	As outlined within the report. See paragraph 4.4
5 Key Considerations	As outlined within the report.

	See paragraph 4.5
6 Award criteria	As outlined within the report. See paragraph 4.6
7 Any business risks associated with entering the contract	As outlined within the report. See paragraph 4.7
8 Any other relevant financial, legal or other considerations.	See section 5

5. Implications

5.1 Financial implications:

The current contract value is £800K which was meant to last for four years up to 28th of February 2023. Due to Covid-19, the council had to spend more to enable flexible working and will be spending more because of the FutureWork project. The increased cost will be met from the FutureWork budget.

5.2 Legal Implications:

The council has a general power of competence under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 to do anything an individual may generally do subject to any statutory limitations. The Council has the power under this section to agree to the proposals in this report.

The Local Government Act 1999, requires the council to make arrangements to achieve Best Value in the exercise of its functions when considering a service provision, which includes the supply of goods detailed in the body of the report.

This report seeks approval to vary the value of the call-off contract between the council and Unique Office Solution by increasing the contract value of £800,000 by £700,000, totalling 1.5 million. The increase in value is to allow for additional spend incurred as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic to implement remote working and to support plans for safe return to work.

It is stated in the body of the report that as a direct result of the COVID 19 pandemic the council incurred additional spend due to implementing a remote working hybrid model in order to meet government home working requirements. The report outlines that the council will need to incur additional expenditure in order to address the safe return to buildings to meet the needs for Islington council residents, customers and staff, in accordance with current health guidelines to make spaces as COVID-19 safe as possible.

Legal can assist with the variation of the call off contract and sealing, as contracts above £500,000 will need to be sealed.

The decision to increase the value of the contract is a key decision but within the delegated authority of the Corporate Director. Under Procurement rule 18.1.2 a Corporate Director can

agree an amendment to a contract where the value of the amendment is up to £2,000,000 in the case of a revenue contract or £5,000,000 in the case of capital expenditure.

The decision maker can approve the recommendations provided they are satisfied with the contents of the report and the recommendations represents best value for the council.

5.3 Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030:

An Environmental Impact Assessment was completed on 02/08/2021 and reviewed by Energy services.

5.4 Resident Impact Assessment:

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

A Residential Impact Assessment was completed on the 09/08/2021, finding no detrimental impact for residents. The Residential Impact Assessment is appended.

6. Reasons for the decision:

- 6.1 To extend arrangements for to the Supply of Office and Commercial Furniture to take account for additional spend incurred as a direct result of the COVID-19 epidemic and to support plans for the safe return to work making council workspaces COVID-19 safe as a hybrid model with continued remote working, as necessary.

7. Record of the decision:

- 7.1 I have today decided to take the decision set out in section 2 of this report for the reasons set out above.

Signed by:

Corporate Director Community Wealth
Building

Date

Appendices

- The Residential Impact Assessment is appended

Background papers: None

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