

Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



Nottingham
City Council

Reference Number:	2820
Author:	Rachael Morris
Department:	Strategy and Resources
Contact:	Rachael Morris (Job Title: HR Business Partner, Email: rachael.morris@nottinghamcity.gov.uk, Phone: 01158763459)
Subject:	Electoral Service Support
Total Value:	£30,000 (Type: Revenue)
Decision Being Taken:	<p>1) In accordance with financial regulation 3.29, to agree to dispense with the provisions of contract procedure rule 5.1.1 with regard to obtaining quotations, and to a contract being entered into with the Association of Electoral Administrators to provide consultancy support for the Electoral Services team during the period of April 2017 to June 2017 to support the team with coordinating and convening the General Election.</p> <p>(2) To agree that the cost of the work for the sum of £30k be met from contingencies if it is not possible to reclaim as an Electoral expense from Central Government.</p>
Reasons for the Decision(s)	<p>The Electoral Services team are integral to the convening and coordination of all Local, National and European elections. The service requires additional capacity to support the Council to undertake the administration that is required for a General Election. The Election has been called at short notice and the team are under-resourced at this time due to unforeseen temporary reductions in staffing arrangements.</p> <p>The skills set required to support the administration and coordination of an election is of a specialist nature and the decision asks for dispensation from Finance Regulations due to this unique skills set required. There are no other organisations in the marketplace that could support the Council's requirements at this short notice.</p> <p>The Association of Electoral Administrators operates as an intermediary organisation hosting consultants that can support Local Authorities with specialist expertise in Elections. They undertake work of a specific nature and have provided the Council with three CVs of consultants for us to assess suitability, skills set and fit with Nottingham City Council. All consultant CVs put forward were for the same value.</p>

Other Options Considered:	<div>Recruiting an agency worker to fulfill the role - this option is not preferred as the only organisation in the marketplace that provides workers with the specialist skills set required for Electoral Administration is the AEA. Engaging an agency worker would provide capacity within the service but it would not provide the specialist expertise to support the Council and the team to deliver the General Election.</div> <div>Secondment of another colleague to the role - this option is not preferred due to the developmental time required and the urgency of the situation.</div>
Background Papers:	
Published Works:	
Affected Wards:	Citywide
Colleague / Councillor Interests:	
Dispensation from Financial Regulations:	Yes
Use of Consultants	<div>Number of Days:35</div> <div>Rate per Day:860</div> <div>Total value:30000</div> <div>Start date:24/04/2017</div> <div>End date:16/06/2017</div>
Reason for using a consultant:	Consultancy support for the Electoral Services team during the period of April 2017 2 June 2017 to support the conduct and administration of the General Election. There are unforeseen temporary staffing reductions in the Electoral Services team and there is an urgent requirement for support to convene and administer an Election for the Citizens of Nottingham. The consultant engaged would provide leadership and subject matter expertise to a team during a concentrated two-month period in the lead up to the General Election.
Other options considered:	Agency - not preferred due to reasons overleaf Secondment - not preferred due to reasons overleaf Do nothing - not preferred due to statutory service provision.
Name of consultant:	Linda Lawty

Reason for selection?	Specialist expertise and leadership.
Has the consultant previously completed work for the City Council?	No
Specific activities to be undertaken by the consultant are:	Duties as part of the Electoral Services Manager specifically administering the by-Election and General Election.
Period of engagement:	April 2017 - June 2017
By what process was the consultant selected?	Via the Association of Electoral Administrators. Dispensation from Financial Regulations has been sought as part of the DDM process due to the specialist nature of the consultancy support required and the AEA is the only known organisation that provides expertise in this area of work.
Consultations:	Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.
Crime and Disorder Implications:	There are no Crime and Disorder Implications as part of this decision.
Equality:	EIA not required. Reasons: An EIA will be conducted and the Equalities and Diversity Team have been consulted.
Social Value Considerations:	Not above EU threshold
Relates to staffing:	Yes
Decision Type:	Officer
Executive Decision?	No
Scheme of Delegation Reference Number or Other Source of Delegation:	1
Advice Sought:	Legal, Finance, Procurement, Human Resources, Equality and Diversity

Legal Advice:	<p>As a result of the General Election being called at short notice and unexpected staffing absences in the Elections Services team, immediate and specialist support services are required to prepare for the Election in June.</p> <p>The proposed consultant has been chosen from 3 offered by the Association of Electoral Administrators who are the only organisation considered able to offer the support with the required expertise at such short notice. Due to the urgent requirement of support, undertaking a formal quotation process in accordance with the Constitution would delay the commencement of the work.</p> <p>For the reasons given in the report, Dispensation from Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1 (the requirement to undertake a quotation process) in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.29 (Operational Issues) is supported.</p> <p>Advice provided by Dionne Claire Screaton (Solicitor) on 21/04/2017.</p>
Finance Advice:	<p>The estimated cost of this decision is £30,000 in 2017/18. Because of the nature of the decision about the general election it was not possible to incorporate this cost into the medium term financial plan. For this reason the decision to fund the cost from the contingency if it is not possible to reclaim as an electoral expense from Central Government is reasonable. Similarly dispensation from contract procedure rules is reasonable.</p> <p>Advice provided by Ian Greatorex (Finance Project Manager) on 20/04/2017.</p>
Procurement Advice:	<p>This report seeks approval, using clause 3.29 of the financial procedure rules on grounds of operational issues for a value below key decision level, to dispense with the requirement under clause 5.1.1 under the contract procedure rules to seek three quotes. If dispensation is granted, then the requirements of the contract procedure rules will be satisfied and there will be no procurement concerns. Having discussed the background and the desired outcomes of the project with the service area, procurement supports this proposal. Advice provided by Rosalie Parkin (Category Manager) on 21/04/2017.</p>
HR Advice:	<p>The subject of this decision has no direct workforce implications, as it primarily seeks approval for exemption from procurement regulations, to enter into a consultancy arrangement to provide support the Electoral Services Team, Due to the short notice of the announced General Election, and the requirement to provide a timely service on behalf of the 'Returning Officer', and taking into account the diminished capacity within the Electoral Services Team, it would seem appropriate to provide urgent and appropriate professional expertise and support, in order to meet the Council's obligations in this respect.</p> <p>Lynn Robinson HR Business Partner 20 April 2017 Advice provided by Lynn Robinson (HR Business Partner) on 20/04/2017.</p>

**Equality and Diversity
Advice:**

The election process must be a well-run and inclusive process. This decision should help the council to continue to meet its public sector equality duty by providing additional capacity that enables the authority to adhere to best practice, to the benefit of voters who have protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010. More particularly, ensuring that all voters are able to access polling stations safely, and that polling station staff are trained to take account of the needs of voters. Including but not limited to ensuring: privacy for wheelchair users; information and signage about the election process meets the needs of voters with sensory impairments, learning disabilities and people who may have limited language proficiency. Additional support should allow capacity to ensure voting procedures are easy to understand with reasonable adjustments being made for Disabled people as appropriate. Advice provided by Imogeen Denton (Senior Equality Specialist) on 20/04/2017.

Signatures:

Jon Collins (Leader of the Council)
SIGNED and Dated: 25/04/2017

candida brudenell (Corproate Director for Strategy & Resources)
SIGNED and Dated: 21/04/2017
Geoff Walker (Strategic Director Finance/CFO) - Dispensation from Financial Regulations
SIGNED and Dated: 21/04/2017
Chief Finance Officer's Comments: for the operational reasons contained in the report