

# Nottingham City Council Delegated Decision



**Nottingham**  
**City Council**

Reference Number:

3760

Author:

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Department:

Development and Growth

Contact:

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Subject:

Contract to Scott Gray Associates Ltd and University of Nottingham Ningbo China

Total Value:

65,000 (Type: Revenue)

Decision Being Taken:

- 1) To dispense with Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1 in accordance with Financial Regulations 3.29 to award a contract to (a) Scott Gray Associates Ltd., to provide Communications & Digital Marketing expertise to support the delivery of the Regional Leaders summit £25,000 and (b) University of Nottingham Ningbo China £40, 000.
- 2) To delegate authority to the Director of Economic Development to finalise the details, award and sign the relevant contract, and authorise the expenditure

**Reasons for the Decision(s)**

The Digital Marketing Executive post is a vacant post, funding for which will end in March 2020. The decision was made to award a temporary contract as we were unsuccessful in recruiting to the role and due to funding constraints it would not be feasible to fill the vacancy for four months. The agency appointed will need to be able to develop the work within required timescales to the required standards. They will work with Communications and Marketing colleagues to develop and inform the Midland Engine's digital engagement strategy, as well as work with partner Communications and Marketing colleagues to develop and inform the Midlands Engine digital engagement strategy to create a network of channels, allowing content to be effectively cross-promoted.

The timescale for recruiting into the post is rather short. Scott Gray Associates Ltd is already working with the Midlands Engine and therefore has the knowledge, experience and access to the relevant contacts to carry out the tasks effectively.

The China Strategy Refresh post based at the University of Nottingham, Ningbo China is a specialist role. The Chinese national, will work to promote Midlands Engine and work on the Regional Leaders Summit, which will be a significant and high profile event, requiring high quality linguistic and cultural knowledge and sensitivity. This is a unique piece of work that needs to be done on the China Strategy Refresh including the Regional Leaders Summit. The appointment is time critical as the Regional Leaders summit takes place in February 2020.

The Midlands Engine has a well established partnership with the University of Nottingham, Ningbo, China where the role will be based. The requirement for local language skills in addition to cultural knowledge and understanding support this decision.

Nottingham City Council are the Accountable Body for the Midlands Engine Partnership (Delegated Decision 2598 and 3691) and are acting on behalf of a decision taken by the Midlands Engine Operating Board.

**Other Options Considered:**

Option 1a - Not awarding the contract to Scott Gray Associates Ltd. This was rejected as it would impact on current political and regionally sensitive engagements, in particular, The Regional Leaders Summit to be held in February 2020.

Option 1b - Go out to formal quotation - This option was rejected owing to the limited timescales to develop a communications strategy for the delivery of the event and to offer day to day strategic communications advice to the Regional Leaders Summit Programme Team.

Option 2a - Not awarding the contract to The University of Nottingham, Ningbo China. This option was rejected. Specialist support is required in China to support the work of delivering the Regional Leaders Summit. Linguistic skills requirement in addition to operational and logistical considerations inform this decision.

Option 2b - Go out to formal quotation - This option was rejected due to timescales and the specialist knowledge required for this unique piece of work. The role is to promote the Midlands Engine, working on the China Strategy Refresh and Regional Leaders Summit which are high profile.

**Background Papers:**

None

**Published Works:**

**Affected Wards:** **Citywide**

**Colleague / Councillor Interests:** **None**

**Dispensation from Financial Regulations:** **Yes**

**Consultations:** **Those not consulted are not directly affected by the decision.**

**Crime and Disorder Implications:** **There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this decision.**

**Equality:** **EIA not required. Reasons: This decision does not set out proposals for changes to a policy, service or function**

**Decision Type:** **Portfolio Holder**

**Subject to Call In:** **Yes**

**Call In Expiry date:** **16/01/2020**

**Advice Sought:** **Legal, Finance, Procurement, Human Resources**

**Legal Advice:**

**Given the specialist and unique nature of the services, the requirement for the services to be undertaken imminently so as to ensure efficient delivery of the Summit and the other reasons given with the report, the recommendation for dispensation from Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1 in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.29 is supported.**

**Nottingham City Council is the Accountable Body for the Midlands Engine and must ensure that appropriate contracts are entered into to ensure compliant use of MHCLG funding.**

**Legal services will support as necessary. Advice provided by Dionne Claire Screamon (Solicitor) on 23/12/2019.**

**Finance Advice:**

The decision to seek dispensation from financial regulations to directly award a contract to Scott Gray Associated Ltd is supported due to time constraints and the specialist skills required to cover all areas of social media to the Midlands Engine, including the Regional Leaders Summit.

The decision to seek dispensation from financial regulations to award a contract to University of Nottingham Ningbo China is deemed acceptable due to the specialist nature of the role.

The costs associated with these decisions are to be funded by MHCLG grant funding and local partner contributions as approved in delegated decision 3691.

An Accountable Body Manager is responsible for meeting the terms of grant conditions and ensuring the correct processes are followed, in order to reduce the risk to the council.

Advice provided by Roma Patel (Commercial Business Partner) on 03/12/2019.

**Procurement Advice:**

A dispensation from Contract Procedure Rule 5.1.1 in accordance with Financial Regulation 3.29 is supported due to the specialist requirements and short timescales for the services to be delivered for the summit.

Advice provided by Paul Ritchie (Lead Procurement Officer) on 23/12/2019.

**HR Advice:**

Given that the post of Digital Marketing Exec is vacant and that the funding for this will end in March 2020 thereby making it difficult to recruit to for a 4 month period, the decision to award the temp contract to Scott Gray Associates Ltd is supported especially as the appointed agency will be able to develop the work within the required timescales and to the required standards.

The decision to award the contract to University of Nottingham Ningbo China is deemed acceptable due to the specialist nature of the role and given that the initiative will be funded by MHCLG grant funding and local partner contributions.

Advice provided by Shakeel Khalil (Senior HR Consultant) on 24/12/2019.

**Signatures**

David Mellen (Leader/ PH Regeneration, Safety and Communications)
SIGNED and Dated: 08/01/2020
Chris Henning (Corporate Director for Development and Growth)
SIGNED and Dated: 31/12/2019
Laura Pattman (Strategic Director of Finance) - Dispensation from Financial Regulations
SIGNED and Dated: 06/01/2020
Chief Finance Officer's Comments: