
To: Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board

On: 23 November 2023

Report by: Chief Executive and Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Contract Authorisation Report for Business Gateway Workshops and Expert Help Services (RC-CPU-23-102)

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the formal approval of the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board to award a contract for Business Gateway Workshops and Expert Help Services.
 - 1.2 The recommendation to award a contract follows an open procedure for an above-threshold Government Procurement Agreement (GPA) procurement exercise, which was conducted in accordance with Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 and the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.
 - 1.3 The contract strategy was approved by the Head of Economy and Development Services, and the Category Manager on 23 August 2023.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Finance, Resources and Customer Services Policy Board authorises the Head of Corporate Governance to award the contract for Business Gateway Workshops and Expert Services to Inspirent Ltd;

- 2.2 The contract will be for a period of two years. It is envisaged that the Contract will commence on 1 January 2024; however, the actual Commencement Date will be confirmed within the Council's Letter of Acceptance;
 - 2.3 The contract value for the two-year period will not exceed £196,000 excluding VAT.
 - 2.4 A Data Processor Agreement (DPA) was included in the tender and will require to be signed by Inspirent Ltd prior to delivery of the service.
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3. Background

- 3.1 Renfrewshire Council is seeking to procure a service provider, with the competence and capability to deliver a package of services to support the delivery of start-up and growth Business Gateway Services in Renfrewshire.

These services may include: Start Up, Business Base and Specialist Workshops, Surgeries and Expert Help consultations for growing businesses in areas such as Marketing, Finance, Innovation, Energy Efficiencies and Net Zero, Intellectual Property, Business Strategy, Procurement, Business Planning, Digital, Tourism, Exporting, Skills and Human Resource Management.

- 3.2 The Contract Notice was dispatched via the Public Contracts Scotland advertising portal on 23 August 2023 and, as the contract is funded through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the contract notice was published on the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) on 25 August 2023 with a tender submission deadline of 12 noon on 26 September 2023.
- 3.3 During the tendering period, 15 organisations expressed an interest in the tender opportunity with three tender submission responses submitted by the tender submission deadline. Four organisations gave the following reason for declining to respond: 'Not aligned with our core business'.
- 3.4 Tenderers were required to complete a Single Procurement Document (SPD) (Scotland) to be submitted with their tender submission. All three tender submissions were evaluated against a pre-determined set of criteria in the form of the SPD (Scotland) by representatives from the following Council services: Corporate Procurement Unit, Economic Development, Risk Management and Health and Safety.
- 3.5 All three tender submissions received complied with the minimum selection criteria of the SPD (Scotland). The tender submissions were each evaluated against the Award Criteria of 60% Quality and 40% Price.

- 3.6 The scores relative to the Award Criteria for each of the three tenderers are noted below:

Tenderer	Quality (60%)	Price (40%)	Total Score
Inspirent Ltd	57.75%	37.68%	95.43%
CJM Project Financial Management Ltd	48.75%	40.00%	88.75%
Enterprise North East Trust Limited	49.25%	38.90%	88.15%

- 3.7 The evaluation of the tender submissions received identified that the submission by Inspirent Ltd was the most economically advantageous tender.

- 3.8 Community Benefits were requested as part of the procurement process and Inspirent Ltd advised within their tender submission that the following Community Benefits would be made available to the Council during the Contract:

- 2 x Work Experience Placement for an individual 16+ years of age (who is not currently in employment, education or training) and preferably from an identified priority group.
 - 2 x Work Experience Placement for an individual aged 14+ years of age (and currently in full-time education) and preferably from an identified priority group.
 - 2 x Industry Awareness Events
 - 2 x Financial Support for a Community Project/Group, i.e. for other community initiatives that meet Renfrewshire Council community policies / strategies.
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Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – The financial status of Inspirent Ltd was assessed by undertaking a Dun and Bradstreet credit assessment, which confirmed that Inspirent Ltd satisfies the Council's requirements in relation to financial stability.

The contract value for the two-year period will not exceed £196,000 excluding VAT and is funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

2. **HR & Organisational Development** – None arising from this report.

3. **Community/Council Planning** –

- Our Renfrewshire is thriving – the services being delivered are within Renfrewshire area and will deliver support to local business within Renfrewshire.
- Our Renfrewshire is fair - Tenderers were assessed within this procurement process with regard to their approach to ensuring fair working practices throughout their organisation and paying the living wage.
- Reshaping our place, our economy and our future - Services delivered under this contract offers specialist workshops and expert help that will encourage growth in the Renfrewshire area and help people in Renfrewshire build and develop their business.
- Working together to improve outcomes – The services delivered helps to improve business within Renfrewshire.

4. **Legal** – This procurement was carried out in accordance with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015 for an above Threshold Services Contract and the Council's Standing Orders Relating to Contracts.

5. **Property/Assets** – None arising from this report.

6. **Information Technology** – Cyber Security was evaluated and Inspirent Ltd has confirmed that they have achieved Cyber Essential Accreditation.

7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report.

If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

8. **Health & Safety** – Inspirent Ltd health and safety credentials were evaluated by Corporate Health and Safety and met the Council's minimum requirements regarding health and safety.
9. **Procurement** – This procurement procedures outlined within this report shall ensure that the Council meets its statutory requirements in respect of procurement procedures, efficiency and modern Government.
10. **Risk** – Inspirent Ltd insurances were assessed and evaluated by Corporate Risk and met the minimum requirements regarding insurable risk.
11. **Privacy Impact** – Following discussion with the Council's Information Governance team, a Data Processor Agreement (DPA) was included in the tender and will require to be signed by Inspirent Ltd prior to delivery of the service.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – None arising from this report.
13. **Climate Change** – The level of impact associated with provision of this service has been assessed using the Scottish Government Sustainability Test and no climate change implications were noted as part of this Contract.

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