

DECISION FORM

Decision Form to be retained in department – copy to be e-mailed to Democratic Services



SUBJECT:
Building Schools for the Future

Decision to be taken by:
Key Decision (NO)

Portfolio Area: Children's Services

Portfolios Affected:
Children's Services

Wards Affected:
All

Recommendations:

1.1 The Executive Board note the progress made in the development of the Building Schools for the Future Programme including:

- submission and approval of BSF Strategy for Change Part 1
- outcomes of Gateway Review of programme
- update on development of SEN school organisation proposals
- estates strategy – outcomes of site option appraisals
- consultation and engagement programme

1.2 The Executive Board endorse the appointment of Tribal Consulting as ICT advisers to the BSF programme, approved by the Deputy Chief Executive in line with the Council's financial regulations.

1.3 The Executive Board endorse the appointment of Grant Thornton as financial advisers to the BSF programme, approved by the Council's Executive Member for Children's Services and Executive Member for Resources, in line with Council's financial regulations, as the work undertaken over the duration of the project could be extended to potentially exceed the threshold for key decisions.

1.4 The Executive Board note and endorse the outcomes of the procurement of legal advisers to the BSF programme reported verbally at the meeting.

Rationale:

2.1 Progress report on development of BSF Programme:

2.1.1 The Council is the accountable body for the BSF programme. Regular progress reports to the Executive Board aim to facilitate the discharge of this responsibility.

2.2 Appointment of external expert advisers to the BSF programme:

2.2.1 A key requirement to ensure the successful delivery of the Building Schools for

DECISION FORM

the Future Programme is the appointment of external professional advisers for Finance, Legal and ICT to support the work of the transformation and procurement strategies, and to ensure value for money and commercial viability are achieved.

2.2.2 The authority is committed to the procurement model specified by Partnership for Schools (PfS) and this was reported to Project Board on the 15 March 2007:-

“ .. a number of specialist external advisers will be procured using the adviser framework that has been established by Partnership for Schools to ensure speedy and efficient appointment...”

2.2.3 This framework includes financial and legal services. The framework was adopted by the authority as a basis for the procurement of financial advisers and is currently being used for the procurement of legal advisers.

2.2.4 Partnership for Schools recommends the use of the BECTA framework for the procurement of ICT consultancy to BSF Programmes. This framework was adopted as the basis for procurement of ICT advisers.

2.2.5 Due to the anticipated value of the contract for Financial Advice being in excess of £140k, the clear advantage of the Partnerships for Schools framework procurement route is the ability to progress through to appointment speedily and efficiently. The appointment process has been undertaken over an 8 week period. The framework process is fully compliant with European procurement rules but allows a considerably shorter timescale to the negotiated EU procurement route that would take approximately 4 months. In addition, the framework offers the authority further protection as the contract is terminable if any adviser loses their status on the framework agreement.

2.2.6 An evaluation criteria has been development to support the procurement process for all advisers. The evaluation criteria were weighted 80% quality and 20% price and assessment includes :-

- relevant experience and track record of suggested individuals/team
- ability to meet (or exceed) service requirements
- work methods
- project plan
- proposals for skill knowledge transfer to the Authority's staff
- ability of adviser to comply with employment law and adequacy of professional indemnity insurance cover
- proposed fee

2.2.7 As the work to be undertaken by external advisers over the duration of the project could be extended to potentially exceed the threshold for key decisions all decisions made by officers in line with financial regulations should be endorsed by the Executive Board.

Policy and Corporate Implications (including consultation process):

3.1 The appointment of external expert advice is imperative to ensuring the delivery of the BSF programme.

DECISION FORM

Financial implications:

4.1 Budgetary provision for appointment of external advisers is available within the allocated BSF Development Fund

Legal implications/Powers:

5.1 Procurement of the external advisers has followed the Becta Framework that has complied with EU procurement requirements.

5.2 Procurement of the external financial and legal advisers has followed the Partnership for Schools Framework that has complied with EU procurement requirements. Procurement of the external advisers required form of tenders, together with certificates of non-collusion and non-canvassing to be completed and returned under seal for formal opening.

Other resource implications:

6.1 Financial support to the BSF programme is also provided by a small in-house team of two accountants with substantial experience on school funding and procurement. In-house experience of support to PFI and the BSF programme is limited. The external finance advisers will work closely with the in-house team.

6.2 The ICT advisers will work closely with the E-Learning manager in support of the delivery of the BSF programme.

Declaration of Interest:

None

Signed:

Executive Member: Chris Thayne

Date:

Also present:

C. Thayne
3/7/07

Signed:

Chief Officer:

Date:

Harry Atwell
3/7/07

Background papers: A list of background papers on this issue is held with: Lisa Bibby on ext: 6760

Date of Publication of Decision: 13th July 2007

Date of Expiry of Call-In Period: 9.00 am 22nd July 2007

document2
03/07/2007