

**TITLE: Service Level Agreement for Procurement Services**

Committee: Audit Committee

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**Issue**

1. To receive an update on the Service Level Agreement for Procurement Services.

**Recommendations**

2. Members are requested to note this report.

**Background/Options**

3. Historically the Council secured procurement services by way of a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC). This arrangement ceased in April 2025. Since then the Council has relied on ad hoc, non-contractual support from CCC until such time alternative arrangement could be made.
4. The reason the SLA was not renewed with CCC was largely due to the availability of Officers at CCC and, understandably their need to concentrate on their own organisational needs. This did however, leave a void for this Council and had some operational impact.
5. To address this Officers have actively sought to redress the matter and considered the best way to deliver procurement services. Two options were considered; deliver the service in house by directly recruiting a Procurement Officer or enter into a Service Level Agreement with another Authority.

**Arguments/Conclusions**

6. In House

This was actively considered by the Corporate Management Team. After due consideration it was decided that this was not a suitable option for the following reasons:

- Not cost effective due to the periodic nature of procurement requirements,
- Lack of expertise in house for strategic procurement requirements, i.e. the requirements under the Procurement Act

## 7. SLA with another Authority

This was chosen as the preferred method for delivering procurement services for the following reasons:

- Access to bespoke advice,
  - Availability at the time of need,
  - Training and toolkit for procuring officers,
  - Ability to request additional service with an organisation that has the capability to deliver this, and
  - Cost effective
8. Members will be aware that our Internal Audit service is provided by North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) and through that service we have benefitted from both an excellent professional service and a degree of independence.
9. The Chief Executive, Director Finance and Monitoring Officer explored an opportunity for NNC to deliver procurement services and once it was proven that the service could be delivered by NNC an SLA was agreed. Note- assurances were sought by the quality of ad hoc advice provided by NNC.
10. The SLA runs until May 2027 and there are opportunities to review and break the contract if necessary. The costs for an embedded end to end procurement service and pipeline management service are in the region of £30,000 per annum with actual cost dependent on the extent that the service is required. This is within the budget framework.
11. The SLA will deliver the requirement of the Council. As with any new arrangement Officers will monitor the effectiveness and make any changes necessary to deal with the requirements of the Council.

## Additional Implications Assessment

12. In the table below, please put Yes or No in each box:

|                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Financial Implications</b><br><br>Yes- within budget     | <b>Legal Implications</b><br><br>Yes- SLA in place to address contractual obligations of both parties and enables Council to be fully compliant with Procurement Act 2003 | <b>Human Resources (HR) Implications</b><br><br>ECDC employee nominated as key contact               |
| <b>Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)</b><br><br>Not required | <b>Carbon Impact Assessment (CIA)</b><br><br>Not required                                                                                                                 | <b>Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)</b><br><br>Not required- no personal data will be shared |

## **Appendices**

None.

## **Background documents**

None.