

**NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL
DECISION**



DECISION OF: CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
IN CONSULTATION WITH: MALCOLM COE AND MARK RODDAN
DIRECTORATE: CORPORATE SERVICES

DECISION NO: CSD29

SUBJECT: To establish and gain approval to use the Council's Dynamic Purchasing System for the supply of Apprenticeship Training over the next four years.

KEY DECISION: YES

BACKGROUND: North Somerset Council does not currently have any formal arrangements in place for awarding apprenticeship training. Recent legislation around the Apprenticeship Levy mean that the council will have in the region of £910,000 taken from its salary budget over the next four years. These funds will be taken automatically and held by HMRC for a limited time, during which the council can draw down funds for apprenticeship training, however, after two years, any unspent funds will be taken back by HMRC and will not be recoverable. The council requires a way of identifying and awarding contracts to quality apprenticeship training providers to make best use of its levy funds and remain compliant with Public Contracts Regulations for this level of spend.

DECISION: To formalise the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) and approve acceptance of the providers listed below (and any others that successfully apply during the term) onto the DPS, to enable multiple contract award processes up to the value of £910,000 for apprenticeship programmes.

REASONS: The Dynamic Purchasing System will give the council the opportunity to maximise the use of Apprenticeship Levy funds, as well as selecting the most appropriate provider for each apprenticeship programme. The benefits of using a DPS, in comparison to a standard framework, is that the DPS is open during the entire four-year term, thus allowing new providers to join at any time and be considered for any opportunities.

Providers of apprenticeship training programmes have already gone through a process of accreditation called the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP), held by the Apprenticeship Service. The establishment of the DPS allows the council to run simpler processes to identify the most suitable apprenticeship provider from the RoATP in order to meet our particular requirements for individual apprenticeships. The council has included within the OJEU limit spend for Somerset County Council and Taunton Deane

Borough Council who may also use the DPS, however they will do so independently of the council.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED: The council could run individual tendering processes for every contract required. This would require regular and lengthy processes with longer lead times for offering apprenticeship training and regular internal signoff's being sought for low value spend. This would almost certainly result in fewer apprentices trained and less of the Apprenticeship levy being drawn down.

The Council could also carry out exception processes for direct awards of contracts however this would risk non-compliance to EU regulations as well as the council's own internal Contracts Standing Orders, in addition it would be harder to establish value for money, nor would a competitive market be properly utilised.

Both options were rejected as being ineffective and overly time consuming. The Dynamic Purchasing System is recommended as the best practice procurement option.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Costs

The cost of purchasing apprenticeship training programmes amounts to £910,000 over the next four years, paid by apprenticeship levy funds specifically allocated and held by HMRC.

Funding

Apprenticeship Levy Funds can only be used to pay for apprenticeship qualification delivered through the Apprenticeship Standards and by registered providers, therefore the council will have to fund the apprenticeships salary, should they not be an existing member of staff.

If the council is unable to secure an approved provider for identified training and development needs, the funds paid to HMRC will be lost on the two year anniversary of the funds being taken.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

The programmes will be commissioned under the arrangements set out by Government for the National Apprenticeship programme- <https://www.gov.uk/topic/further-education-skills/apprenticeships> . The RoATP will serve as a pre-qualification in order to gain entry and remain on the DPS.

CONSULTATION

The Corporate Management Team have been actively involved in the development of the proposals

RISK MANAGEMENT

The National Apprenticeship Programme provides an opportunity for the council to resource its learning & development priorities, including leadership & management.

The programmes will include provision to ensure that they are addressing organisational and service priorities, including partnership working

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes the programmes will be available to all council employees undertaking relevant management roles. There are no equality issues arising from the proposals.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

The council needs to help ensure that employees are able to maintain and develop their skills and techniques appropriate to their role so that service delivery continues in the most efficient and effective manner. The Apprenticeship Levy came into effect in April 2017 when in England, control of apprenticeship funding was put into the hands of employers through the Digital Apprenticeship Service.

North Somerset Council is looking for local training providers to support the Council in delivering the new Apprenticeship Levy by identifying apprenticeship opportunities in the Council, recruiting and training apprentices and supporting the Council in the delivery of a quality Apprenticeship Programmes that secure best value and operates within the Apprenticeship Levy contract rules.

This opportunity has been advertised in the OJEU, on the Council's local procurement portal and the Government's 'Contracts Finder' site. Entry onto this DPS will only be for those training providers who have successfully registered on the SFA's 'Register of apprenticeship training providers' (RoATP). All those who have registered on the RoATP and passed the SQ stage will automatically be admitted onto this DPS.

BACKGROUND PAPERS


List of providers to be accepted:

ASK Europe Plc (Business Transfer Agent Ltd)
Aspire Achieve Advance Ltd
Bespoke Consultancy & Education Ltd
Bridgwater College
CIPS
City of Bristol College
Contracting Services (Education and Skills) Ltd
Cornwall College
CSM Consulting Ltd trading as UCAN

Develop Training Ltd
Gloucestershire College
Gower College Swansea
Haddon Training Ltd
Lifetime Training Group
New College Swindon
PeoplePlus Group Ltd
Petroc
PM Training (Project Management (Staffordshire) Ltd)
RHG Consult Ltd
Seetec Business Technology Centre Limited
Skills Training UK
Solvo Vir Ltd
The Care Learning Centre (Isle of Wight) Ltd
Weston College
Wiltshire College
Working Links (Employment) Ltd

SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER(S):

Signed: 

Title: INTERIM CEO

Date: 09/07/18

Signed:

Title:

Date:

IN CONSULTATION WITH:

Signed: 

Title: HEAD OF FINANCE + PROPERTY

Date: 09/07/18

Signed: MARK ROSSAN

Title: HEAD OF STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT

Date:09/07/18.....

Footnote: Details of changes made and agreed by the decision taker since publication of the proposed (pre-signed) decision notice, if applicable:

