

**Proposed Officer Key Decision
to be taken by the Head of Law and Governance
on or after 13th September 2013**

Tender for IT Audit Services

Recommendation

That the Head of Law and Governance approves that the County Council commence the tender process for IT Audit Services and that the contract be awarded on terms and conditions acceptable to the Strategic Director – Resources.

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 For a number of years the Authority has contracted jointly with the Warwickshire Districts and Boroughs, Solihull Metropolitan Borough and Lincolnshire and Gloucestershire County Councils for IT Audit Services with a specialist firm.
- 1.2 The current contract is now in its fourth year and ends on 31 March 2014. Consequently an EU compliant tendering process needs to be run this year to have a replacement contractor in place for April next year. Permission is therefore requested, as required by contract standing orders, to re-tender and award a further contract to start on 1st April 2014.
- 1.3 The contract will be setup as a framework allowing participating authorities flexibility to draw off as much or as little work as they require. The length of the contract will be subject to agreement with the participating authorities subject to a maximum of four years (the maximum allowed under EU rules).
- 1.4 The contract is low risk and has operated successfully with few problems since first being let in 2006. I am not therefore anticipating major changes to the tender documentation, evaluation criteria, etc but the number of participating authorities may change.
- 1.5 The contract gives the participating authorities cost effective access to specialist knowledge. By collaborating the authorities obtain economies of scale and access to a wider range of skills than could be obtained if they contracted individually or employed specialists themselves. The contract will also make provision for the successful tenderer to provide if required a limited amount of non-IT audit services to supplement in-house services at times of peak demand.

- 1.6 The estimated total value of the contract is £762,000 over the anticipated four years of the contract. The County Council's estimated commitment in a typical year will be around £50,000 per year. The actual work commissioned by each authority will depend on a number of factors including budget constraints, extent of IT developments and changes in risks.
- 1.7 It is anticipated that the results of this tender will be available for other local authorities to use subject to the existing participants being satisfied that the successful tenderer has the capacity to do so without impacting the quality of service provided to them.
- 1.8 Subject to the Officer Key Decision approval and agreement of the participating authorities it is anticipated that the tendering process will commence during September 2013 with tender responses required by mid-January 2014. The bidders would be informed of the outcome by end February allowing the new contract to commence on 1st April 2014.

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