

**Proposed Decision to be taken by the
Deputy Leader
on or after 22 May 2015**

**Approval to Establish a Contract for the Provision of
Marketing, Design and Print Goods and Services from
2015 - 2018**

Recommendation

That the Deputy Leader:

- 1) Agrees to the commencement of a procurement process for the provision of marketing, design and print goods and services in order to ensure value for money and quality products to meet our evolving communications needs and
- 2) Authorises the Strategic Director of Resources to enter into all relevant contracts.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 The Council's annual external spend on marketing, design and print is estimated to be in the region of £500Kⁱ.
- 1.2 The demand for marketing, design and print services fluctuates and at times exceeds in-house capacity. It is also untenable to keep certain specialist equipment, to produce branded merchandise for example, in-house. This means we are required to outsource marketing, design and print jobs on a regular basis. Procurement in this way allows us to maximise cost benefit through mixed use of internal and external supply.
- 1.3 In 2003 the Council's print unit entered into a procurement process to create an Approved List of printing services. The services were to supplement those offered in-house. The procurement process sought to attract a variety of tenders and resulted in the creation of a list of vetted providers with an acceptable range of specialisms and pricing structures. The Approved List has now expired and requires renewal.
- 1.4 As part of our ongoing drive to reduce costs and strengthen the Warwickshire County Council brand we adopted a single channel approach to design and multimedia buying in 2009. As part of this process we created a framework agreement with external design agencies and individual freelance designers with a variety of skills and competences to work alongside the existing in-

house design service. The Design and Media Services Framework Agreement has now expired and requires renewal.

2.0 Key Issues

- 2.1 Our current external providers are offering their marketing, design and print goods and services outside of a contractual agreement. For such a significant annual public spend it is crucial that the companies and freelancers we deal with are vetted for quality and cost, and, that they operate within the terms and conditions we set down for a minimum period.
- 2.2 The organisational structure for Marketing and Communications has stabilised. Both design and print functions are the responsibility of the Communications Manager (as of 1st September 2014). The opportunity now exists for external marketing, design and print services to be sourced under a single contractual agreement that replaces the previous Approved List for Print Services and the Framework Agreement for Design and Media Services.

3.0 Proposed Recommendation and justification

- 3.1 The County Council should begin a procurement process, to create a new contractual agreement for the provision of marketing, design and print goods and services from multiple suppliers to supplement in-house services.
- 3.2 This will allow us to access the best goods and services the market has to offer on terms acceptable to the Council. Furthermore this procurement route will mean there is no obligation to buy from suppliers signed up to the agreement. The Council shall always be free to choose the most value for money services and only enter into call-off contracts as required.

4.0 Background Papers

None

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ⁱ Based on Agresso interrogation and internal data for financial years 2011/12 and 2012/13.