

Lancaster City Council | Report Cover Sheet

Meeting	Individual Cabinet Member Decision	Date	April 2021		
Title	Local Government Reorganisation: Award of Framework for the provision of Consultants in the pursuit of Local Government Reorganisation for a Bay Unitary				
Report of	Chief Executive				
Purpose of the Report					
To approve the award of a framework contract for consultancy services to PA Consulting, to support the three councils of Lancaster, Barrow and South Lakes to develop and deliver Local Government Reorganisation arrangements for the Bay unitary.					
Key Decision (Y/N)	Y	Date of Notice	26.1.21	Exempt (Y/N)	N

Report Summary
<p>This report proposes the approval of the award of a framework contract to PA Consulting for consultancy support to provide the resource, experience and expertise required in relation to the Bay proposal for Local Government Reorganisation.</p> <p>A procurement framework has been developed collaboratively between the three Bay councils to provide transparency, security and flexibility and providing assurances on quality and value for money.</p>

Recommendations						
To approve the award of the Local Government Reorganisation consultancy contract to PA Consulting, with an overall ceiling of £2m up until April 2025, subject to ongoing value for money and quality checks for individual work packages.						
Relationship to Policy Framework						
<p>The award of a contract for consultancy services relating to Local Government Reorganisation supports the council's proposal - alongside Barrow Borough Council and South Lakeland District Council - of a Bay Unitary Authority, agreed at its meetings of 30 September 2020 and 5 November 2020 and in line with its approval of the LGR key consultation points at its meeting on 24 March 2021.</p> <p>The proposed Bay authority would enable greater opportunity to pursue the council's overall priorities and policy aims across the district and wider Morecambe Bay area.</p>						
Conclusion of Impact Assessment(s), where applicable						
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Climate N/A</td> <td>Wellbeing & Social Value N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Digital N/A</td> <td>Health & Safety N/A</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Equality N/A</td> <td>Community Safety N/A</td> </tr> </table>	Climate N/A	Wellbeing & Social Value N/A	Digital N/A	Health & Safety N/A	Equality N/A	Community Safety N/A
Climate N/A	Wellbeing & Social Value N/A					
Digital N/A	Health & Safety N/A					
Equality N/A	Community Safety N/A					
Details of Consultation						
None specifically relating to the award of contract; the Bay proposals are based on extensive consultation with residents and stakeholders.						
Legal Implications						

Contracts called of the framework will be subject to the terms and conditions contained within the framework

Financial Implications

No direct financial implications from this report. The consultancy costs for the Bay unitary developments proposal are shared equally between the three constituent local authorities.

For information, the general fund revenue budget for 2021/22 includes a reserves provision of £200K to support commissioning and work around Local Government Reorganisation to ensure that we can play our part in shaping Lancaster City Council's place in the future of Local Government.

The award of a framework contract provides an overall ceiling of £2M for expenditure up to April 2025, however there is no guarantee of expenditure, which will be limited at any time by budget provision within the three councils. Quality and value for money will be considered when agreeing any individual schedules of work within the framework.

Other Resource or Risk Implications

None directly relating to this report.

The framework opportunity has been subject to a Public Contract Regulations 2015 open process and meets all relevant procurement requirements.

Section 151 Officer's Comments

The s151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

Monitoring Officer's Comments

Call off of contracts under the framework within budget will be executive decisions. If outside of budget the decision will lie with Full Council.

Contact Officer	Anne-Marie Harrison, Head of Economic Development
------------------------	---

Tel	01524 582308
------------	--------------

Email	amharrison@lancaster.gov.uk
--------------	--

Links to Background Papers

1.0 Background

Following the submission of the full Local Government Reorganisation proposal for the Bay in December 2020, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government has initiated a public consultation on options for Local Government Reorganisation in Cumbria.

Once the consultation has been completed, the Secretary of State will decide on whether to progress any of the proposals. The implications for the Bay proposal, and therefore for Lancaster City Council and the partner councils of Barrow and South Lakes, will vary according to the decision.

2.0 Consultancy Support

Progressing a Local Government Reorganisation proposal at this scale requires a level of resource, experience and specialist expertise beyond that which is available across the three council's.

The outline and full proposals submitted in late 2020 were developed with the support of consultants procured within officer delegated limits and legislative requirements. Further specialist support is now necessary to help address work that is required at the present time, during the government's consultation period and, if the bid is successful, to begin the extensive work that will be required to establish new unitary arrangements.

3.0 Procurement Framework

Officers of the three Bay councils recognise that a procurement framework is the most effective model for securing consultancy support for future work on the Bay proposal and meets all legal requirements.

A procurement framework offers

- An open, fair and transparent process
- Flexibility with the opportunity to manage risk
- Security that expert advice and support will be available when needed
- Appropriate levels of forward planning and delivery in response to latest developments

Whilst it is not yet known if the Bay unitary bid will be successful, it is clear that there are interim requirements that will need to be met and, should the bid gain approval progress will need to be swift. That being the case, officers have instigated, the arrangements for a framework for services now.

The framework for services was developed by officers of the three Bay councils, and tendered in February 2021 in accordance with all relevant requirements for services over the threshold of £189k. The framework has a ceiling of £2m and will be in place until April 2025. Individual schedules of work will be developed and agreed to meet delivery requirements and provide quality assurance and value for money.

Proposals have been received and evaluated in accordance with the principles set out in the procurement framework. PA Consulting were the successful tenderer as a result of an open competition.

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

Option 1: Approve the award of contract to the successful tenderer in accordance with the requirements for procurement frameworks.
Advantages: Secure resource to support future Local Government Reorganisation developments as described in this report.
Disadvantages: None
Risks: The procurement framework has been developed in line with best practice, quality of service and value for money, in order to minimise risk and enable successful future delivery. Risks have been considered as part of the procurement process.
Option 2: Do not approve the award of contract.

Advantages: None.
Disadvantages: Meeting procurement regulations outside of a framework would be extremely challenging and more time consuming. Additional resource challenges would be created potentially affecting the outcomes to be delivered.
Risks: This would create significant risk to the development and delivery of the Bay unitary as supply of key services would be at risk.

5.0 Officer Preferred Option

Option 1 is the officer preferred option and will secure the expertise and capacity required to fully and proactively meet all requirements in relation to Local Government Reorganisation.