

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE REPORT**

To: REGENERATION SERVICES COMMITTEE		Subject: North Lanarkshire's Working – Procurement
From: HEAD OF REGENERATION SERVICES		
Date: 17 February 2010	Ref: 1501	

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from Committee on the decision to award the contract for media buying for North Lanarkshire's Working to the Media Shop. In addition to this the report is seeking approval to tender a design framework agreement and a PR contract as part of the 2010/2011 programme of activity.

**2. Background**

- 2.1 North Lanarkshire Partnership has secured funding from ERDF, ESF and Scottish Government in addition to partner agency funds to support the continuation of the North Lanarkshire's Working Employability Service in 2010/2011. Partners to the bid include three further education colleges, Motherwell, Coatbridge and Cumbernauld, NHS Lanarkshire, Routes to Work Ltd and council services.
- 2.2 In line with North Lanarkshire's Working marketing strategy it is proposed that high profile advertising and promotional campaigns be rolled out across North Lanarkshire that promote North Lanarkshire's Working Employability Service to its specific target audiences, which include unemployed residents and employers which will mirror the activity undertaken in Phase 1.
- 2.3 In Phase 1 of North Lanarkshire's Working from April 2008 to March 2010, it had been planned that in the final quarter of the period that no marketing campaigns would run, as the project would be in a winding down phase. The approval to continue funding (as outlined in para2.1) of North Lanarkshire's Working for another year (Phase 2), requires that marketing should continue and there should not be an interruption in service during the transition from phase 1 to phase 2.

**3. North Lanarkshire's Working brand**

- 3.1 The North Lanarkshire's Working marketing campaigns were officially launched in October 2008. The aim of the campaigns is to promote a single point of contact for a fully integrated and comprehensive employability service that is delivered by the partners and will generate enquiries from difficult and hard to reach client groups.
- 3.2 Given the ambitious targets set by the project it is necessary to balance small, targeted marketing for specific programmes within the model, with that of larger scale marketing campaigns to raise the profile of the employability services and get the key messages out to the wider North Lanarkshire community, including businesses.
- 3.3 The NLW campaigns will seek to generate enquiries from local employers and the hardest to reach client groups. In order to achieve this, expertise is required from an appropriately experienced advertising and media buying agency to deliver specific activities that have been set out in the North Lanarkshire Working Marketing Strategy, previously approved at Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008.

- 3.4 The use of an external media buyer has proven extremely effective for North Lanarkshire's Working to date. During campaign periods we have found an increase of 150% in calls to the NLW freephone number (during a previous campaign in August 2009 Northline received 252 calls).
- 3.5 Approval to tender a PR contract is also sought with the contract starting in April 2010. The contract is intended to run from April 2010 to the end of March 2011. Finally, it is necessary to seek approval to tender a framework agreement with a number of design agencies for the period April 2010 to the end of March 2011. The framework agreement will follow council procurement guidelines and will enable the project to work with a small group of design agencies for various marketing projects throughout its term.
- 3.6 The use of external agencies for PR and design requirements is due to a number of reasons:
- The inability to claim European funding for work carried out by internal council departments or that of any other partners.
  - The PR resource must be able to promptly respond to opportunities and also proactively source opportunities with partners and the media to create awareness of North Lanarkshire's Working.
  - The need for a resource that has contacts within regional, national and trade press and can identify new and effective opportunities for getting messages to specific client groups in line with the strategy.
  - Furthermore, given the diverse range of target audiences that the project works with a design resource that can work on multiple projects at the same time on behalf of all the partners is imperative.

#### 4. The Tender Process

- 4.1 The media buying tender was issued on 18<sup>th</sup> December and was advertised in line with council standing orders. The media buying tender submission date was 15<sup>th</sup> January 2010. The contract will commence in February and will last until March 2011. Three submissions were received from the following companies:

Contractor	Amount
▪ Spiritmedia	£100,000
▪ The Media Shop	£100,000
▪ Feather Brooksbank	£100,000

In order to quantify the price criteria we asked that agencies provide us with a rate card cost for a quarter page colour advert in the Daily Record West Coast edition. Each submission also requested that the agency provided the cost if North Lanarkshire's Working were to purchase the same advert through them. The submissions were as follows:

Contractor	Rate Card Cost	Cost of Purchasing Through Contractor
Spiritmedia	£2519.40	£1025.23 (40.69% saving)
The Media Shop	£2419.95	£994.50 (41.10% saving)
Feather Brooksbank	£2287.35	£1017.45 (44.48% saving)

- 4.2 The three submissions were scored by officers from North Lanarkshire Council on behalf of the partnership. The scoring was based on price and quality criteria outlined in the tender. The price criteria was weighted at 20% of the overall score and the quality criteria weighted at 80% of the overall score.
- 4.3 Following the scoring evaluation the panel selected The Media Shop to deliver the contract on behalf of North Lanarkshire's Working. The scores from the panel were combined to give one overall figure for each company. The Media Shop scored much higher in the quality section than the other companies. The higher score was a result of:

- providing a greater amount of evidence of working with our target groups, the agency has worked with Jobcentre Plus, learndirect scotland and Scottish Enterprise;
- providing detail of their experience of purchasing regional media and the skills of their account team;
- their understanding of the aims of North Lanarkshire's Working.

4.3. The scores were:

▪ The Media Shop	680
▪ Spiritmedia	440
▪ Feather Brooksbank	400

## 5. Financial Implications

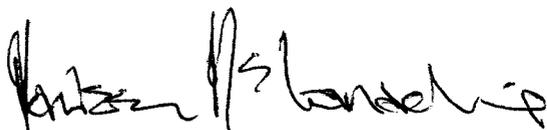
5.1 The maximum cost of the media buying agency contract is £100,000. The maximum cost of the PR contract is £40,000 and the maximum cost of the design framework agreement is £100,000.

5.2 All of these costs exclude VAT but include expenses over the duration of the activity to March 2011. This will be fully funded as part of the allocation awarded to North Lanarkshire Partnership as outlined in para 2.1. Whilst cost will be an important consideration, quality factors will be crucial in determining the award of the PR contract and the design framework agreement. The quality and experience of agencies chosen will enable North Lanarkshire's Working to better engage with all identified target audiences.

## 6. Recommendations

6.1 Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and:-

- i) Approve the decision to award the media buying services tender to the Media Shop to the value of £100k.
- ii) Approve the tendering of a PR contract to the value of £40,000 and a design framework agreement to the value of £100k.



**Maureen McConachie**  
**Head of Regeneration Services**

Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information please contact Alison Marshall, Regeneration Services, at Tel 01698 302812.