

**NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL  
REPORT**

To: POLICY & RESOURCES (REGENERATION & INFRASTRUCTURE) SUB COMMITTEE		Subject: Business Gateway Update
From: HEAD OF PLANNING AND REGENERATION		
Date: 19 <sup>th</sup> May 2016	Ref 1857/YW	

## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to:

- i) Seek delegated authority for the Convener of Policy and Resources (Regeneration and Infrastructure) Sub Committee and Chief Executive to conclude all matters in relation to the award of contracts following the OJEU tendering process for the delivery of Business Gateway Services post 1 October 2016.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Business Gateway is a national brand providing practical information and support to individuals setting up a new business or growing an existing business. Business Gateway at a local level in Lanarkshire has, since 2008, provided a mix of adviser-led services, expert help, workshops and events. Local contract delivery is supported nationally by the Business Gateway website (bgateway.com), a telephone enquiry and information service, a central IT system, marketing campaigns, Public Relations (PR) support and contracts which measure quality assurance and survivability.
- 2.2 The local Lanarkshire Business Gateway service is currently delivered through a single contract with Lanarkshire Enterprise Services Ltd. This contract is managed by North Lanarkshire Council on behalf of both North and South Lanarkshire Councils. The service is managed operationally by Planning and Regeneration and overseen strategically by the Lanarkshire Business Gateway Steering Group. The current Business Gateway contract comes to an end on 30 September 2016.

## 3. Business Gateway Services - October 2016 onwards

- 3.1 Work has commenced on a formal tender process through OJEU for the delivery of Business Gateway services from 1 October 2016.
- 3.2 Moving forward, the overarching approach is to ensure this new Business Gateway service across the whole of Lanarkshire, is designed to support growth in the Lanarkshire economy particularly through a step change from a generalist to a more tailored and specialist service.
- 3.3 Rather than a single contract, the contract has been split into a series of Lots through a Framework Agreement which will provide a menu of activity to support the delivery of Business Gateway Services in Lanarkshire. These Lots will be delivered through a range of advisory services, training workshops, local prospecting and marketing. The Lots are as follows:
  - Lot 1. Business Start Up Service
  - Lot 2. Existing Business Support (growth and sustainability)

- Lots 3 to 11 (inclusive) will cover Specialist Advisory/Expert Help Services focusing on growth and sustainability: Lot 3. Marketing; Lot 4. Digital Media; Lot 5. ICT; Lot 6. Finance; Lot 7. HR issues; Lot 8. Procurement; Lot 9. Leadership and Organisational Development; Lot 10. Innovation / R&D; Lot 11. Other (Sector Specific – Tourism, Food and Drink, Social Enterprise etc)

3.4 The duration of the Framework Agreement will be from 1 October 2016 to 30 September 2018. The Council will also reserve the right to extend this for a period of twelve months (12 months)] and a further period of twelve months (12 months) until 30 September 2020.

#### **4. Financial, Personnel and Legal Implications**

4.1 The value of the Framework Agreement (including the possible extension period) is in the range of £5.8M (five million and eight hundred thousand pounds) to £7.3M (seven million and three hundred thousand pounds) excluding VAT.

4.2 Business Gateway Services are financed through an annual allocation of funding of £1.45m received through the Council's Revenue Support Grant. This funding is received for delivery across both North and South Lanarkshire Council. Operating Principles for the use of this funding have been agreed by COSLA Leaders and SOLACE. Additional funding of £375K per annum (October 2015 to 31 December 2018) has been approved to complement this core funding through the European Regional Development Fund.

#### **5. Conclusion**

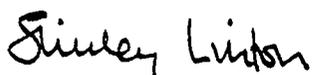
5.1 The Business Gateway service is the Council's key service for delivering support to the local business community. The current contract comes to an end in 30 September 2016. North and South Lanarkshire Councils have revisited the current services delivered and the future delivery model to maximise the impact and support available to new and existing businesses across Lanarkshire, and to achieve best value for the Councils.

5.2 The new services are currently being tendered through an OJEU process. It is expected that the contracts for the Lots will require to be awarded in August 2016, prior to the next Committee meeting, to enable appropriate standstill and transfer arrangements as required before the new services commence on 1 October 2016.

#### **6. Recommendations**

6.1 It is recommended that:

- i) The Committee delegates authority to the Convener of Policy and Resources (Regeneration and Infrastructure) Sub Committee and Chief Executive to conclude all matters in relation to the award of contracts following the OJEU tendering process for the delivery of Business Gateway Services post 1 October 2016.



**Shirley Linton**  
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Local Government Access to Information Act: for further information on this report please contact Yvonne Weir, Economic Development Manager (Tel: 01236 632866).