

Policy & Resources Committee	
Meeting Date	29 November 2023
Report Title	Procurement of Consultancy Services
EMT Lead	Lisa Fillery, Director of Resources
Head of Service	Claire Stanbury, Head of Finance and Procurement
Lead Officer	Charlotte Knowles, Commissioning Manager
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. That the Committee approves the appointment of Reed Talent Solutions t/a Consultancy+ as a provider of Consultancy Services until 30 September 2027.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report seeks committee approval of the appointment of Consultancy+ as a provider of consultancy services.

2 Background

- 2.1 On 22 April 2020, Cabinet approved the appointment of Reed Talent Solutions t/a Consultancy+ as a provider of consultancy services via the YPO (Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation) HR Services and Solutions Framework (569). The Framework expired on 30 September 2023 and is replaced by the YPO Managing Consultancy and Professional Services Framework (1141).

- 2.2 Consultancy+ are the sole supplier on the neutral vendor Framework. Reed Talent Solutions, trading as Consultancy+ is an organisation with between 201 and 500 directly employed staff.

- 2.3 Consultants can be appointed by:

- Direct award / named supplier service: this is where the Council knows the consultant/professional it wishes to work with, and the supplier is already fully onboarded with Consultancy+.
- Direct award / named supplier and onboarding service: this is where the Council knows the consultant/professional it wishes to work with, and Consultancy+ onboards this supplier onto their supply chain of consultancy and professional services.
- Further competition / full service: this is where the Council knows the service or the outcome it will require, and Consultancy+ supports in finding a solution or suitable consultant/professional to deliver the requirement and fulfil the desired outcome.

- 2.4 The benefits of using the framework agreement are:

Single Supplier Solution:

- Consultancy+ have specialist procurement and service teams to support and understand the Council’s requirement.
- Consultancy+ have an extensive supply chain that is actively managed and vetted.
- The Council has the option to utilise a known consultant or professional (including local SMEs who are not generally on the national Framework Agreements) and Consultancy+ will support with onboarding them into their supply chain.
- Confidence that the right solution will be delivered based on the requirement.

Procurement Expertise:

- Single provider framework and easy direct award process.
- Support from YPO on understanding the requirement and services.
- Compliant route to market with reduced timescales – no need to run a full above threshold procurement if procuring via the framework agreement.
- Assured supplier standards – suppliers/providers are ‘pre-qualified’ as to their general suitability.

Value for Money:

- Aggregation of spend – potential for the Council to utilise benefits of aggregated spend volume and increased leverage in the market.
- Social Value to be delivered by the provider through appointment of the framework agreement. Further social value requirements can be achieved at call-off contract level.
- Value for money through a time-effective (shorter timescales as no need to run a full tendering exercise), specialised service to meet consultancy requirements under competitive pricing.

2.5 The Council has been using Consultancy+ since 2020. Under the old Framework, Consultancy+ charged 4.5% per project. Under the new Framework, the fees are as follows:

Named supplier:

Project spend value	Fee
£0 - £10,999	2.3%
£11,000 - £499,999	3.5%

£500,000 - £4,999,999	3.1%
£5m - £9,999,999	1.1%
£10m+	0.7%

Named Supplier & Onboarding:

Project spend value	Fee
£0 - £10,999	2.3%
£11,000 - £499,999	3.6%
£500,000 - £4,999,999	3.3%
£5m - £9,999,999	1.1%
£10m+	0.7%

Full Service:

Project spend value	Fee
£0 - £10,999	3%
£11,000 - £499,999	4.8%
£500,000 - £4,999,999	3.8%
£5m - £9,999,999	1.2%
£10m+	0.8%

- 2.6 As this is a neutral vendor Framework, Committee approval is required as the whole life / cumulative value is likely to be over £120,000 (including VAT). However, if approved, there is no guarantee of contract value as there is no obligation to use the Framework. All procurement options will be considered with the lead officer for each project including Request for Quotation / Invitation to Tender and other Framework Agreements.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to approve the proposal to use the Framework, enter into a contract with Consultancy+ until 30 September 2027 and give the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services the authority to complete such contract and any ancillary agreements.

4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 Other frameworks are available that could deliver the same service opportunities that we can achieve through the Consultancy+ framework. However, these frameworks either have higher fees or shorter payment terms that do not align with the Council's terms but offer no gains that would be of value to the Council. As such, these frameworks have been rejected as feasible alternatives.
- 4.2 Not to approve the Consultancy+ Framework as a procurement option for consultancies.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Commissioning Manager has consulted Finance and Mid Kent Legal Services on the use of this Framework.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Appointing a supplier that meets a good quality standard and provides good value for money contributes towards the corporate priority “Renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future”.
Financial, Resource and Property	In 2022-23, the Council spent approximately £41,000 with Consultancy+. The total contract value for the four years is therefore, anticipated to be over £120,000.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 - Social Value is delivered by the provider through the framework agreement. Further social value requirements can be achieved for further competitions and direct awards at call-off contract level.</p> <p>The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 as amended (“TUPE”) do not apply to this contract.</p> <p>YPO’s standard framework agreement terms and conditions will apply.</p>
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	This can be considered in the suppliers’ responses to the Social Value quality question in further competitions.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Suppliers/providers are ‘pre-qualified’ as to their general suitability during the onboarding process.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	This is covered by the Framework terms and conditions.

7 Appendices

7.1 None.

8 Background Documents

8.1 None.