



Council
23 July 2014
Quality Assurance Contract Procurement

Classification	Public
Purpose	For decision
Issue	Consideration of a revised approach and timetable for the education quality assurance contract procurement.
Recommendation	To agree the delegation of the oversight of the quality assurance contract procurement to the Education and Registration Standards Committee.
Financial and resourcing implications	No specific costs arise from this report.
Equality and diversity implications	None.
Communications implications	None.
Annex	Outline procurement timetable
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Background

1. In January 2014 Council agreed to a waiver of the procurement rules relating to an extension of the current contract with the Quality Assurance Authority for a further year to August 2015.
2. Council also agreed a plan for tendering a major quality assurance contract to commence from August 2015.
3. The January 2014 paper considered a number of aspects of the proposed procurement including:
 - a. Potential changes to our quality assurance framework and legislation.
 - b. The need for adequate time from the commencement of the new contract to the anticipated cycle of new reviews and any changes in our approach to quality assurance.
 - c. An appropriate contract length.
 - d. The need to comply with EU procurement rules due to the size of the contract.
 - e. The likely timetable for the procurement.
4. This paper updates Council on progress since January and sets out a revised approach to the procurement.

Discussion

5. Since the January meeting a number of issues have arisen that require us to update the process and timetable.
6. In the spring the Executive concluded that given the size and scope of the procurement that we would benefit from some consultancy support for the project. We have engaged AFH Procurement to provide a modest amount of support for the process particularly to advise us on EU tendering requirements.
7. Advice from the consultant on the procurement approach has on the whole supported our planned approach except:
 - a. We are advised that the most appropriate time period for such a contract is for three years with an option to extend for up to two years. A longer contract would not be possible.
 - b. We should use a 'restricted' approach to the tender which would involve an initial pre-qualification stage followed by an invitation to tender. Such an approach will enable us also to have a focused briefing session with potential tenderers which should improve their understanding of our requirements.

- c. Our timetable for the procurement needed to be lengthened and the initial advertisement should be issued in October in order to meet EU tendering requirements.
8. A detailed timetable for the project can be found at the annex.
 9. We had anticipated that the detailed procurement strategy and related documentation could be considered by Council in November. However, we think that in order to meet our revised timetable this needs to be signed off by the Education and Registration Standards Committee at its October meeting. Therefore Council is asked to delegate this approval to the Education and Registration Standards Committee.
 10. At later stages of the procurement process the proposed timings also fit more closely with the Education and Registration Standards Committee meeting cycle (March/June) than Council (February/May) and, while Council should still be appraised of the procurement outcomes, detailed input may more usefully be provided by the Committee at those times.

Recommendation: to agree the delegation of the oversight of the quality assurance contract procurement to the Education and Registration Standards Committee.

Outline procurement timetable

2014

January	Business case agreed by Council
May	Procurement consultant appointed to advise and implement procurement process
May-19 September	To develop the procurement strategy with the consultant and ensure the following documents are drafted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Procurement strategy• OJEU advert• PQQ document (including scoring mechanism)• Tender document (including scoring mechanism)• Draft contract terms
13 July	Issue paper on procurement to Council for agreement of oversight by Education and Registration Standards Committee (ERSC)
23 July	Agreement of Council to delegation to ERSC
19 September	Issue paper for ERSC on procurement strategy
2 October	Procurement strategy and supporting documents agreed by ERSC
8 October	OJEU advert placed and documents available on GOsC website
7 November	Closing date for PQQ submissions (30 days)
21 November	PQQ assessment completed and draft invitation to tender issued
Late November	Briefing session for bidders
3 December	Invitation to tender issued

2015

7 January	Closing date for tender responses (>35 days)
16 January	Shortlisting (if required) and call for interview completed
Early February	Tender panel interviews and award decision
	Standstill notice issued
End February	Standstill period concludes

Annex to 14

12 March	ERSC update report
March/April	Contract finalised
May/June	Contract comes into force – overlap with existing contract which ends 31 July 2015 because of possible need for handover process and development of new process
14 May	Report to Council on outcome of procurement exercise
18 June	Report to ERSC on implementation of new contract arrangements
31 July	Old QA contract ends
2016	
April	Commencement of next planned phase of QA – BSO and College of Osteopaths.