

Executive Member for Resources

Friday, 25 April 2008

Present: Councillor Alan Cullens (Executive Member for Resources)

Officers: Tim Murphy (Corporate Director of Information and Communication Technology), Graeme Walmsley (Human Resources and Operational Development Manager) and Tony Uren (Democratic Services Officer)

08.14 DECLARATIONS OF ANY INTERESTS

The Executive Member had no reason to declare an interest in the meeting's agenda items.

08.15 WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PLAN, 2008/11

The Executive Member for Resources received and considered the draft Workforce Development Plan for the period up to 2011 which had been compiled by the Corporate Director of Human Resources and Operational Development.

The Workforce Development Plan aimed to ensure that the Authority was able to deliver improved services, greater efficiency and achieve corporate priorities through visionary leadership, organisational direction and a skilled, well-trained and motivated workforce.

The draft Plan set out clear strategies for the recruitment, training and reward of staff, highlighting opportunities for staff to develop and update their skills as a means of adding value to both the Council and individual employees.

In particular, the Workforce Development Plan was designed to achieve the following five priorities identified in the revised Local Government Plan and Workforce Strategy:

- **Organisational Development** – effectively building workforce support for new structures and new ways of working to deliver citizen focused and efficient services, in partnership;
- **Leadership Development** – building visionary and ambitious leadership which makes the best use of both the political and managerial role, operating in a partnership context;
- **Skills Development** – with partners, developing employees skills and knowledge, in an innovative, high performance, multi-agency context;
- **Recruitment and Retention** – with partners, taking action to address key future occupational skill shortages, promote jobs and careers, identify, develop and motivate talent and address diversity issues;
- **Pay and Rewards** – modernising pay systems to reflect new structures, new priorities and new ways of working and to reinforce high performance, including encouraging a total rewards approach.

The Executive Member welcomed and accepted the draft Plan, but suggested the inclusion of the following revisions and/or additions to the Plan:

- Financial Shared Services – Confirmation that the Council will arrange the training and induction of staff transferred from South Ribble Borough Council in order to integrate them into the Chorley organisation;

- Elected Member Development – Inclusion of a statement to clarify that elected Members were not part of the Council's workforce, but the development opportunities available to Councillors were an appropriate part of the overall Development Plan for the Borough Council;
- Learning and Development – Clarification that all employees will be allowed the opportunity to attain an NVQ Level 2 qualification as a minimum under the Skills for Life pledge; Confirmation that Chorley Council will pursue opportunities for joint training programmes with other neighbouring Authorities wherever possible; Inclusion of the employers' commitment to provide adequate training on health and safety issues for employees.

Decision made under delegated powers:

That the draft Workforce Development Plan for 2008-2011, as now presented, be approved for consultation purposes with staff and trade unions, subject to the amendments recommended by the Executive Member being incorporated in the Development Plan.

Reason for decision:

Approval of the draft Plan for consultation purposes will ensure that staffs' and trade unions' responses are taken into account before a final decision on the adoption of the Plan is taken.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:

None.

08.16 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Decision made:

That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the ground that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

08.17 MICROSOFT SOFTWARE - TENDER EVALUATION CRITERIA AND AWARD OF CONTRACT

The Executive Member for Resources received and considered a report of the Corporate Director of Information and Communication Technology Section seeking approval to the award of a contract for the purchase of new Microsoft software licences for the Council.

The report explained that the Council's current desktop software suite had been in operation for 10 years and was causing problems in terms of compatibility with other systems used both internally and by the Authority's partners and major suppliers.

An evaluation of the potential licensing options available had highlighted that pursuance of an Enterprise agreement should prove ultimately to be the most cost effective method of delivering a 'fit for purpose' office software package. An Enterprise Agreement would allow expenditure to be spread over a 3 year period and would enable the Authority to benefit from periodic upgrades.

The Council had received 10 quotations in response to the tender invitation, which had been duly assessed on the whole life costs evaluation criterion. The Officers

considered that the tender evaluation process had revealed that the tender offer submitted by Equanet would provide the lowest whole life costs and best value for money. The company would provide 60 days of training (double the number of days offered by some of the other tenderers), which would be essential to the delivery of the maximum benefit from the investment.

The Corporate Director of Information and Communication Technology confirmed that acceptance of the recommended tender would not require any additional expenditure provision, as the new package could be funded from the capital programme and other budget savings.

Decisions made under delegated powers:

(1) That the evaluation criterion used to assess the tenders received for the supply of a new licence for Microsoft products be agreed.

(2) That approval be given to the award of the contract for the supply of new Microsoft software to Equanet on the basis of the submitted tender outlined in the report.

Reason for decisions:

In line with corporate procurement rules and relevant legislation, tenders for the supply of Microsoft software under an Enterprise Agreement were invited using the Buying Solutions 'Catalist' framework and the ESPO (East Shires Purchasing Organisation). Using the evaluation criterion, an evaluation of the tenders received found Equanet to be the preferred supplier.

Alternative option(s) considered and rejected:

Continuing with the Council's existing software product set was considered but rejected on the grounds that, firstly, the Authority would encounter significant compatibility issues as the suppliers of the existing systems tailor integrations such as mail-merge to newer versions. Secondly, the number of occasions where information provided to the Council would be inaccessible would increase and adversely impact on the Authority's ability to do business.

Alternate licensing options were considered. The Enterprise model was chosen due to the ability to spread expenditure over 3 years. It also offered significant additional benefits above those offered by a standard licensing model. These include:

- Home use rights
- New version rights
- Employee purchase program
- Training vouchers.

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