

Audit and Standards Committee - 10th December 2013

Report of the Treasurer

Amendment of Standing Orders

Purpose of the Report

1. This report proposes amendments to Standing Orders.

Background

2. As part of the work covered by the Procurement Support Group a review of the Council's Standing Orders has been undertaken by Officers on the Group who represent all Directorates.
3. The Audit & Standards Committee Terms of Reference include "Determination of any amendments to Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders, including those relating to Schools".
4. Standing Orders assist in ensuring good procurement management by providing rules and guidance to Members and Officers on the operation of financial and management controls in all aspects of the Council's procurement activities.
5. The current set of Standing Orders were approved by Council in 2006 and amended in 2010 following consultation with relevant parties. The current review of Standing Orders has seen a re-write of the old version to make it more streamlined and reflect on a number of factors :-
 - a. Removed unnecessary text to reduce number of pages by 40% and concentrate on core principles.
 - b. Replaced requirement for Directorate Procurement Manuals by promoting one Corporate Procurement Manual [centred around DACHS Manual] which includes all necessary procedures, guidance and information on management of contracts. This will be a more efficient and effective way of staff obtaining guidance.
 - c. Included two flowcharts to assist staff understand general procurement issues especially for lower level expenditure.

d. Simplified value bandings :-

Up to £5,000	As per Corporate Procurement Manual, with some flexibility for Directorates
£5,000 to £75,000	3 quotations or tenders
Over £75,000	As for over £155,000 now

e. No linked documents within Standing Orders to reduce incidence of links failing, and refers to Corporate Procurement Manual as principal source for guidance.

f. Amended treatment of post completion reviews to :-

i. Include revenues contracts over £500k and capital schemes over £1M.

ii. Simplify reporting to Cabinet

g. Specified that the electronic tendering system ["Intend"] must be used for dealing with tenders.

h. Consolidated guidance on sustainability, equality and, environment into one document.

i. Requires contracts rather than Service Level Agreements to be used.

6. The new Standing Orders are attached as Appendix A and have been the subject of consultation across Directorates. It is intended that if approved, Standing Orders would go live in April 2014 to coincide with the launch of a revised Corporate Procurement Manual which is being developed by Officers with support from all Directorates.

7. All amendments to the Council's Standing Orders would also be replicated in the version for Schools.

Finance

8. This report has no direct financial effect.

Law

9. Each local Authority is required to have a Constitution which details the governance arrangements and responsibilities of Members, Governors and Officers.

Equality Impact

10. This report does not raise any equal opportunities issues.

11. Children and young people were not consulted on, or involved, with the preparation of this report.

Recommendations

12. That the Committee :-

- a. Approve the proposed amendments to Council and School Standing Orders.

- b. Authorise the Treasurer to make minor amendments if wider consultation identifies any changes prior to 1st April 2014.



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Treasurer

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