

Report to Sarah Sturrock, Assistant Chief Executive

August 2022

Award of Contract: External Print Management Service

Report by, Nicholas Davis, Senior Communications & Engagement Manager

Electoral divisions: All

Summary

The Council's current External Print Management service (print brokerage) fulfils a variety of printing requirements from across the organisation. This service is currently provided by Capita under an outsourcing contract, which ends on 30 September 2022.

The [decision](#) to procure a new External Print Management supplier was made in May 2022.

In considering the options to meet future print requirements, officers have now completed the procurement process and have identified a new External Print Management supplier, who can provide the required flexibility, quality and value for money.

The Commercial Panel has been consulted as part of the County Council's internal governance and the process was undertaken in accordance with the Standing Orders for procurement and contracts.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Assistant Chief Executive approves the appointment of [Corporate Document Services Limited](#) (CDS) as the organisation's new External Print Management Service provider under a new five-year contract valued at £1.20m in total for the initial 5 years. Contract commencement is from 01 October 2022, with options to extend for periods up to a further 2 years, allowing for a maximum contract term of 7 years.

Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The current contract is due to expire at the end of September 2022.
- 1.2 Printed assets are produced across all directorates to meet various service needs and to reach audiences without digital access. Printed assets are used for a range of statutory and information sharing purposes, including signage,

posters, flyers, printed consultation surveys for residents without online access and translated materials.

- 1.3 The external printing spend across West Sussex County Council has reduced from approximately £450,000 per annum five years ago to approximately £200,000 per annum now. These savings within the print management service budget are the result of a planned 'digital first' approach, designed to drive down print costs and support the Council's sustainability commitments. The COVID-19 pandemic has also driven an increase in the use of digital marketing over print. However, an ongoing requirement remains for printed materials issued for and on behalf of West Sussex County Council.

2 Award details

- 2.1 The Council conducted a procurement exercise from 17/06/2022 to 05/08/2022. Three tender submissions were received.
- 2.2 CDS submitted the strongest overall bid and have extensive experience in the public sector, which includes supplying Surrey County Council, Birmingham City Council, MOD, Cabinet Office and Transport for London.
- 2.3 CDS have clients with annual expenditures ranging from less than £1,000 to over £6,000,000.
- 2.4 The award is for a new contract with an initial term of 5 years plus options to extend for periods up to a further 2 years, allowing for a maximum contract term of 7 years.
- 2.5 The total estimated cost for the 5-year contract is £1.20m.
- 2.6 CDS will provide a fully managed service. This will include sourcing local suppliers, gathering quotations, placing orders, arranging delivery, driving efficiencies, invoicing, reporting and quality control.

3 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 3.1 The proposed decision to award has been reviewed and approved by the graphic design, finance, legal, procurement and IT teams, following the standard design and approval processes for a procurement of this scale and complexity.

4 Finances

- 4.1 Revenue consequences
- 4.2 The core contract costs will be met from the funding available within the wider strategic business case that looks at the future of all the services currently provided through the SSO contract. The effect of the award:
 - (a) **How the cost represents good value**

Under the recommended award, the Council will continue to be provided with a best value quote based on the criteria specified for each external print job. There are also opportunities to award jobs to West Sussex suppliers as part of our social responsibility initiatives, as CDS will work with the Council to develop a network of suppliers across the county.

(b) Future savings/efficiencies being delivered

The communications and graphic design teams will continue to drive down the need for printed materials whenever possible and practical.

CDS will also provide an opportunity for greater savings due to their supplier network and buying power. This was evidenced when they quoted for several test jobs as part of the tender evaluation process.

When Birmingham City Council appointed CDS they delivered 57% savings in year one.

(c) Human Resources, IT and Assets Impact

No additional administration support is required within the graphics team (part of the Communications & Engagement team) to replace that currently being provided by Capita. This will be supplied within existing resources. IT support will be minimal as the new print management software is cloud-based.

5 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action (in place or planned)
Risk of poor service and print quality from a new supplier	The evaluation of CDS' tender submission included an assessment of print capability and quality. It also included a software demonstration, interview and a review of testimonials from their existing clients
Risk of new online ordering system being difficult for the graphics team to use, causing delays	Software demonstrations have been given and the cloud-based software is intuitive. Full support and training is also provided by CDS, initially and ongoing
Risk that the demand for printed materials returns to pre-pandemic levels and there is not enough budget	Monthly spend and annual forecasts will be closely managed between CDS and the County Council, with regular account reviews scheduled. Any signs of increased demand will be raised to the Assistant Chief Executive early for review

6 Policy alignment and compliance

- 6.1 The new contract will provide the Council with the opportunity to have more transparency and control over print suppliers, therefore allowing the Council to prioritise the use of local companies to support the West Sussex economy.

- 6.2 The new contract will enable the Council to ensure that it continues to fulfil print demand in the most climate-friendly way, supporting the drive for the organisation to be carbon neutral by 2030.
- 6.3 CDS have been awarded the Planet Mark Certificate. They are looking to be carbon neutral by 2050.

Sarah Sturrock
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Appendices

None.

Background papers

None.