

REPORT TO CABINET

26 June 2019

Subject:	Continued Sandwell Membership of the Midland Alliance - Professional Services Partnership Framework 3
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Councillor Jackie Taylor – Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport
Director:	Executive Director – Neighbourhoods – Alison Knight Director Regeneration and Growth - Amy Harhoff
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	
Key Decision:	Yes
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Councillor Jackie Taylor 05/06/2019
Director Approval:	Alison Knight – Executive Director neighbourhoods Amy Harhoff – Director Regeneration and Growth
Reason for Urgency:	Urgency provisions do not apply
Exempt Information Ref:	Exemption provisions do not apply
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	This is a boroughwide initiative
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	Scrutiny consultation has not been undertaken
Contact Officer(s):	Barry_Ridgway@sandwell.gov.uk Highways Asset Manager

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Approve Sandwell MBC continuing with the membership of the Midland Highways Alliance Professional Services Partnership Framework (PSP 3) let by Leicestershire County Council.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks approval to continue with Sandwell membership of the Midland Highways Alliance Professional Services Partnership Framework let by Leicestershire County Council.

2 IMPLICATION FOR THE VISION 2030

- 2.1 Membership of the Midland Highway Alliance provides the opportunity to share best practice, improve our performance and make efficiency savings by working collaboratively together with other members.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Professional Services Partnership Framework (PSP3) is to ensure members have efficient access to consultancy services. The PSP3 framework has a membership of more than twenty authorities and consequently offers good value for money through economies of scale.
- 2.3 The ability to use a 'ready-made' consultancy service framework contributes to our 2030 vision by giving us direct access to specialist expertise, seconded staff when we need them as well as web-enabled collaboration tools with the associated governance and processes.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 In June 2015, the Midland Highway Alliance (MHA) launched the Professional Services Partnership 2 (PSP2). This followed the successful PSP 1. The contract end date for PSP 2 was 28th April 2019.
- 3.2 This second generation of the framework was used by fourteen MHA members, including ourselves and is based on the New Engineering and Profession Services Contracts.

- 3.3 The scope of the framework enables procurement of professional services to deliver a range of highway services including highway improvements, maintenance, road safety schemes either directly or through secondments. Several other specialist services such as landscape architecture, structural engineering, building services, drainage and environmental engineering are also commissioned through this framework. The commissioning of seconded professionals is particularly useful in supplementing Council expertise through cyclical and project based peaks in workload.
- 3.4 This framework is administered through Leicestershire County Council on behalf of MHA members.

4 THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 Sandwell Highway Services have seven seconded staff employed through the PSP 2 Framework to support delivery of major highway improvement schemes such as Birchley Island, Local Transport Plan projects, streetworks co-ordination and permit scheme development as well as helping ensure that prospective highways assets arising from new development are of good standard. In addition landscape architects, structural engineers and building professionals have been commissioned to resource capital projects including housing development.
- 4.2 In the financial 2018/19, we spent approximately £750,000 under this Framework agreement. This is the total spend under the Framework covering all commissions, which includes, but is not exclusively Highway Services commissions.
- 4.3 PSP 2 ended on 28th April 2019.
- 4.4 We received notification from Leicestershire County Council to confirm that the standstill period for the replacement framework, PSP 3, ended on 1st May 2019.
- 4.5 Approval to continue our membership of this framework is required to continue with the commission of the seven highways seconded staff to resource the delivery of some key strategic projects and work programmes funded by external capital grants.

5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

5.1 Consultation has been undertaken with:

- (i) The specialist consultancies and secondees who are commissioned under the current PSP 2
- (ii) Leicestershire County Council who have administered the replacement PSP 3 framework.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 Membership of the MHA PSP3 framework is the most cost-effective method of resourcing externally funded capital programmes. There are additionally many other advantages to be gained by participating in this framework. It delivers benefits beyond access to specialist services. Membership of MHA facilitates benchmarking and delivers efficiency savings by collaborative working. Having access to a 'ready-made' framework contract to access the specialist staff we need reduces the cost associated with the administration in tendering and obtaining market quotations for individual pieces of work.

There would also be no guarantee of continuity of involvement of the specialist staff working on partly completed projects if we did not continue with our membership of the PSP 3 framework.

For these reasons, discontinuing with membership of the MHA PSP framework is not recommended.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Commissions through the MHA PSP3 framework are funded almost entirely through external capital grant funding or the income streams generated by specialist work. The commissions are funded from existing budgets and no approval is sought or implied to increased approved budgets.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 Prior to committing to the framework, advice must be sought to ensure that the Framework is compliant with the Public Contract Regulations 2016.

9 **HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)**

9.1 None

10 **IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND**

10.1 None

11 **CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 That Sandwell MBC continue with our membership of the Midland Highways Alliance Professional Services Partnership Framework (PSP 3).

12 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 Confirmation of the outcome of the tender process/ acceptance of tender/ intention of ward of the PSP 3 framework from Leicestershire County Council.

13 **APPENDICES:**

None