

	ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS BY OFFICER 13 July 2017
Title	Authorisation to access the CBC (Central Buying Consortium) Framework agreement delivered by West Sussex County Council for the supply of library resources.
Report of	Strategic Director, Children and Young People
Wards	All
Status	Public
Enclosures	None
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Summary

This report seeks approval to access Central Buying Consortium (CBC) framework agreement through West Sussex County Council for library materials. The CBC contract has been re-tendered by West Sussex County Council in accordance with EU procurement regulations and expires March 2020. Barnet has been a member of the arrangement to access CBC since 2002 through which the best value for money is achieved for supply of the library materials through economies of scale (with savings made in management and procurement costs).

Decisions

To authorise access to Central Buying Consortium framework through West Sussex County Council for library materials following the re-tender of this contract by West Sussex County Council to March 2020.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 Barnet Libraries became an associate member of the Central Buying Consortium Framework (CBC) from the 1 August 2002, following recommendations from the Audit Commission to 'explore competition further for stock re-tendering including local consortia'. The Central Buying Consortium is one of the largest local authority purchasing consortia in the UK. It has circa 45 local authority members, (17 Core and 28 Associate). This represents most of the major authorities from the Midlands to the South East. The CBC Library Group, a sub-group of the CBC, has extended its membership to include London Boroughs.
- 1.2 The combined purchasing power of this group is considerable and substantial discounts have been achieved by purchasing library materials in this way. Exact levels of discount vary between types of stock and cannot be made public for reasons of commercial sensitivity. Commercial confidentiality is a contractual requirement of CBC membership. To ensure value for money is achieved average discount is reported against each quarter and monitored by the Contract Review Group.
- 1.3 The CBC contract is divided into four lots, each representing supply of a different type of library material. A list of lots can be seen below:
- Lot 1 – Adult Fiction
 - Lot 2 – Adult Non-Fiction and Reference
 - Lot 3 – Children's Fiction and Non-Fiction
 - Lot 4 – Audio Visual (AV) materials – CDs, DVDs and Games

- 1.4 The CBC contract is managed by West Sussex County Council whose procurement team conducts contract negotiations, procurement processes and monitors and evaluates on-going performance of all suppliers. Barnet provides feedback per quarter relating to the local performance of each supplier within the contract. Any issues are taken up by the CBC Contract Review Group on a quarterly basis. Barnet pays an annual management fee to West Sussex County Council of 1% of Barnet's annual spend through the contract.
- 1.5 The CBC contract was re-tendered by West Sussex County Council in accordance with EU procurement regulations until March 2020. The contract term lasts for an initial period of 2 years with options to extend by up to 2 years. Successful suppliers within the new framework agreement are Askews and Holts Library Service and iSubscribe. Barnet Libraries anticipates an annual spend via the CBC framework of circa £400,000.
- 1.6 However, as an associate member Barnet can withdraw from the CBC at the end of each financial year should other framework contracts offer more favourable terms.
- 1.7 Supply of library resources purchased via the CBC is part of the current procurement forward plan. Approval is thus now sought to continue membership of the CBC via the new contract until March 2020.

2. REASONS FOR DECISIONS

- 2.1 Access to the supply of library materials through Central Buying Consortium supports collaborative purchasing and economies of scale which deliver discounts for purchasing library materials and ensures a compliant procurement for supply to Barnet Library Services.
- 2.2 Furthermore, external contract management through the CBC represents a significant saving in local day to day management costs and substantial savings with regard to re-tendering processes. Working with a large number of other local authorities also provides for greater standardisation in servicing requirements thus further reducing costs and driving greater value from stock supply contracts.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 3.1 If the London Borough of Barnet were to withdraw from the Central Buying Consortium, there would be significant increase in costs of purchasing library materials in addition to increases in contract management and procurement costs to source a new supplier.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 Approval of the recommendation will enable Barnet Libraries to continue its membership of the CBC and access to the CBC framework up to March 2020. At this point the contract will be re-tendered and Barnet will have the option to call off from the framework should framework should terms remain favourable.
- 4.2 Barnet Libraries anticipates an annual spend via the CBC framework of circa £400,000.
- 4.3 As an associate member Barnet can withdraw from the CBC at the end of each financial year should other framework contracts offer more favourable terms.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

By awarding this contract, Barnet Libraries will support Corporate priorities in the following ways:

- 5.1.1 To support growth; by offering support to job hunters through books and on job hunting and creating CVs
- 5.1.2 To manage demand; by supporting residents to find information for themselves, helping them to resolve their own issues
- 5.1.3 To create more resilient communities; through increased self-sufficiency such as providing access to self-help stock.
- 5.1.4 To enable children and young people to receive a great start in life; by offering a range of stock to encourage and enable reading development.
- 5.1.5 The award of these contracts will also support the Health and Wellbeing Strategy by providing access to information and self-help stock.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 5.2.1 By remaining part of the Central Buying Consortium, Barnet will achieve excellent value for money when purchasing library materials to continue providing a highly valued and well used Library Service.
- 5.2.2 Furthermore, external contract management through the CBC represents a significant saving in local day to day management costs and substantial savings with regard to re-tendering processes.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.3.1 The London Borough of Barnet is a Library Authority as specified under the Libraries and Museums Act 1964 and has a statutory responsibility to provide “a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof”.
- 5.3.2 Remaining part of the CBC allows Barnet to obtain maximum quantity and quality of library materials for the designated budget thus contributing to the provision of a comprehensive and efficient library service that we know is highly valued by residents.
- 5.3.3 The calling off from the Central Buying Consortium framework was carried out in accordance with EU public procurement rules and the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules which are found at, part 22 of the Constitution.
- 5.3.4 Authorisation for this procurement was agreed via the Annual Procurement Forward Work Programme at Policy and Resources Committee on 1st December 2016.

5.4 Risk Management

- 5.4.1 There is a risk that an alternative framework will provide better value for money within the next two year period and Barnet will not be able to exploit the opportunity. The impact of this risk is low as, Barnet is an associate member of the CBC therefore can choose to leave the arrangement at the end of any financial year.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.5.1 It is not envisaged that the continuation of the CBC membership will have any impact on Equality and Diversity.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

No consultation undertaken

1. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 Annual Procurement Forward Plan 2017-18, Policy and Resources Committee 1 December 2016 Agenda item 10
<http://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s36301/Annual%20Procurement%20Forward%20Plan.pdf>

7. DECISION TAKER’S STATEMENT

- 7.1 *I have the required powers to make the decision documented in this report. I am responsible for the report’s content and am satisfied that all relevant advice has been sought in the preparation of this report and that it is compliant with the decision making framework of the organisation which includes Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, Budget and Policy Framework and Legal issues including Equalities obligations.*

8. OFFICER’S DECISION

I authorise the following action

8.1

Signed _____

Date _____
