

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 11 April, 2016

Report of the Leader

Welsh Language Translation - External Commissioning

Purpose of the Report

1. To obtain Cabinet approval to enter into an agreement with Cardiff Council for the provision of Welsh language translation services.

Recommendations

1. Due to the requirement to provide a Welsh language translation service, that the Council enters into a one-year service level agreement with Cardiff Council on the basis outlined in this report.
2. That delegated authority be granted to the Head of Legal services, together with the Head of Performance and Development, to enter into a formal service level agreement with Cardiff Council to provide a Welsh language translation service during 2016/17.
3. That authority be given to the Head of Performance and Development, in consultation with the Leader and the Head of Finance, to undertake a formal procurement process for a Welsh language translation service to commence from April 2017 and for the contract to be awarded to the most economically advantageous provider.

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To secure an effective, responsive and resilient translation service to enable the Council to discharge its responsibilities under the Welsh Language Measure 2011 and associated standards.
2. To comply with the Council's contract standing orders.
3. To comply with the Council's contract standing orders.

Background

2. The Welsh Language Measure 2011 established a framework for introducing statutory standards relating to the Welsh language. The Welsh Language Commissioner in September 2015 issued the Council, in common with other

organisations, with a compliance notice setting out the standards which would apply. A report on that compliance notice went to Cabinet on 14 December 2015.

Relevant Issues and Options

3. In view of the legal requirement to comply with the standards, the Council needs an assurance that the Welsh language translation arrangements it has in place are fit for purpose. The volume of translation work will rise as a result of the standards, and an effective, efficient and responsive service will be needed to deal with the work.
4. The Council currently has an in-house translation service consisting of 1.5 full time equivalent officers. A recent review of the service (part of a wider review of Communications, Media Relations and Graphic Design) concluded that a more effective delivery model was required in view of the increased demands of the Welsh language standards and to achieve greater service resilience. The review therefore proposed that the in-house service should be discontinued, with an externally commissioned service taking its place.
5. After considering various options such as outsourcing to the private sector and using the translation framework agreement set up by Welsh Government, it has been concluded that the most effective solution would be to commission a partner Council to deliver the service on the Vale Council's behalf. Several Councils were approached to ascertain if they were interested in providing the service. Only Cardiff Council, who have a well-established and effective translation service, indicated their willingness to undertake the role. Preliminary discussions have therefore taken place, and arrangements would need to be firmed up via a Service Level Agreement before commencing.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

6. Current central expenditure on Welsh language translation is approximately £50,000. This is supplemented with expenditure by individual services, who use the Welsh Government framework agreement to commission pieces of work when central capacity is insufficient. In recognition of additional costs to be incurred as a result of complying with the Welsh language standards an additional £100,000 has been agreed as part of the revenue budget for 2016/17. Those additional costs are estimates at this point since much will depend on the level of public demand. Expenditure will be carefully monitored throughout 2106/17.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

7. One of the Wellbeing Goals included in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act is "a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language". The Welsh language standards are intended to contribute to that goal, integral to the achievement of Sustainable Development, and an effective translation service is essential to the delivery of the standards.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

8. The translation service to be provided by Cardiff Council will be regulated by a Service Level Agreement between the two Councils. The draft SLA will be referred to Legal Services before being signed.

Crime and Disorder Implications

9. There are no Crime and Disorder implications.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

10. Provision of the translation service by Cardiff Council is intended to enable the Vale Council to discharge its responsibilities in relation to the Welsh Language Act 2011 more effectively.

Corporate/Service Objectives

11. The Council's Corporate Plan for 2016-2020 has "Valuing culture and diversity" as one of its objectives (Objective 8), and includes "Implement the Welsh language standards to improve access to services and information" as an action. The proposals in this report will enable the Council to achieve these things.

Policy Framework and Budget

12. This is a matter for Executive decision.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

13. Not applicable.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

14. Corporate Resources

Background Papers

None.

Contact Officer

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Officers Consulted

Responsible Officer:

Rob Thomas, Managing Director