
Meeting of the Executive

10 April 2007

Report of the Director of Learning, Culture and Children's Services

JOSEPH ROWNTREE SCHOOL – Appointment of technical consultants

Summary

1. There is a need to appoint technical consultants to assist in the development of the outline business case for the Joseph Rowntree One School Pathfinder (OSP) project. The selection process has identified a preferred bidder. The costs of the preferred bidder are not the lowest. This report requests Members to approve the appointment as a matter of urgency, in order to prevent delay on the overall programme. The overall programme to deliver the new Joseph Rowntree School is extremely tight. In order to keep on time, the technical consultants need to be ready to begin work with the school directly after the Easter half-term. This will give the consultants the necessary time to undertake the immediate tasks required for the completion of the outline business case on time, to prevent any further delay with the procurement of the design and build contractors.

Background

2. Work to develop the Joseph Rowntree One School Pathfinder has been on going since October 2006. We are required by the DfES to have the new school ready for occupation by September 2009. In order to meet the timescale, the project will be procured using Partnership for Schools' (PfS) national procurement framework. The PfS criteria require the submission of an outline business case (OBC) for approval, prior to commencing the full competition process. So far, the OBC has been developed using in-house resources. The project is now at the stage where external resources are needed in order to develop and finalise the OBC. Input is needed from technical consultants to ensure that the OBC meets all of the PfS criteria. PfS have a national consultants framework that gives access to pre-tendered consultancy services. Six consultants were approached from the PfS framework and invited to submit an expression of interest. Two consultants declined to bid and the remaining four were evaluated. Two bidders were short listed and invited to make a presentation to the evaluation panel. The two short listed bidders, their costs and scores are attached in confidential annex 1.

As this is a pathfinder project, there is not as yet a standard procedure for the level of work required to produce an OBC. Therefore, the bidders were asked to submit costs based on rates per day, for a generic work plan for a £25.5m OSP project. The rates per day of the two consultants are similar but Mott MacDonald have allocated more time to the project. Whichever consultant is appointed will need to work out the exact details of the work required and it is expected that the final costs would be similar.

Mott MacDonald scored higher on quality because:

- The people in the team are locally based (York and Leeds rather than London)
- They were better communicators
- They had a wider variety of skills in-house
- They clearly demonstrated a team approach, working with us rather than for us
- They were enthusiastic and knowledgeable about our project
- They demonstrated realism, issuing cautions rather than reassurances
- That they inspired us with confidence that they were the team who would deliver.

The scoring was done individually and without consultation with other panel members.

Consultation

3. The Procurement Unit were consulted throughout the process. All procedures were checked and approved to ensure that financial regulations were adhered to. The evaluation panel comprised:
 - Hugh Porter, Headteacher of Joseph Rowntree School
 - Frank Dixon, Chair of Governors, Joseph Rowntree School
 - Ian Atkinson, Design Architect, Joseph Rowntree Trust
 - Neil Hindhaugh, Head of Property Services
 - Maggie Tansley, Head of Planning and Resources, LCCS
 - Ali Kelly, Joseph Rowntree OSP Project Manager
 - Anna Evans, Joseph Rowntree OSP Project Director

Options

4. The options are to:
 - a. Appoint the consultant with the lowest tendered costs, Gardiner and Theobald.
 - b. Appoint the consultant with the higher costs, Mott MacDonald.

Analysis

5. If Gardiner and Theobald are appointed, based on the tendered costs, there would be a financial saving. However, their approach to team working is likely to generate more days work at the start of the project, in order to agree a common strategy and clear understanding of project deliverables. Their remote location in London will incur more travel time and less working time per day.

Mott MacDonald are prepared to commence work immediately and already have a clear understanding of what is required. Once a detailed work plan has been agreed, it is expected that their original quote will be slightly reduced. However, the benefit of using Mott MacDonald is clearly linked to the added value that they will bring to the project in terms of team working, experience and detailed knowledge of what is required by PfS.

Corporate Priorities

6. Improve the way the Council and its partners work together to deliver better services for the people who live in York by facilitating a swift and effective appointment of a contractor to build the new school. Delivering the new building on time will help the school achieve its educational transformation and enhance the City's reputation with government.

Implications

7.
 - **Financial** - As referred to in the body of the report.
 - **Human Resources (HR)** – There are no human resources implications.
 - **Equalities** – There are no equality implications
 - **Legal** – There are no legal implications.
 - **Crime and Disorder** – There are no crime and disorder implications.
 - **Information Technology (IT)** – There are no IT implications.
 - **Property** – There are no property implications.
 - **Other**

Risk Management

8. The risks are:
 - We do not get the correct output specification within the OBC, that best reflects the school, the local authority and the community's aspirations.
 - We do not achieve an approved OBC within the necessary timescale

- We miss the optimum date to appoint constructors and find that we are left with little or no choice

Recommendations

9. The Executive Leader is asked to approve Option b of the report, that Mott MacDonald are appointed as technical consultants for the Joseph Rowntree School OSP.

Reason: That the preferred bidders will add value to the project beyond the financial benefits of the lowest tendered bid.

Contact Details

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Report Approved **Date** 05.04.07

Specialist Implications Officer(s)

Financial Implications
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Wards Affected: Huntington and New Earswick

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers: None

Annexes – Annex 1 CONFIDENTIAL

