

LONDON BOROUGH OF BRENT

MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE

12 July 2004

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES

**WARDS AFFECTED
ALL**

FP NO SS-03/04-16

PROCUREMENT OF FROZEN ASIAN VEGETERIAN MEALS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Following the report to the Executive on 26th April 2004 and the decision to commence a new procurement process for the supply of Asian Vegetarian meals this report sets out the revised evaluation criteria and weightings for approval by Members.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Executive to give approval of the evaluation criteria and weightings to be used in the award of the contract as set out in paragraph 7.2 and at appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.2 The Executive give approval for Officers to award the contract in accordance with approved criteria.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Council's Contract Standing Orders state that contracts for supplies and services between £20k and £150k require at least 3 quotes to be sought for the contract.
- 3.2 The estimated value of this supplies contract is £125k over the lifetime of the contract.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that the cost of this contract will be funded from existing resources.

4. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 This is a contract for the supply of frozen Asian Vegetarian meals and therefore has no staffing implications for the Council.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The procurement process for the supply of Asian Vegetarian meals will not be subject to the EU Procurement Regulations as the estimated value of the contract is less than the EU threshold of £153k.
- 5.2 As the estimated value of the contract for the supply of Asian Vegetarian meals is between £20k and £150k Standing Orders require that at least three quotes be sought for the contract. Suppliers who submitted quotes would need to be properly evaluated against the pre agreed evaluation criteria.
- 5.3 Chief Officers have delegated power to award contracts for Asian Vegetarian meals following the submission of and evaluation of quotes. However, the report to the Executive on 26 April 2004 suggested that given the history of the procurement of this contract it would be prudent for the award of contract to be referred back to the Executive for approval, although it was not specifically agreed by the Executive that this should happen. It is open to the Executive to agree that Officers can award the contract in accordance with delegated powers following the evaluation. If the Executive is satisfied with the evaluation criteria, which have been developed in consultation with Legal Services, and process set out in this report the Executive may consider it appropriate for the award to be made by Officers.

6. DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council has a commitment to provide culturally appropriate Social Services meals to its main communities. Through this process it is seeking to award a contract for the supply of Asian Vegetarian meals which meet the Council's requirements in regard to economic and financial standing, business probity, Health & Safety, Food Hygiene and nutritional standards, offers value for money and meets user acceptability.
- 6.2 Users from the community will be invited to participate in assessing the quality and acceptability of meals through a tasting panel and receiving sample meals at home.

7. DETAIL

- 7.1 Following the report to the Executive on 26th April 2004 the Executive noted the failure of the tender process in relation to the contract for the supply of frozen Asian Vegetarian meals and gave approval for Officers to commence a new procurement process following a review of the evaluation criteria for awarding the contract and the Executive's approval to the new evaluation criteria.

7.2 Officers examined the evaluation method used in the previous procurement process to identify deficiencies. For reference a copy of the former evaluation grid is attached at Appendix 2. It was established that because of the way that the scoring was totalled it was possible for bidders to exceed the minimum benchmark score overall but still to effectively not meet the requirements of Council's essential categories such as food hygiene standards and health and safety. In order to address this, the revised system has been split into two parts whereby a bidder must meet the requirements of all categories in the first part before being evaluated against those in the second part. The scoring mechanism has also been revised from a 0-10 point scale to a 0-7 one with the following interpretations which gives a definitive score for not meeting and meeting the Council's requirements and allows a small amount of differential to be allocated to the degree to which bidders partly, mainly or exceed requirements:

0	Does not meet Council's requirements
1-2	Partly meets the Council's requirements
3-4	Mainly meets the Council's requirements
5	Meets the Council's requirements
6-7	Exceeds the Council's requirements

The revised process is set out below for approval.

7.2.1 The evaluation process will be undertaken in two stages. All criteria will be scored between 0 and 7 in accordance with the meanings as set out in 7.2 above

7.2.2 The first stage will evaluate the following categories:-

- Economic and Financial Standing
- Business Probity
- Health and Safety
- Food Hygiene
- Quality Assurance and Quality Control
- Nutritional Standard
- Packaging
- Delivery Arrangements

All of these criteria are mandatory and any organisation scoring 4 or less in any category will be eliminated at this stage.

7.2.3 Organisations who meet all the above requirements with a score of 5 or more will considered against the value for money criteria which are:-

- Portion Size
- Presentation of Meal
- Range of Meals
- Price
- User Acceptability

These criteria will be weighted as set out in Appendix 1.

Bench marks will be set for portion size based on the specification requirements and prices based on the available budget.

- 7.2.4 The contract will be awarded to the organisation which receives the highest score in the second stage of the evaluation subject to that organisation meeting the required benchmarks for portion size and price. However should the second stage of the evaluation process produce a tie between two or more organisations then the first stage scores for those organisations involved in the tie will be carried forward and added to their second stage scores. The contract would be awarded to the organisation with the highest combined score, again subject to that organisation meeting the required benchmarks for portion size and price.
- 7.3 Since the Executive Meeting on the 26th April 2004 Officers have been undertaking further research into other available provision by contacting other Social Services Departments, Hospitals, community groups and other commercial operations. In addition Officers are proposing to place an advertisement in the Asian press to invite expressions of interest in the supply of frozen Asian Vegetarian meals and provide details of their experience. Suitably qualified organisations will be invited to quote.
- 7.4 Officers envisage that the process will be completed by 31st October 2004. As set out in the Legal Implications the report to Executive on the 26th April 2004 suggested that the awarding of this of this contract be referred back to the Executive for approval. However Officers are concerned that this will delay the award of the contract by a further two months and there seeking approval from the Executive to award the contract under normal delegated powers for a contract of this value. Officers will report back to the Executive following award of the contract to inform members of the outcome of the procurement process.

8. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 8.1 Report to the Executive 26th April 2004 Award of Contract for the Supply of Caribbean, Asian Halal and Asian Vegetarian Frozen Meals for Meals Services
- 8.2 Contract documentation and file
- 8.3 Any person wishing to inspect the above report or requiring further information should contact :
- Ros Howard
Service Unit Manager Older People Services
13-15 Brondesbury Road, London NW6 6BX
Tel: 020 8937 4030 email: ros.howard@brent.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

PROCUREMENT OF FROZEN ASIAN VEGTARIAN MEALS AUGUST 2004 – QUOTATION EVALUATION MATRIX

Criterion	Quotation 1	Quotation 2	Quotation 3	Quotation 4	Quotation 5	Quotation 6	Quotation 7
	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
Stage 1							
Economic & Financial Standing							
Business Probity							
Health & Safety							
Food Hygiene							
Quality Assurance & Control							
Nutritional Standard							
Packaging							
Delivery Arrangements							
Result: Pass/Fail							

Criterion	Quotation 1			Quotation 2			Quotation 3			Quotation 4			Quotation 5			Quotation 6			Quotation 7					
	Weight	Score	Total	Weight	Score	Total	Weight	Score	Total	Weight	Score	Total	Weight	Score	Total	Weight	Score	Total	Weight	Score	Total			
Stage 2																								
Portion Size	7			7			7			7			7			7			7			7		
Presentation of Meal	5			5			5			5			5			5			5			5		
Range of Meals	5			5			5			5			5			5			5			5		
Price	12			12			12			12			12			12			12			12		
User Acceptability	12			12			12			12			12			12			12			12		
TOTAL																								

Weight =weighting, the relative significance of the element
 Score =score on a 0-7 scale as indicated
 Total =weighting multiplied by score

Key to Scores
 0 Does not meet Council's requirements
 1-2 Partly meets the Council's requirements
 3-4 Mainly meets the Council's requirements
 5 Meets the Council's requirements
 6=7 Exceeds the Council's requirements

