

**Oldham Borough Council
Record of Decision**

1. **TITLE:** Award of contract for the delivery of Oldham Advice Service (Financial Inclusion Service)
2. **SERVICE AREA:** Resources Directorate - Customer Services
3. **PURPOSE OF DECISION**

To award the contract for the provision of Oldham's Advice Service (Financial Inclusion Service) to ensure that Oldham has a comprehensive and resident focused advice service to improve the financial wellbeing of residents.

4. **DECISION MADE BY:** Cabinet Member - Finance, Corporate Services and Sustainability and Deputy Leader

5. **DECISION:**

RESOLVED - That:

- a) To approve the award of a contract to Citizens Advice Stockport, Rochdale, Oldham and Trafford (CA SORT) Group to deliver the Oldham Advice Service, as detailed in this report, for an initial term of 2 years and 9 months from 1 July 2026.
- b) To enter into a contract with CA SORT as the incumbent provider of the Oldham Advice Service following the satisfactory completion of Direct Award Process pursuant to Schedule 5 of the Procurement Act 2023, with CA SORT being the only supplier with the requisite qualifications subject to the expiry of the required standstill period under section 51 and the required contract details notice under section 53.

6. **REASON FOR DECISION**

To seek approval to award a contract for the provision of Oldham's Advice Service (Financial Inclusion Service).

7. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Option 1 – Do not procure a Financial Inclusion Service

Pros – There will not be a cost to the Council for this option

Cons – The current approach of duplicated provision will continue leading to an inefficient approach and limited value for money. Furthermore, a partner's expertise will not be obtained leading to potential gaps in knowledge for our teams and quality of offer to our residents.

Option 2 – To consider alternative compliant routes available to procure the Oldham Advice Service in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023 such as a Competitive Process. This is not a recommended option. Based on the outcome of the Pre-Market Engagement exercise, a Direct Award is a compliant option.

Option 3 (preferred option) – To award and enter into a contract with CA SORT as the incumbent provider of the Oldham Advice Service following the satisfactory completion of Direct Award Process pursuant to Schedule 5 of the Procurement Act 2023, with CA SORT



being the only supplier with the requisite qualifications subject to the expiry of the required standstill period under section 51 and the required contract details notice under section 53. This is the recommended option as the response to the Pre Market Engagement exercise from the incumbent provider, CA SORT met the necessary requirements to deliver the proposed contract.

8. INTERESTS AND NATURE OF INTERESTS DECLARED

None

9. PRINCIPAL CONSULTEES: Executive Director of Resources.

10. DOCUMENT CONSIDERED: Not applicable