

**Report to CABINET**

## **Awarding of Enforcement Agent Services contract following re-tender exercise**

**Portfolio Holder:**

Councillor Abdul Jabbar MBE, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources

**Officer Contact:** Sarah Johnston, Director of Finance

**Report Author:** Nick Davies, Revenues Manager

**26 February 2024**

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### **Reason for Decision**

This report seeks approval to award and enter into contracts for Enforcement Services for the collection of unpaid council tax, business rates, sundry debts and commercial rent arrears from 1 April 2024 with 3 highest ranking bidders as a result of the further competition process undertaken.

### **Executive Summary**

The Council currently operates a mixed provision of council employed 'in house' enforcement agents (EAs) and external enforcement agents for the collection of unpaid council tax and business rates debts.

The existing contract was awarded in October 2019, following an OJEU compliant procurement route in accordance with Oldham Council's Contract Procedure Rules and EU regulations utilising the Rotherham Framework (OJEU notice ref 2016/5 -202-365931). Two providers, Marston Holdings Ltd and Rundle and Co were appointed for a 12-month fixed term contract until 30 September 2020.

Due to the moratorium on debt collection activities during 2020 and 2021 as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, approval was subsequently given to extend this contract until 31 March 2024.

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On 25 October 2023, the Council issued an invitation for tender for externalisation of all enforcement activity, including provisions for the collection of sundry debts and commercial rent arrears. As the in-house provision is no longer required, the ITT includes the provision of TUPE transfer for those staff currently employed by the Council as enforcement agents.

This Cabinet report sets out how the Revenues and Benefits service have retendered the contract and selected the preferred suppliers.

**Recommendations**

It is recommended that Cabinet approve to award the contract for Enforcement Services to the 3 highest ranking bidders following evaluation and moderation.

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### 3 **Options/Alternatives**

3.1 Option 1 and Option 2 are presented in the Confidential (Part B) report, later on in the meeting's agenda

### 4 **Preferred Option**

4.1 The preferred option is **Option 1**. This is recommended on the following basis:

Awarding the contract for Enforcement Services to the 3 highest ranking bidders who offer high quality services supports the Council in its objectives

### 5 **Consultation**

5.1 As set out in Part B.

6 **Financial Implications** - As set out in Part B.

7 **Legal Implications** - As set out in Part B.

8. **Co-operative Implications** - As set out in Part B.

9 **Human Resource Implications** - As set out in Part B.

10 **Risk Assessments** - As set out in Part B.

11 **IT Implications** – As set out in Part B.

12 **Property Implications** - As set out in Part B.

13 **Procurement Implications** – As set out in Part B.

14 **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications** - As set out in Part B.

15 **Community cohesion, including crime and disorder implications in accordance with Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

- As set out in Part B.

16 **Equality Impact Assessment including implications for Children and Young People** - As set out in Part B.

### 17 **Key Decision**

17.1 Yes

### 18 **Key Decision Reference**

18.1 FCR-06-23

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19     **Background Papers**

19.1   None for this report

20     **Appendices**

20.1   The Appendix for this item is attached to the Part B report