

Title: Regional Identity Framework
Portfolio: Operations
Responsible Director: Alan Reiss, Operations Director
Report Author: Rachel Lippe, Head of Public Relations

Purpose of the report

This report seeks approval to award a contract for suppliers to deliver a creative solution answering the need for a regional identity framework.

Recommendations

The Assistant Director for Communications is recommended to approve the direct award of the contract with the value of £70,000 to Cravens Limited.

A. Context

1. Background

SLT approved in January the inception of a programme to create a regional identity framework with an indicative budget of £105,000. The creation of the framework was to be driven by the appointment of a market research agent (estimated budget £35,000) and a creative design agency (estimated budget £70,000).

MMC Ltd has since been appointed and begun work as the market research provider. This paper seeks to appoint Cravens for the design work, which will involve creating a set of visual and narrative codes and frameworks, based on market research and the region's modern heritage and future ambition. The frameworks will be applicable to a range of marketing campaigns and activities going forward.

2. Overview of procurement

The North East MSA initially undertook an open competitive procurement exercise for this piece of work, hosted on the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) Open portal. 21 suppliers submitted compliant bids which were scored against quality (80%) and price (20%). Following an evaluation exercise, it was determined that Cravens submitted the most advantageous tender.

Since the publication of the initial procurement exercise, the North East MSA's requirements relating to the services have changed, particularly in relation to strategy regarding content creators and influencers in the social media sphere. As a result, since the specification for the service needed to be amended to reflect these changes, the North East MSA was no longer able to proceed to award resulting from the initial process. The initial process has therefore been abandoned, and no award has been made from it as a result.

Due to the timescales required to appoint a contractor to commence delivery of the services, the North East MSA is unable to run a further competitive procurement exercise. The North East MSA therefore intends to proceed to direct award to Cravens. Whilst the specification has changed, the services are similar to those in the initial procurement exercise, and the North East MSA is therefore satisfied that this appointment would secure best value.

B. Impact on North East Mayoral Strategic Authority Objectives

This project supports a wide range of programmes within the MSA and its partners where a cohesive regional identity will play a significant part in storytelling and the visual appearance of campaigns, marketing materials websites and other resources. This includes destination marketing, inward investment, recruitment, regional pride, North East Ambition, Business North East, Invest North East among others.

C. Key risks

The key risk associated with this procurement is ensuring that the services can be complete in the tight timescales committed to with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) so there are raw materials for use by wider campaigns: Experience North East is already waiting on the deliverables from this to inform the Visit North East identity now out to tender,

D. Corporate Implications

D1. Financial and other resources implications

SLT has approved the release of £100,000 to support the programme.

D2. Legal implications

The comments of the representative of the Monitoring Officer are included in this report.

D3. Equalities implications

The North East MSA follows the [Public Sector Equality duty](#) and this report has due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010.

D4. Consultation and engagement

This workstream has been taken forward following consultation with SLT members, the Head of Mayoral Delivery, ENEE and external partners in the tourism, cultural, investment and voluntary sectors to ensure it meets the wider needs of the region.

E. Appendices

None

F. Background papers

None

G. Contact officers

Rachel.Lippe@northeast-ca.gov.uk
Head of Public Relations