



## CORPORATE & ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

MEMBERS UPDATE 2018/19

Issue: 4

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Article of: **Borough Solicitor**

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**SUBJECT: EXEMPTION FROM CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES – PRACTICAL  
LAW AND WESTLAW SERVICES**

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Wards affected: Borough wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF ARTICLE**

- 1.1 To advise members of a recent exemption from the Contracts Procedure Rules granted by the Chief Executive.
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### **2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Council has in place robust rules and procedures, reflecting best practice in relation to the procurement of goods and services.
- 2.2 The Chief Executive recently signed an exemption to the Contracts Procedure Rules in relation to a contract for the renewal of Practical Law and Westlaw Subscription services (a comprehensive suite of on-line legal research tools).

### **3.0 EXEMPTION TO CONTRACTS PROCEDURE RULES**

- 3.1 The exemption relates to Contract Procedure rule 6 which provides that where the estimated value or amount of a proposed contract will exceed £10,000 (but will not exceed £50,000) the appropriate officer shall obtain not less than three written quotations.
- 3.2 In relation to the supply of a comprehensive suite of on-line legal research tools there are only two recognised suppliers in the UK due to the unique nature of the service provided and so it was not possible to obtain three quotations.

3.3 It was not practicable to approach Cabinet (or another body of Members) to request the exemption to rule 6 as the renewal with Thompson Reuters (Professional) UK Limited had to be finalised by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2018 in order to take advantage of a bulk discount negotiated by the North West Legal Consortium (a consortium of over 30 public sector bodies that wish to collaborate in the procurement and provision of quality legal services). The discounted yearly contract price is £15,680.68. Accordingly, the Chief Executive was requested to consider waiving the rule 6 requirement to obtain three quotations.

3.4 A quote was obtained from the only other supplier, Lexis Nexis, again through the North West Legal Consortium. However, the service offered by Lexis Nexis would not offer the breadth of the service of Thompson Reuters (Professional) UK Limited and would have cost in the order of £25,000.00 per annum.

#### **4.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this article and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There are financial / resource implications arising from this article, however, these have been met from existing resources.

#### **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

8.1 This Article is for information only and makes no recommendations. It therefore does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers.

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#### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Article.

#### **Equality Impact Assessment**

This article is for information only and does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and/ or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

#### **Appendices**

None