

# Finance & Resources Committee

10am, Thursday, 23 May 2019

## Adoption of Framework to provide an Online Booking Service for Emergency Accommodation for Homelessness Services

Item number	7.8
Executive/routine	
Wards	
Council Commitments	

### 1. Recommendations

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- 1.1 This report seeks the approval of the Finance and Resource Committee to adopt Lot 2 “Online Accommodation Booking” of the Crown Commercial Services Public Sector Travel & Venue Solutions Framework, to provide an online booking portal for temporary accommodation where alternative contracts do not have the capacity to deliver.
- 1.2 The Framework expires on 28 February 2021, with an option to extend for twelve months.
- 1.3 Based on current requirements the estimated value of call offs against this framework would be £560,000, however, the framework will only be used when required and the Council will have no commitments regarding volume and expenditure.

**Alistair Gaw**

Executive Director for Communities and Families

Contact: Nicky Brown, Homelessness and Housing Support Senior Manager

E-mail: [Nicky.Brown@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:Nicky.Brown@edinburgh.gov.uk) | Tel: 0131 529 7589

## Adoption of Framework to provide an Online Booking Service for Emergency Accommodation for Homelessness Services

### 2. Executive Summary

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- 2.1 This report seeks the approval for the Finance and Resources Committee to adopt Lot 2 “Online Accommodation Booking” of the Crown Commercial Services Public Sector Travel & Venue Solutions Framework to provide an online booking portal for temporary accommodation where alternative contracts do not have the capacity to deliver.
- 2.2 Hotel Reservation Service Limited (HRS) are sole supplier on Lot 2 of the Crown Commercial Service Framework.
- 2.3 The Framework expires on 28 February 2021 with an option to extend for twelve months.
- 2.4 Based on current demand the annual spend on the framework would be £560,000. However, there is no commitment to spend and the actual value may fluctuate depending on demand for temporary accommodation and capacity of other contracts utilised by the Council.

### 3. Background

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- 3.1 The Council has a statutory duty under Part II of the Housing (Scotland) Act 1987 – Homelessness Provisions – to assist those who are homeless or threatened with homelessness, including providing accommodation in certain circumstance. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 amends the 1987 Act and requires the Council to provide a minimum of temporary accommodation, advice and assistance to all applicants assessed as homeless, regardless of whether they have been assessed as being in priority need.
- 3.2 The Council has contracts in place for accommodation in Private Sector Leasing (PSL), Shared Houses and Interim Accommodation (IA) that is provided as a managed service by an agent. Homelessness Services also arrange for ‘spot’

contracts for IA that are directly awarded, if required to allow the Council to discharge its duties.

- 3.3 In addition to these contracted services, the Council is sometimes required to purchase temporary accommodation on an ad hoc basis in order to meet demand.

## 4. Main report

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- 4.1 It is estimated that around £560,000 annually is spent through “corporate” providers who are generally large chain hotels. The objective of adopting this framework is to provide an efficient booking facility which is compliant with the Council Standing Orders where these hotels are required.
- 4.2 This framework will provide an avenue for booking short term accommodation from hotel brands. Between April and November 2018, 39 separate chain hotels were used in Edinburgh to provide a total of 5033 bednights. Currently each individual booking is carried out manually to establish availability. Subsequently each hotel will have a separate payment process which again has a resource implication, as these must be processed before the booking is accepted.
- 4.3 The online booking system provided by HRS will provide a streamlined system to establish availability, make a booking and manage a single weekly invoice regardless of volume.
- 4.4 In 2017 Crown Commercial Services advertised a Framework for Public Sector Travel and Venue Solutions, with Lot 2 dedicated to Online Accommodation booking. Eight suppliers tendered, and the Framework Lot was awarded to HRS in March 2018.
- 4.5 The City of Edinburgh Council can therefore directly call off when there is a requirement to book emergency accommodation through HRS.
- 4.6 The service is provided without a management charge or booking fee for the Council, with revenue for HRS earned through a commission basis from hotels. This will also allow the Council access preferential rates which HRS has been able to negotiate as a global travel management agency.
- 4.7 Call offs from the framework shall be managed by the Council’s Homelessness and Housing Support Services. They will track benefits and work to monitor key performance indicators during the duration of the framework.
- 4.8 The framework expires on 28 February 2021, with an option to extend for twelve months.

## **5. Next Steps**

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- 5.1 The Council's Homelessness and Housing Support Services will work with HRS to implement the system. This will be a straightforward process as the booking tool can be accessed on any internet enabled device and computer. It is anticipated that bookings will be able to begin almost immediately dependent on demand.

## **6. Financial impact**

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- 6.1 Adoption of this Framework does not represent a financial commitment by the Council however based on historical spend the potential value of call offs are estimated to be £560,000 annually and there are a number of factors which may affect spend including;
- 6.1.1 The opportunity to gain access to discounted rooms negotiated by HRS with global hotel chains;
  - 6.1.2 Any changes in demand and other strategies led by Homelessness and Housing Support Services to meet this demand; and
- 6.2 There will be operational time savings as a result of this process as it will reduce time spent booking hotel rooms and managing the invoicing process.
- 6.3 The costs associated with procuring this Framework are estimated to be less than £10,000.

## **7. Stakeholder/Community Impact**

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- 7.1 This service represents an internal process change but is not anticipated to represent a change to outcomes for end users.
- 7.2 Homelessness and Housing Support Services will work with HRS to carry out a Data Privacy Impact Assessment following adoption of the framework. This will be governed using the terms in the Crown Commercial Services Framework agreement.

## **8. Background reading/external references**

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- 8.1 N/A

## **9. Appendices**

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- 9.1 Appendix: Summary of Tendering and Tender Evaluation Processes

<b>Contract</b>	<b>CT2530 Adoption of Framework to provide an Online Booking Service for Emergency Accommodation for Homelessness Services</b>	
Contract Period	The Framework expires on 28 February 2021 with an option to extend for twelve months.	
Estimated Total Contract Value (including extensions)	£560,000 annually based on historical volumes	
Procurement Route Chosen	Direct award to Lot 2 Online Accommodation of the Crown Commercial Services Public Sector Travel & Venue Solutions Framework	
Call off Contracts to be Awarded	1	
Price / Quality Split	Quality 20	Price 80