

**WEST MIDLANDS FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

**22<sup>ND</sup> MAY 2006**

**1. PROCUREMENT STANDING ORDERS**

Joint report of the Chief Fire Officer and Treasurer.

**RECOMMENDED**

THAT the Executive Committee approve the revised Procurement Standing Orders (formerly known as the Tenders and Quotations Procedures) Standing Orders attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

**2. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report is to seek approval for the proposed amendments to Brigade Standing Order 1/8 which sets out the policy, strategy and procedures that control the Authority's procurement processes.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The existing Standing Order 1/8 Tendering & Quotations Procedures was last revised in January 2004. Since that time significant changes have taken place in the field of procurement. In particular, the publication of the National Procurement Strategy for Fire & Rescue Authorities and recent changes to the EU Procurement Directives.
- 3.2 The National Procurement Strategy includes a target for all Fire and Rescue Authorities to pilot e-tendering. The existing Standing Order does not include the necessary procedures to enable the pilot to be conducted.
- 3.3 The Brigade's Procurement Policy has recently been updated and the procedures set out in the existing Standing Order need to be aligned with the new policy.

3.4 In view of the implications of the above it has become necessary to update the existing Standing Order to set out working procedures that reflect the business needs and obligations of the Fire Authority. The changes which have been highlighted in the attached Appendix include:-

- the inclusion for the first time of a number of procurement and general definitions.
- greater involvement of the Supply Chain Section in all procurement processes.
- updated procedures on EU Procurement Directives e.g. standstill periods.
- EU Regulations on assessment criteria.
- guidance on specification preparation.
- additional guidance on the acceptance of Tenders and Quotations.

3.5 The amendments included in the Appendix attached to this report are designed to complement the Authority's Financial Regulations which were recently updated and approved at the Authority meeting held on 24 April 2006. The updating of both the Financial Regulations and the policy, strategy and procedures set out in the attached appendix will assist the Authority to demonstrate value for money when undertaking financial transactions.

#### 4. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

The procurement of goods and services impacts on all aspects of the service, therefore, account will continue to be taken of the equality and diversity needs of the Authority and its staff when undertaking procurement to ensure that the products and suppliers selected support the values of the service.

#### 5. **CORPORATE AIMS SUPPORTED**

The principal corporate aims supported by the information in this report are as follows.

1. Meeting the Fire Authority's statutory duties, standards and expectations.
11. Modernising and improving the quality of service.

6. **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Officers in the Sandwell Legal Department have reviewed the Standing Order and the amendments that they wish to be included have been incorporated.

7. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

National Procurement Strategy, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister,  
November 2005

Brigade's Procurement Policy (Standing Order 8/1)

F J E Sheehan  
Chief Fire Officer

L Bateman  
Treasurer