

# OFFICER DECISION NOTICE



**Reading**  
Borough Council  
Working better with you

This notice is to be used for the following types of officer decisions. (Select one option).

**A.** Decisions taken by officers under a specific express delegation from Council or a Committee.

**B.** Decisions taken by officers under a general delegation from Council or a Committee, which relates to (i) a permission or a licence, or (ii) the rights of an individual, or (iii) a contract or expenditure over which materially affects that relevant local government body's financial position.

<b>1. Title of decision:</b>	Interpretation and Translation Language Services
<b>2. Date of the decision:</b>	30 April 2025
<b>3. The decision maker:</b>	Assistant Director for Policy, Change and Customer Services

#### 4. Decision details:

To appoint thebigword Interpreting Services Ltd from the 16 of June 2025 to deliver interpretation and translation services for Reading Borough Council, following a procurement process that asked suppliers to submit a response to the following requirements:

- Face-to-Face Interpretation Services
- Remote Interpretation Services
  - Telephone Interpretation: On-demand and scheduled telephone interpretation services.
  - Video Interpretation: On-demand and scheduled video interpretation services for both spoken and non-spoken languages.
- Document Translation and Transcription Services
- Adherence to the quality standards set out in the framework.
- To provide performance monitoring and a mechanism for the council to manage spend.
- To support the council's social ambitions in relation to local employment, community engagement and environmental sustainability.

#### 5. Reasons for the decision:

Streamlining and enhancing access to interpretation and translation services and the booking process have been key components of our customer experience strategy.

Together with our Accessibility strategy, this reflects the council's commitment to offering fair services, acknowledging that language barriers and sensory impairments can create considerable obstacles for some residents. Communicating effectively in preferred

languages is essential for delivering equitable, high-quality service. The Council adheres to the Equality Act 2010, which mandates non-discrimination and fosters equality across all protected characteristics.

This procurement objective includes delivering high-quality, cost-effective, and compliant language services that are easily accessible, efficient, technologically integrated, and culturally sensitive.

The successful supplier, thebigword Interpreting Services Ltd, emphasises stakeholder engagement, continuous improvement, and sustainability in their approach.

**6. Alternative options considered (if any) and rejected:**

- 1) Do nothing – this option was rejected, given a number of language supplier contracts were out of date, and the booking process is cumbersome and inefficient.
- 2) Procure a supplier who would meet the criteria set out in section 4 of this report and meet the needs of our customers and the council.

**7. List of open Background Papers:**

None

**8. List of confidential or exempt Background Papers:**

None

**9. Any other matters taken into consideration:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Legitimate expectation of consultation	<input type="checkbox"/> Procedural requirements
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Health implications	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental or Climate Change
<input type="checkbox"/> Health and Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Risk Management implications
<input type="checkbox"/> Transparency of Information (FOI etc)	<input type="checkbox"/> Privacy Impact Assessments
<input type="checkbox"/> Human Rights Act Duties	<input type="checkbox"/> Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Parenting	<input type="checkbox"/> Community Safety
<input type="checkbox"/> Regulatory duties	<input type="checkbox"/> EU withdrawal
<input type="checkbox"/> Armed Forces Covenant	<input type="checkbox"/> Other

**Details of the matters taken into account:**

None

**10. Legal considerations**

Legal advice has been sought as part of the procurement and contract set up phase.

**11. Financial considerations**

This procurement is funded from the Customer Experience strategy

Over three years, the value of the contract is estimated to be £360K

**12. Internal consultations**

No consultation needed, however, internal stakeholders will be briefed as part of the mobilisation process.

Sections 13- 18: To be completed only for Decision A (express delegation from a Committee)

**13. The name of the Committee:**

**14. Date of the meeting:**

Click or tap to enter a date.

**15. Minute number:**

**16. The delegation given by the Committee:**

**17. The name of any member of the committee who declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision:**

**18. Any councillor or officer required to be consulted prior to the exercise of this delegation and details of their response.**