

Translating and Interpreting Services

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to inform CSMP Board Members of the current position of the review of Translating and Interpreting Services (TICS).

Recommendations

2. The Board are asked note the contents of the report.

Background

3. In June 2010 the Scottish Government hosted a roundtable discussion on TICS services and it became clear at this meeting that there is a degree of inefficiency around the delivery of TICS services at a local and national public sector level and a more streamlined approach may be more efficient and cost effective. Since this meeting CSMP has received endorsement from the CSMP Board and the COSLA Community Wellbeing and Safety Executive Group to further explore the potential of sharing these services.
4. CSMP have attended meetings of the Translating and Interpreting Services Working Group which was set up and chaired by the Scottish Government to consider and discuss a number of options around a shared national framework and single procurement contract for translation, interpreting and communication support services. These meetings have also been attended by representatives from the Scottish Government, the Association of Chief Police Officers in Scotland (ACPOS), the NHS and the Central Government Centre of Procurement Expertise (CGCoPE). CGCoPE were involved in the development of the Framework Contract for the Scottish Courts Services and have been able to provide an insight into creating a national framework. It was agreed at the first meeting that the development of an overarching national framework delivered on regional basis would be the best model to follow, particularly as the bones of a regional model are already in place, with Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and Dundee all providing their own translating and interpreting services.
5. The last meeting of the group was attended by procurement officers from the organisations involved in the working group to ascertain their views on the development of a national model. Scotland Excel were also present. Whilst CGCoPE stated that they were not currently positioned to take the lead on the project, NHS Procurement expressed their interest to be involved and have committed a resource to assist in the development of a national framework. This resource has been agreed on the basis that the work is carried out in conjunction with another agency. This is likely to be Scotland Excel but we are still waiting for final agreement of their involvement.
6. All present were in agreement that it was vital to get the fundamentals in place before tackling some of the issues being considered such as the use of video conferencing to deliver the service. However, it has become evident from this early stage that

efficiencies will not only be made in terms of cost. It is anticipated that the administration process will become more streamlined and that management information will be more readily available allowing for the seamless identification of spend and emerging trends.

7. This review of service is particularly timely as there is the potential for there to be a rise in the number of requests for translation services from the police further to the implementation of the new EU directive on the Translation Rights for EU Citizens in Criminal Trials. This directive aims at improving the rights of the accused by ensuring that any EU citizen facing a criminal trial in another Member State can have all of the proceedings translated into their own language.

Conclusion

8. It was agreed that the procurement officers should meet independently of the main group to scope out what additional information is necessary to move this work on before reporting back to the main group with a template of their requirements. We are waiting for this meeting to take place and will report back to the Board in due time.

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