

APPENDIX 4 HIGHWAYS AND STREET SCENE CONTRACT (BBLP) TASK GROUP

DRAFT NOTES OF THE HIGHWAYS AND STREET SCENE CONTRACT (BBLP) TASK GROUP MEETING HELD ON 15 DECEMBER 2015 AT KENNET ROOM - COUNTY HALL, TROWBRIDGE BA14 8JN.

Present:

Cllr Bob Jones MBE, Cllr Gordon King, Cllr Jeff Osborn and Cllr Linda Packard

Also Present:

Theo Biney, Peter Binley, Adam Brown, Adrian Hampton, Parvis Khansari and Henry Powell

1 **Apologies**

Apologies received from Cllrs Tony Trotman, John Walsh and Philip Whitehead.

2 **Notes of the previous meeting**

The report of the task group's meeting held on 15 October 2015 was approved as a correct record. This was endorsed by Environment Select Committee on 27 October 2015.

3 **New highways contract**

Key discussion points:

The following attended to answer questions on the report and appendices setting out the process for tendering for the new highways contract:

Peter Binley Head of Highways Asset Management
Theo Biney, Senior Purchasing Group Leader
Adrian Hampton, Head of Local Highways, Weather and Emergency Services
Parvis Khansari, Associate Director for Highways and Transport

Key discussion points:

Parish Stewards

- The contract includes the provision of the parish steward service and a specification for the role. The council held an open day and showed a

DVD on the Parish Steward Scheme to ensure bidders understand what is required.

- ICT issues experienced under the previous contract are being addressed. It is hoped operators will use the My Wiltshire app resulting in no loss of data on logged issues. Operators will be empowered to respond directly to logged issues, rather simply than 'close', 'complete' or 'reject', which caused communication issues previously. In the short terms a 'workaround' has been implemented to reduce the known ICT problems.

Workflow

- Gullies in high- risk areas are cleared as a priority , but those not causing house flooding or road safety issues are addressed when resources allow.
- Work is being done to ensure that the new contractor can commence work on day one and that the council has a full programme of work to pass to them.
- Masonry issues (e.g. loose paving slabs) are being addressed where they meet the council's stated intervention levels. There four reactive masonry gangs. Work that does not meet the council's intervention levels are completed as resources allow, or left as low priority work. There are two additional capital masonry gangs that undertaken scheduled maintenance and larger schemes. The number of gangs available in the new contract will be decided when rates and the budget is known.

Joint tender with Swindon Borough Council

- Wiltshire and Swindon are undertaking a joint procurement process with a single set of prices and specifications. However, each council will sign contract separately to retain separate liabilities. Procuring and managing the contract together will create efficiencies. Swindon BC has its own in-house highways provision, but the new contract will give them capacity for additional relatively small-scale works. Wiltshire benefits from the joint arrangement by being able to demonstrate that it is working collaboratively with other councils, which is a factor when central government determines local authority funding levels.

Contract extensions

- Under the new contract the council can award the provider a six month extension for every year that a suite of KPI targets are delivered, with a maximum total extension of 2 years. However the council can also remove these extensions if performance is not satisfactory.

Adjustments to the new contract

- Small amendments to the contract have been made since the previous version in order to close small loopholes and ensure clarity about terms and expectations. These include defining precisely what a 'season' is and the specification for the parish steward role.
- Much of the value of the new contract goes on materials and technology. The successful bidder is expected to be aware of the latest technological developments and use these to create efficiencies.

Next steps

- The pricing information submitted by bidders will allow calculations to be done assessing the impact of the new contract on the council's 2016/17 financial plan.
- On 12 January 2016 Environment Select Committee will receive a report describing the strengths and weakness of the various tenders bids, but the actual providers won't be named. On 19 January Cabinet will make the final decision.
- Task Group members were invited to form one of the focus groups contributing to the LGA Peer Review of the council's highways service.
- Officers were asked to provide the following information:
 - a) Parish Steward role specification
 - b) A Members Briefing Note in January reporting the successful provider and detailing the services to be provided under the contract.
 - c) Urban grass cutting maps.
 - d) "BBLP" to be removed from the task group's name.

4 Next steps

Please see the item above.

(Duration of meeting: 3.00 - 4.00 pm)

The Officer who has produced these minutes is Henry Powell, Senior Scrutiny Officer, of Democratic Services, direct line 01225 718 052, e-mail henry.powell@wiltshire.gov.uk