

Agenda

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Delegated Decisions of the Board Member, Housing Needs

Date: **Monday 27 February 2012**

Time: **5.30 pm**

Place: **Town Hall, St Aldate's**

For any further information please contact:

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Delegated Decisions of the Board Member, Housing Needs

Board Member

Portfolio

Councillor Joe McManners

Housing Needs

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AGENDA

PART ONE PUBLIC BUSINESS

Pages

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Guidance on personal and prejudicial interests is attached to these agenda pages.

2 PUBLIC ADDRESSES

Members of the public may, if the Board Member agrees, ask a question of the Board Member on any item for decision on this agenda (other than on the minutes). The full text of any question must be notified to the Head of Law and Governance by no later than 9.30 am two clear working days before the meeting. Questions by the public will be taken as read and, at the Board Member's discretion, responded to either orally or in writing at the meeting. No supplementary question or questioning will be permitted.

The total time permitted for this item will be 15 minutes.

3 COUNCILLOR ADDRESSES

City Councillors may, at the Board Member's discretion, ask a question or address the Board Member on an item for decision on the agenda (other than on the minutes). The full text of any question and the nature of any address must be notified to the Head of Law and Governance by no later than 9.30 am two clear working days before the meeting. Questions by councillors will be taken as read and, at the Board Member's discretion, responded to either orally or in writing at the meeting. No supplementary question or questioning will be permitted. If an address is made, the Board member will either respond or have regard to the points raised in reaching her or his decision. If the address is by the Chair of a Scrutiny Committee or her or his nominee then the Board member will be required to say as part of their decision whether they accept the Scrutiny recommendations made.

4 STREET OUTREACH REPORT.

This report invites the Board Member to delegate authority to the Executive Director, Housing and regeneration to enter into a new Street Services and Reconnection Service contract for three years with the option of a two year extension at the Council's discretion.

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5 MATTERS EXEMPT FROM PUBLICATION

If the Board member wishes to exclude the press and the public from the meeting during consideration of any of the items on the exempt from publication part of the agenda, it will be necessary for the Board member to pass a resolution in accordance with the provisions of Paragraph 21(1)(b) of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 on the grounds that their presence could involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as described in specific paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

The Board member may maintain the exemption if and so long as, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

DECLARING INTERESTS

What is a personal interest?

You have a personal interest in a matter if that matter affects the well-being or financial position of you, your relatives or people with whom you have a close personal association more than it would affect the majority of other people in the ward(s) to which the matter relates.

A personal interest can affect you, your relatives or people with whom you have a close personal association positively or negatively. If you or they would stand to lose by the decision, you should also declare it.

You also have a personal interest in a matter if it relates to any interests, which you must register.

What do I need to do if I have a personal interest?

You must declare it when you get to the item on the agenda headed "Declarations of Interest" or as soon as it becomes apparent to you. You may still speak and vote unless it is a prejudicial interest.

If a matter affects a body to which you have been appointed by the authority, or a body exercising functions of a public nature, you only need declare the interest if you are going to speak on the matter.

What is a prejudicial interest?

You have a prejudicial interest in a matter if;

- a) a member of the public, who knows the relevant facts, would reasonably think your personal interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgment of the public interest; and
- b) the matter affects your financial interests or relates to a licensing or regulatory matter; and
- c) the interest does not fall within one of the exempt categories at paragraph 10(2)(c) of the Code of Conduct.

What do I need to do if I have a prejudicial interest?

If you have a prejudicial interest you must withdraw from the meeting. However, under paragraph 12(2) of the Code of Conduct, if members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about that matter, you may also make representations as if you were a member of the public. However, you must withdraw from the meeting once you have made your representations and before any debate starts.

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To: Delegated Decisions of the Board Member, Housing Needs

Date: 27th February 2012

Report of: Head of Business Improvement

Title of Report: AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR THE PROVISION OF A STREET SERVICES AND RECONNECTION SERVICE.

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To authorise the award of a contract to provide a Street Services and Reconnection service. To also grant delegated authority to the Executive Director of Housing and Regeneration to award the contract.

Key decision? No

Executive lead member: Councillor Joe McManners

Policy Framework: Meeting housing need and an efficient and effective Council

Recommendation(s): The Board member is asked to:

- (1) Delegate authority to the Executive Director of Housing and Communities to enter into new Street Services and Reconnection service contract for 3 years with the option of a 2 year extension at the complete discretion of the Council.

Appendices to report: None

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This report sets out the procurement route that has been taken to identify a new provider of the Oxford's Street Services and Reconnection service, to assist Oxford City Council in meeting its objectives to reduce homelessness.

- 1.2 Oxford City Council currently has a contract with Crime Reduction Initiatives (CRI) to provide a Street Services and Reconnection service. The service is provided through the provision of a dedicated team of 6 members of staff including a Service manager, team leader, three outreach workers and a reconnection worker. CRI is a voluntary sector organisation who specialise in this area of work.
- 1.3 The team provides assertive outreach and support to the City's rough sleepers and hostel dwellers. The main aim of their work is to help people access appropriate accommodation and other services, thus reducing the number of people sleeping rough across the city.
- 1.4 The key target for this service is to maintain levels of rough sleeping in Oxford below 5 or as close to zero as possible. This target is set by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) in central government.
- 1.5 The current providers have not met the target of keeping rough sleeping numbers below 5 or close to zero. The current providers have delivered an outreach service for the last 3 years, however, current best practice reflects that a more assertive approach to outreach is needed to get positive results. It was felt that by going to market now, the Council can reflect on what practices are currently being delivered in other areas that are resulting in a reduction of rough sleepers. This is to be used within the quality criteria used to assess tenders.
- 1.6 The funding for this service comes from an annual grant from CLG's Preventing Homelessness Grant to tackle a range of issues, including rough sleeping. The current grant allocation for 2011-2012 is £1,042,000; we believe this amount will be allocated next year.
- 1.7 The Council has been commissioning this service since 1st April 2008 and the current contract with Crime Reduction Initiatives will cease on 31st March 2012, and therefore needs to be re-tendered.
- 1.8 The current cost of providing a Street Services and Reconnection team by a team of dedicated people is £238,694 per annum. It is important that the users of this service build up trust with the service providers and that there is continuity of service, so it is proposed to award a contract for 3 years with the option to extend for up to 2 further years, provided the service delivers its targets and the funding from CLG continues.

2. Tender Process

- 2.1 The value of the contract necessitates a tender compliant with the EU Procurement Regulations be carried out. An OJEU notice was issued in October 2011 and a single stage tender process is being undertaken.

This will enable a new contract to be put in place and fully operational for 1st April 2012.

- 2.2 The new provider will work alongside the current provider for 3 months to ensure a full handover of the service is completed if required.
- 2.3 The tender advertisement resulted in eight organisations submitting tender proposals. Five bidders were invited to interview.
- 2.4 Detailed tender evaluations and interviews were conducted in December and January 2011. Tenders were evaluated on the basis of 65% quality criteria, and 35% on cost.
- 2.5 The short listed tenderers were interviewed and assessed further, this has resulted in the Finance team performing due diligence checks on the short listed suppliers.

3. Staffing Implications

- 3.1 There are no new staffing implications for the Council as this contract is already managed by a manager in Housing Needs who acts as the contract manager.
- 3.2 It is possible that TUPE will apply to some or all of the employees of CRI who are currently engaged in providing this service. In the event that the new contract is awarded to an alternative supplier, this matter will need to be agreed between the current and new supplier. CRI and the tenderers are aware of this.

4. Benefits

- 4.1 This team provides us with a dedicated Street Services Team that work with rough sleepers within the boundaries of the city. Evidence shows that if this is done quickly and successfully then it impacts less on secondary services and also avoids those attending statutory services.
- 4.2 This team will give us the opportunity to meet central government targets of reducing rough sleeping to zero by 2012. The team will also work closely with new government initiative called 'No Second Night Out'.

5. Other Options

- 5.1 'Continue as we are' is not an option as the current providers contract is coming to an end.

6. Level of Risk

6.1 Potential risks identified, however, are:

Risk	Likelihood	Mitigation
Unable to agree mutually acceptable contract terms with the preferred supplier.	M	It is hoped that this risk can be mitigated through the tender process and through reference checks with other local authorities. The recommendations in this report also seek to ensure that the Council is in a position to award a contract.
Oxford City Council needs to cancel the contract for any reason.	L	The contract allows for sufficient flexibility to help overcome this. There will also be appropriate break clauses in the contract for non-performance, as well as the option for the Council to exit the contract at the end of the initial contract term.

7. Climate Change/Environmental Impact

7.1 We would seek to appoint a provider who shares the Council's commitment to environmental sustainability.

8. Equalities Impact

8.1 We will seek to appoint a provider who will commit to paying the Council's Living Wage and will comply with equality and diversity obligations.

9. Financial Implications

9.1 The contract is dependant on the continuation of funding from DCLG. Oxford City Council has received a grant from Preventing Homelessness Grant since 1st April 2002 and current government thinking indicates that there is an on-going commitment to the reduction of rough sleeping and therefore to the continuation of this grant. The provision of the Street Services and Reconnection Team is the major priority for funding from this grant.

9.2 In order for the Council to ensure that it has sufficient funding from DCLG for each year of the contract, the contract will include a break clause to cover either the termination or variation of the contract on 1st April each year. Bidders have already been made aware of this and will be responsible for any redundancy costs if the service could not be funded in any year.

- 9.3 The current provider has secured office space in the city centre. New bidders have advised that they will all secure office space within the centre of Oxford if successful.
- 9.4 The finance team have checked the financial sustainability of the two short listed tenders via their financial statements. Both organisations appear to be finding funding aspects challenging but based on the historical financial information provided both companies have been approved to continue with the evaluation process.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1 A legally compliant procurement process is being followed, as outlined earlier in this report. The TUPE obligations on any successful tenderer have also been outlined in the tender documentation. A legally binding contract will be entered into with the successful tenderer with break clauses to terminate the contract early without penalties if required.

11. Conclusion

- 11.1 This service has had a major impact on reducing the number of rough sleepers in the city by providing Outreach support. As the current providers contract is coming to an end this tender process has proved that the methods of delivering successful outreach have changed since the contract was last put in place therefore the council wishes to appoint a new provider who would be able to achieve the targets set by local and central government on rough sleeping. The funding for this contract is provided by DCLG and therefore the Council wishes to continue with this proactive service by entering into a new contract for the provision of a Street Services and Reconnection service provided through a dedicated team

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Background papers:

None

Version Number:

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