

NORTH SOMERSET COUNCIL DECISION

DECISION OF: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT

WITH ADVICE FROM: DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT



DECISION NO: 18/19 DE 242

SUBJECT: GREEN TEAM CONTRACT COMMISSIONING PLAN

KEY DECISION: NO

BACKGROUND:

The council's Parks and Open Spaces Projects and Maintenance (Social Enterprise) contract ends on 31 March 2019 and needs to be re-provided from 1 April 2019. The contract has been renamed the 'Green Team contract'.

The provision of the Services provided under the Green Team contract directly contributes to the council's ambition for providing Quality Places in which to live and visit and Prosperity and Opportunity by enabling young people to fulfil their potential.

DECISION:

That the Commissioning Plan for the future provision of the Green Team contract be approved

REASONS:

The current contract commenced on 1 April 2012 and is contracted to Somerset Wood Recycling. The contract has an initial term to 31 March 2019, with the option for extension, or extensions, up to 31 March 2026. Two teams are currently employed in this contract.

Overall the contractor has been providing the services to a good standard.

We are not considering extending the contract because:

1. Current contractor is unable to extend on the same terms and conditions
2. We need to reduce the overall scope of the contract due to continued budget pressures
3. There is the potential for an improved offer from the market now that the concept of social value has had time to become more embedded meaning there should be more providers.

Consideration now needs to be given to the re-provision of the services provided under the contract from 1 April 2019.

In 2011, when the original contract was prepared, it was an innovative contract because it was created before the introduction of the Social Value Act which places a duty on Councils to consider the Social Value benefits that could be generated through their contracting activity.

Initial consideration is being given to a 8 year contract period to allow future alignment with the Parks and Street Scene contract to facilitate linking of possible future synergies. The final contract duration will, however, be finalised during the tender development stage, taking into consideration contract scope, operational arrangements and financing.

An outline timetable is set out below,

Stage	Indicative dates
Commissioning Plan presented to Executive Member	Nov 2018
Production of contract documents	Nov 18
Tender process	Dec 18
Contract Award	Jan 19
Mobilisation	Feb – March 19
New service delivery commences	1 April 2019

The proposed Green Team contract will provide the following main services:

1. Support existing volunteer groups with maintenance within park and open spaces.
2. Contributing towards our Britain In Bloom and Green Flag awards by providing maintenance within each of these areas.
3. Providing support to the Parks, Tree, PROW and Area Officer Team with regular and reactional maintenance.
4. Treating hazardous & injurious weeds (we have a legal responsibility to treat these plants enforced by Natural England)
5. Grounds and habitat maintenance works – hedge cutting, vegetation and grass clearance, strimming and edging and siding out pathways.
6. Graffiti cleansing
7. Painting/decorating of highway and parks furniture and structures
8. Installation of furniture and signage.

In addition to these practical tasks is the commitment of having social value at its core. This will be addressed in two ways:

- i. Supporting the local community by supervising volunteers that are either:
 - a. Long term unemployed
 - b. Community payback
 - c. Suffering from mental health issues.
 - d. Recovering from alcohol or substance abuse
- ii. Providing people with experience, skills and the opportunity to be introduced back into long term employment.

Volunteering adds considerable value to the contract provision with more than 4000 hours provided each year thereby providing useful opportunities for volunteers to gain new skills; and community payback to provide services for society.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

As set out above

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The current contract has a base budget of circa £112,000 a year. Price reviews mechanisms within the contract has resulted in minimal inflationary increases in contract costs, and consequently there is a risk that future contract costs will be higher than current levels.

Funding

The existing contract is funded through existing operational budgeted within Development and Environment.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS

Whilst there are no statutory requirements in respect of the maintenance of parks and open spaces there is a duty on the council to meet the requirements of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 in respect of its Street Scene. We also have a duty under the Highways Act to ensure highway users are not obstructed by vegetation and that we maintain our sites in a way that it is safe for users.

The re-procurement of services covered by the existing contract will be subject to The Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

CONSULTATION

The Executive Member for Environment will be kept informed of progress.

RISK MANAGEMENT

As indicated above there is a recognised risk that there will be pressure on future contract costs resulting from the inflationary price review mechanism with the existing contract. The tender documents will identify a cost ceiling to ensure that the services will be delivered in budget. Officers will also closely review specification and contract requirements to help mitigate cost increases.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment?

As part of the process going forward an EIA will be completed and will consider the impact of any changes on equality groups.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

The resultant contract(s) will sit within Development and Environment. There are no specific Corporate Implications with this decision.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Executive Member Decision 11/12 DE121 Award of Parks and Open Spaces (Social Enterprise) Contract

SIGNATORIES:

DECISION MAKER:

Signed: Executive Member for Environment

Date:

WITH ADVICE FROM:

Signed: Assistant Director (Placemaking and Growth)
Development and Environment In accordance with Minute No: COU11 Council Meeting 8
May 2018)

Date: