



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

1 FEBRUARY 2017

PRESENT:-

A.Pearson (Chair),
T. Beaken, P Chandler, T Culley, J. Douglas, M.C.R Graham MBE

Chief Executive
Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods,
Administrative Assistant for Communities and Neighbourhoods

C53. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Greenow, Councillor Lumley, Councillor Manderson and Councillor Posnett.

C54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

C55. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

There were no recommendations received from other committees.

C56. HOUSING REPAIRS CONTRACT

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods presented a report to seek Members' approval to proceed with the Housing Responsive, Planned and Voids Repairs contract procurement through a 'lean competitive Dialogue approach and for Members to approve the draft Housing Repairs Design specification, which outlines the key specification outcomes required from a new partnering contract.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods gave a brief overview of the report bringing Members' attention to:

- 3.1- Noting on 27 June 2012 that this committee approved that members award a 5 year with an option to extend for a further 3 years Housing Responsive Repairs, Out of Hours services, Voids and Planned Repairs contract to G Purchase Construction to commence 1 October 2012.
- 3.2- Noting at the Community & Social Affairs Committee on 22 June 2016 members approved a slight extension of the current contract (until end of May 2018) to enable a pre-procurement work to be undertaken, a key feature being

the development of a detailed Housing repairs Specification. Members also recommended that officers develop an approach to seek a long term partnering contract.

The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods presented the Scope and Design Specification as attached as appendix b to Members, focusing on the key points of each slide.

The Chair noted his thanks and stated that he felt it was a very clear document.

A Member noted that it is important to ensure our side of the contract is strong in terms of communication and administration i.e. developing a quality service culture. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that this is important and currently the council are getting better with this, however the council will be reviewing and making both cultural and processing changes internally.

A discussion took place regarding technology advances, as a member noted that many companies now use communication through phones to give their customers or tenants clear and up to date information. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that this will be something they will look into with the bidders and see what they can also offer.

A discussion took place in regards to what will happen if the new partner does not meet the criteria once the contract is in place. It was stated by the Chair and The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods there will be particular clauses and penalties discussed in consultation and within the contract as advised by the legal team. It was also stated the first point of action will always be initial conversation and allowing time for improvement before taking further steps.

A Member enquired as to whether the council can ask for the partner to have apprentices in regards to page 24 of appendix a. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that this will be incorporated into the contract specification. The Chair noted that there is now a new levy which by law large companies will receive for apprentices or have to pay into if they do not use them; this makes the chair confident that new partner will want apprentices.

A discussion was had regarding the process and specification of planned maintenance. The Head of Communities and Neighbourhoods stated that the specification and scheduling of planned works takes place prior to the year of the programme i.e. we are already scheduling the works for the 2017/18 planned programme. A member advised that a lot of work has been done to date and now it is difficult to determine which houses are council owned and which aren't. The Chair stated that there is a lot of good work being done across the repair service however, regrettably the few negative get the most attention.

A Member stated they are happy to see that the council are not looking for the standard 9 to 5 service and recognising that not everyone can take time off for appointments therefore early evening and weekends will be very helpful. The member also noted in regards to technology that other councils do use systems in which tell the tenants who will be coming to their property and when, this would definitely be the way to go on technology services. The Head of

Communities and Neighbourhoods noted that this is definitely something we want to look into, there will be a prioritisation exercise which will be discussed within the task group and all of this needs to be affordable and within budget.

The Chair stated that this contract will be more than just property maintenance, focusing on improving people's lives and being more pro active with the tenants and vulnerable people.

The Chair, on behalf of Councillor Lumley enquired as to whether the partner could have a 3 month probation first before a full contract. He also gave a personal story regarding a company using technology to communicate with customers. The Head of Communities noted that no there could not be a probation period however the clauses and processes in the contact are there for protection.

The Chair wanted to note that TFEC will be involved through out the process, they are doing a very good job and the relationship with the council is closer than ever. Also noting it is important to create the right channels for them to continue to communicate with us going forward.

The Chair sought a proposer and seconder for recommendations 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3. All Members were in favour.

RESOLVED that

- (1) Officers be instructed to commence the procurement for a long term Housing Planned, Void and Responsive Repairs Partner, through a 'lean' competitive dialogue process;
- (2) The Draft Housing Repairs Specification outlining the key outcomes requested from a new long term partner be approved, which is attached as Appendix A;
- (3) Members continue with a Housing Repairs Contract Task Group, with the following Terms of Reference: *'To oversee the Procurement of a Housing Repairs Contract and report back to the Community & Social Affairs Committee with recommendations on a longer term Housing Responsive, Voids and Planned Maintenance Repairs Service'*.

The Chair wanted to note that this is a very exciting time and believed that Melton Borough Council is a very pro active council.

The meeting which commenced at 6.30p.m and closed at 7.20p.m.

Chairman