

## **CONTRACTS SUB-COMMITTEE – 14 November 2000**

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Minutes of the meeting of the **Contracts Sub-Committee** held on **14 November 2000** when there were present:

Councillor D A Weir - Chairman

Cllr Mrs J Helson  
Cllr G A Mockford

Cllr M G B Starke  
Cllr P F A Webster

Concern was expressed about the incomplete Member attendance at this Meeting.

### **OFFICERS PRESENT**

R Crofts	- Corporate Director (Finance and External Services)
G Woolhouse	- Head of Housing, Health and Community Care
D Timson	- Property Maintenance and Highways Manager
J Bourne	- Leisure and Contracts Manager
D Brown	- Environmental Protection Unit Manager
G Brazendale	- Committee Administrator

### **98 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 June 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

#### **Resolved**

That, under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the Meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involved the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in Paragraphs 1 and 9 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

### **99 CONTRACT AWARD – REFUSE AND RECYCLING, STREET CLEANSING AND GROUNDS MAINTENANCE**

The Sub-Committee considered the exempt report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) which outlined the re-tendering process for the refuse and recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts, and sought Members' agreement to recommendations for award of the contracts. The new contracts would commence on 1 April 2001.

A shortlist of suitable companies that had been invited to provide tenders for each of the contracts; a list of the tenderers' proposed prices (with current costs for comparison); and costs per annum for the recycling tender submitted by two companies were appended to the report

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The report explained in detail the following aspects for Members' information and consideration:-

- The assessment criteria and methodology of the contract evaluation process.
- A proposed recycling strategy which would enable the Council to meet the targets contained within the National Waste Strategy.
- Analysis of the prices submitted for each individual contract.
- The annual costs of a recycling scheme, including the staffing implications for the Council.

During discussion, Officers provided further information relating to the following points, in response to Member questions:

- The comparative performance of the two main tenderers during the tender process, the strengths of each submission, and the evaluation carried out, and conclusions reached, by Officers at the end of the process.
- The experience of other Authorities in tendering for similar contracts, particularly in relation to the size of, and gap between, the bids submitted.
- The tender specification, as previously agreed by Members.
- The financial arrangements for the maintenance of King George's Playing Field, Rayleigh, and Plumberow Mount, Hockley, if the Town/Parish Councils accepted or rejected the chosen grounds maintenance contractor, together with the allocation of income from pitch bookings in each of these scenarios. In the event of rejection, the Town/Parish Councils could re-tender for sites under their respective responsibilities.
- Recycling. The Head of Housing, Health and Community Care provided background information relating to the minimum performance standards that Authorities would be expected to reach in levels of recycling, as identified in the Audit Commission's consultation document. These levels were indicative rather than definitive at present, but achievement of certain minimum standards would become a statutory requirement through Best Value legislation. Current indications suggested that the District would need to recycle 14% of waste products by 2003/04 and 21% by 2005/06, figures which included a percentage from Essex County Council's recycling sites, disaggregated by population. Members were informed that, to achieve

the latter target, 4500 - 5000 households would need to be included within the kerbside recycling programme. Currently, 1500 households were involved in the Hawkwell recycling trial. To meet the identified minimum performance standards beyond this date, it was estimated that a further 5000 households would need to be included in the programme by April 2008. Given the likely financial implications of implementing a large-scale recycling initiative, it was suggested that it could be more cost-effective to attempt a phased introduction during the life of the new refuse collection contract, to achieve the minimum standard by the contract's termination in April 2008. This would also allow information to be obtained from other Councils concerning possible approaches to recycling. It was anticipated that, should Members agree to proceeding with a recycling programme, it would be possible for the contractor to begin its operation by Summer 2001, assuming a decision by Council early in the New Year. It would be necessary, at that stage, to include 3500 households, in addition to those in the Hawkwell trial. Members concluded by acknowledging the inevitability of increasing the extent of recycling within the District, given likely Central Government policy, but also recognising the substantial cost of the initiative and the consequent impact upon future Council Tax levels. It was suggested that allocating funds to the programme should be assessed against other competing budgetary priorities, and a motion by Cllr Mrs J Helson and seconded by Cllr G A Mockford to make a decision on the cost and extension of the recycling programme as part of the budget setting process for 2001/02 was agreed. At a Member's request, Officers would seek to obtain cost details of a neighbouring Authority's green waste recycling programme.

The recommendations regarding the award of the refuse and recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts were, on a motion by Cllr Mrs J Helson and seconded by Cllr P F A Webster, agreed unanimously.

### **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That the recommendations for the award of the refuse and recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts, as contained with the exempt appendix to these Minutes, be agreed.
- (2) That a decision on the cost and extension of the recycling programme be taken as part of the budget setting process for 2001/02. (CD(F&ES))

**100 CONTRACT MONITORING AND CHAUFFEURING DUTIES**

The Sub-Committee considered the exempt report of the Corporate Director (Finance and External Services) which outlined a proposed new system for monitoring the refuse and recycling, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts and, also examined an alternative means of providing the civic chauffeuring service.

Members were reminded that these issues had last been considered by the Sub-Committee at its meeting on 9 March 2000 at which it had been agreed that a further report, giving details of staff roles/grades, the proposed new system for monitoring based upon geographical zones and the execution of non-monitoring duties be prepared. A plan, showing the suggested geographical division of the District for monitoring purposes, was appended.

The report covered the following main areas:-

- The current staffing structure at the Council's depot.
- Suggested alterations to the management structure of depot-based staff to ensure that effective monitoring systems would be in place when the new refuse collection, street cleansing and grounds maintenance contracts commence on 1 April 2001.
- The roles of the Principal and Senior Contract Monitoring Officers and the Depot Assistant together with a range of potential benefits of the new monitoring system.
- Proposals for out-sourcing the chauffeuring service to a private car hire company, to allow the Contract Monitoring Officers sufficient time effectively to implement the zoned monitoring system. Consideration was given to piloting the new chauffeuring proposals for one year.

During discussion, the following main issues were considered:

- The need for comprehensive training for the Contract Monitoring Officers to enable them effectively to carry out the monitoring role, and to provide cover for the Senior Contract Monitoring Officer when required.
- The division of the Monitoring Officers' time between office-based and on-site monitoring activities. Dealing with complainants would fall into the former category.
- Review of the specification of Monitoring Officers' vehicles to ensure their appropriateness for new work requirements.

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The Sub-Committee requested that a further report be prepared in six months' time concerning the operation of the new monitoring system, including examples of the reports prepared by the Contract Monitoring Officers.

### **RECOMMENDED**

- (1) That Members agree the implementation of the new structure of the Contract Monitoring Unit, as contained within the exempt appendix to these Minutes.
- (2) That Members agree the implementation of the 'zoned' system of monitoring.
- (3) That a further report be brought to the Sub-Committee in six months' time, regarding the operation of the new monitoring system.
- (4) That Members agree the out-sourcing of the civic chauffeuring duties to a private hire car company on a contractual basis, (initially as a pilot for one year) and that Officers be authorised to proceed with the contract. (CD(F&ES))

The meeting opened at 10.30 am  
and closed at 1.00pm

Chairman: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_