

Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 19 January 2005

Minutes of the meeting of the **Finance & Procedures Overview & Scrutiny Committee** held on **19 January 2005** when there were present:-

Cllr P F A Webster (Chairman)

Cllr P A Capon
Cllr K A Gibbs

Cllr J E Grey
Cllr D Merrick

VISITING MEMBER

Cllr C I Black

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Mrs S A Harper, T Livings and Mrs J R Lumley.

SUBSTITUTES

Cllr Mrs T J Capon

OFFICERS PRESENT

P Warren	- Chief Executive
R Crofts	- Corporate Director (Finance & External Services)
S Rom	- Economic Development Officer
M Martin	- Committee Administrator

18 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 December 2004 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the inclusion of a resolution at the end of Minute 545 as follows:

Resolved

That the recommendations contained within the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2003/04 be agreed. (CD(F&ES))

19 CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

The Committee considered the report of the Policy and Finance Committee, deferred by Council to this Committee for detailed review.

On a Motion moved by Cllr P A Capon and seconded by Cllr J E Grey, the following amendments were **recommended** to Council:-

- para. 2.1 – for ‘estimated contact value’ of up to £10,000 under the column ‘procedure to apply’, delete the words ‘at least 1 quotation’ and insert the following:
‘The procurement officer is required to demonstrate that best value has been achieved in accordance with clause 2.5. Alternatively, 3 competitive quotations should be obtained.’
- para. 2.5 delete the sub-heading ‘Non-competitive quotations’ and the subsequent text contained in paras. 2.5.1 and 2.5.2 and insert the following:-
‘The cost to be paid by the Council shall be the most advantageous, in terms of price, quality of work and delivery and be consistent with achieving best value. To this end, previous quotations for similar work, current market prices and professional and trade price indices shall be taken into account in order to determine best value.’
- para 4.3 be amended to read:-
‘Any tenders received after the expiration of the time for tendering, or which contravene any provision of these rules, should not be considered and shall be returned to the Tenderer.’
- para 5.4.3 delete the words ‘an increase or’ and insert ‘a’.
- para 5.4.4. – delete the colon and dash after the word tenders and insert *‘to confirm or withdraw the tender.’*
- delete the paras 5.4.4.1 and 5.4.4.2

20 LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL STRATEGIC AREA REVIEW CONSULTATION

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive bringing to Members’ attention for consideration and comment the Learning & Skills Council’s (LSC) Strategic Area Review of 14+ education and training, which is now subject to consultation until 28 January 2005.

Responding to a Member question about the identified miss-match between education provision and the needs of businesses, officers advised that at least one local business had been unable to identify a further education College who could provide their specific training requirements and had to get a private College to provide some bespoke training. Also employers find that very little flexibility exists when their employees only require specific modules within a complete course.

These differences can only be addressed by greater dialogue between the training providers and the business community in order to bridge the skills gap.

Members noted that businesses have an input through national and regional employers’ organisations who can lobby Central Government. Businesses can also articulate their needs through other organisations, such as, for example, the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership.

Resolved

That the officer comments outlined with the report be endorsed. (CE)

21 UPDATED RISK REGISTER

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive informing Members of the current position on progressing the Risk Register.

In response to a Member question around the risk associated with a rogue statement made by an elected Member, the Chief Executive advised that this referred to the type of comment that may cause embarrassment to the Council and/or lead to a complaint being referred to the Standards Board for England.

Resolved

That the progress made to date on the Risk Register be noted, together with the actions proposed and that further reports on progress be made twice yearly to this Committee. (CE)

22 LOCAL VOLUNTARY SECTOR COMPACT FOR ROCHFORD DISTRICT

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive introducing a draft local Compact for Members' consideration and comment.

Members noted that this was a statement of principles.

In response to a Member question about the suitability of the phrase 'getting it right together rather than getting it wrong alone', the Chief Executive advised that officers would look at some re-wording.

Resolved

That, subject to the comments above, the draft Rochford Compact be agreed. (CE)

The meeting closed at 7.53 pm.

Chairman

Date