Contract renewals

Background

The parish contracts for Grounds Maintenance, Handyman Services & Caretaking are awarded for a four-year period with an annual break clause, these contracts are due for renewal at the end of May 2024. It is legally required that contracts in excess of £25k should be placed on the government website. Appendix A- SPC Financial Regs

The matter was put on the agenda of the Environment Committee on 8th January 2024, during which meeting the specifications and parish requirements were subject to discussion. There were minor adjustments to the Grounds Maintenance and Handyman services contracts, and it was decided that the Caretaker contract be extended to include Fremantle Park for the first time. Appendix B-Specifications

The FHDC procurement department kindly undertook to advertise the contracts and any interested applicants were signposted to the parish office for any enquiries and also to submit their tenders.

Several businesses did contact the parish for further information including enquiries about the documentation which would be a prerequisite to any successful application. The enquiries received were solely about the RoSPA accreditation. RoSPA is a requirement because it is the responsibility for the inspection and repair of the play equipment in both Sandgate and Fremantle Park. All the interested parties were informed that the provision of a RoSPA certificate was an essential part of the application.

From the initial eleven expressions of interest, seven companies applied for the Grounds Maintenance Contract, four applied for the Handyman Contract and only one applied for the Caretaking Contract.

A waterfall matrix was designed to summarise the required information that contractors provided as part of the tender process.

Stage one of the process was a simple yes/no answer against the follow information requirements:

Grounds Maintenance

Have they submitted: YES or NO

1/ PLI Insurance Cover Confirmation of at least £5m

2/ Method Statement

3/ RoSPA Certification

4/ Waste Carriers Certification

Handyman Contract

Have they submitted: YES or NO

1/ PLI Insurance Cover Confirmation of at least £5m

2/ Method Statement

3/ RoSPA Certification

4/ Waste Carriers Certification

5/ G39 Certification

Stage two was applied when all the information in stage one had been confirmed as a YES. Stage Two considered whether the tender was within budget.

When the information was provisionally collated it was noticed that several applications for both the Ground Maintenance and Handyman contracts had not submitted current RoSPA certification (see Learnings below) and that there were comments that courses had been booked or would be booked on successful acquisition of the contract.

As this was outside the agreed specification the Chairs of SPC and the Finance Committee were contacted for guidance. It was agreed that only those companies with current certification would have their tenders proceed beyond stage one as the specification clearly asked for current documentation. It is worth noting that of those companies who indicated that their colleagues were at present booked onto courses to acquire the necessary certificate that there were no evidential documents submitted which confirmed this.

An additional observation is that safety is of paramount importance in the parks and just the acquisition of RoSPA does not demonstrate experience to a high level. (See Learnings below)

Additionally, there have been similar issues with the G39 requirement on the Handyman Contract- this relates to the installation and maintenance of electrical equipment on lampposts. This is used for CCTV and the Christmas garlands. There have been contractors not submitting a certificate at all and others stating that they have better certification. The parish knows that G39 certification is a current KCC requirement.

There is a single applicant who provided without any follow up, all the necessary certificates and documentation for both the Grounds Maintenance and Handyman Contracts, who is also within the budgetary requirement. This is a well-known local business, with a strong history of customer care and service delivery in the arena of Parish, Town and County councils and has two registered RoSPA inspectors and one registered RoSPA equipment repairer.

Therefore, given the process described, the information received, and also research into the quality of the work undertaken by the successful applicant, it is the strong recommendation of the clerk that the single applicant that met all criteria should be offered the two contracts, to start on 1st June 2024.

Caretaker

There was only one tender for the position of Caretaker, it is within budget for the current year and the applicant has requested inflation increases for the following years. The clerk is aware of the quality of the works undertaken by the applicant and has no hesitation in recommending that the contract is offered to this individual.

In conclusion

There have been a number of lessons that have been learnt during this process which have been included in Learnings below. It was disappointing that not withstanding a good level of interest, that there was only one applicant for the Grounds Maintenance and Handyman Contract who provided everything that was required and that was because they are highly experienced in this field. The process has been transparent and has not advantaged any individuals or company by seeking additional information or clarification of anything that has been submitted.

Learnings

\*There are differing levels of RoSPA Courses, one is to undertake the inspection of play equipment and the other, which is a much higher specification, permits repair to the playground equipment- these are called Routine Play Inspection Course and the Operational Inspection of Children’s Playgrounds Course.

\*\*The next time the contracts are due for renewal it is important to be more specific about the different levels of RoSPA required

\*\*\*The advertisement needs to be even more specific that it requires submission of RoSPA accreditation for the tender to be even considered.

\*\*\*\*It should also require that there is a period after the acquisition of RoSPA certification and evidence of it being used in action. It would be expected that the applicants could demonstrate evidence of XX years of experience.

\*\*\*\*\*At next review the Handyman Contract, be renamed as General Works Contract

Appendix A

b. Where the Council intends to procure or award a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract as defined by The Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (“the Regulations”) which is valued at £25,000 or more, the Council shall comply with the relevant requirements of the Regulations.

c. The full requirements of The Regulations, as applicable, shall be followed in respect of the tendering and award of a public supply contract, public service contract or public works contract which exceed thresholds in The Regulations set by the Public Contracts Directive 2014/24/EU (which may change from time to time).

Appendix B





