

CENTRAL SWINDON NORTH

Grounds Maintenance & Street Cleansing Contract Review Working Group **Notes**

28th September at 5pm – Held physically at The Reading Rooms and virtually via Teams link

Present:

Cllr J Ballman
Cllr M Lucas – Chair
Cllr D Patey – Online
Cllr J Yeowell

A Briggs - CSNPC Estates – Clerk
A Reeves - CSNPC Manager
E Till – CSNPC Head of Finance

Meeting started @ 5pm.

Item 1 – Notes of previous meeting

A Briggs presented the notes of the previous meeting. A copy of which can be found in Annex A.

Cllr J Ballman queried how ad hoc jobs are recorded.

A Briggs advised as hoc jobs are recorded on the client issues log. Which is provided to Cllrs monthly.

A Briggs advised the group that a web form will be available on the new website for residents to submit work request directly to the contractor.

Item was noted.

Item 2 – Performance Contract Review Report

A Briggs presented an associated document, relating to a performance review of the existing grounds maintenance contract. A copy of which can be found in Annex B.

Cllr J Ballman queried the legislation around Carbon reduction for businesses.

Discussion was held.

Cllr Ballman commented on the amount of ad-hoc works being completed and suggested whether there be a cap implemented.

It was explained that many of these works were covered via third party funding, rather than being directly paid for by the Parish Council. An example of the Football Association funding for pitch improvements was given.

The group held further discussion, particularly around operative allocation for completing ad hoc works.

Cllr J Yeowell asked how well the client / contractor relationship was working.

A Briggs describe a positive working relationship.

The group spoke at length about the transfer of staff during the TUPE process.

A Briggs commented on the lack of mapping and data information that was originally transferred from SBC.

A Briggs advised the group that the document was a draft working document. The group were asked for comments or amendments.

The group were informed a further review should take place in 6-12 months time when further data was available.

Cllr J Ballman asked for further information on how the performance is scrutinised, above that of a subjective view.

A Briggs & A Reeves responded to advise that within the contract specification things such as grass heights and condition are listed. Which are used alongside the PQMS grading.

It was advised this binary way of grading is a requirement as to enforce penalties against the contract, should they ever be needed.

J Yeowell queried whether depreciation of vehicles would be passed on to CSNPC during the contract renewal.

A Briggs & A Reeves provided a detailed response in regards to inflationary costs.

A Briggs spoke at length about the current bi annual kerbside sweeping program being delivered by IDV through the Parish. the Group were reminded that SBC would now resume this service for gritting routes only.

CSNPC were in a position to consider ceasing the kerbside sweeping service in light of SBC's resumption. That the monies could potentially be reallocated to use for a mechanical compact sweeper.

The benefits of mechanical sweeping were given.

The group were advised that a Change Control Notice (CCN) would need to be issued to the contractor to remove one service and or implement an additional service.

Cllr M Lucas asked whether the implementation of a mechanical sweeper would remove existing resource.

It was confirmed it would be additional resource, to the existing staffing level, (an additional 1 x FTE).

A Reeves spoke about the need to review efficiencies as part of a CCN., as to ensure utilisation of savings to benefit the services being provided.

A Briggs raised the matter of implementation, and queried the alignment with both CSNPC budget setting and the contract renewal date. It was explained that making a service change mid contract is often challenging or not possible.

A Reeves advised members that they would need to consider the costs as part of budget setting process in January 2023, agreeing any changes and or additional cost projections. With an understanding that negotiations would then take place prior to contract renewal in July 2023.

A Reeves warned of the volatility of rising costs, which could impact any agreed amount set within the budget setting process in Jan 2023.

Cllr J Ballman asked what the costs would be if the Parish were to fully automate street sweeping with machinery.

It was further asked why the Parish has Street Sweeping Operatives and whether this was the most effective way of undertaking the work.

A Reeves advised that the landscape and geography of CSN was restrictive and that fully mechanical sweeping would not be possible. It was commented that there would always be a need for manual operative work.



Cllr J Ballman spoke at length about additional resource, such as a specific small team of reactive operatives to complete routine enhancement works, not part of the core contract works, across the Parish.

It was commented that this could either be through Idverde or in house.

Cllr J Ballman gave comment to the need for either status quo and the existing service remain as is, or the need for committing further spend, as to see the enhancements spoken about.

A Briggs presented the recommendations of the report.

The Group agreed with the recommendations.

Action – A Briggs to seek clarification on what (if any legislation) is in place to impose Carbon reduction for businesses.

Action – IDV to be requested to rearrange postponed Community Engagement event.

Action – Officers to ensure greater scrutiny around the completion of ad-hoc works, as to ensure the core contract is not compromised by removal of existing staff to complete the works.

Action – A Briggs to include additional information on contract specification, as to which is linked to performance marking.

Action - Whole parish residential surveys, seeking Parishioner comments on the services being provided, to be distributed within 6 months.

Item 3 – Tree Condition Surveys

A Briggs referred to an ongoing dispute between CSNPC and SBC reference tree responsibility on lease land.

It was explained that, as to ensure a responsible duty of care under CSNPC occupancy, it was prudent to requests costs for conducting tree survey/condition works.

A cost sourced from Andrew Smith of Idverde was presented as follows:

'We predict 22 days to carry out a full survey and collate a full schedule of works based upon a priority basis.'

The survey cost will be £3,784.00 plus VAT

The volume of works generated from the survey is unknown at this point but for budget purposes you may want to allocate monies for any priority one works raised say in the region of c.£22K'

A Briggs provided a full list of the sites where the tree survey would be required.

Cllr J Ballman queried how often the survey would need to be completed.

A Briggs advised it would be site dependant and would also change when circumstances change. An example of tree planting or significant change was given.

It was further commented that the survey would provide an action plan for works. If the action plan was complete for tree works, then the surveys would remain valid potential for several years.

Cllr J Ballman queried how the figure of £22k was achieved.

A Briggs advised it was a best guestimate based on information Idverde have at the present time.

It was commented that tree works often require a team of people to complete.

A Briggs commented that tree works complete through Idverde has in the past been fairly priced.

Cllr J Ballman asked when was the best time of year to survey trees.

A Briggs replied - Autumn/Winter.

Action – Tree information to be presented to Oct 21 L&R Committee for consideration.

Item 4 – Budget Setting Considerations

A Briggs provided a brief overview of items to be bought from the Contract Working group for consideration as part of the 23/24 budget setting process.

A Briggs presented figures provided previously by Idverde for the cost of mechanical street sweeping and additional full time operatives (x2).

It was confirmed the cost for mechanical sweeping was based on 1 FTE at 37hr per week and include the vehicle lease and consumables.

Cllr J Ballman asked whether 1 x sweeper would be enough to cover the Parish successful.

The Estates Manager advised that from conversations with M Ware (IDV), it was commented that 1 x sweeper would be sufficient and enhance the contract standard.

A Briggs also presented the costs for weekend operatives.

Cllr J Ballman asked A Briggs what he would recommend.

A Briggs stated he would strongly recommend the mechanical sweeping option for consideration. As to the most cost effective way of benefiting the contract.

It was commented that implementation of 2 x FTE as well as mechanical sweeping would take the current standard from Bronze to Gold. However, may be considered excessive at the current time.

General group discussion was held. Including discussion on CSNPC existing vehicle fleet.

The group agreed, that the costs for:

- 1) Mechanical street sweeping
- 2) Additional Operatives (FTE's)
- 3) Tree condition surveys and tree works.

Would be presented to the Oct 22 L&R for consideration as part of budget setting.

Item 4 – Contract Options Appraisal

It was noted the item was a 'standing item'.

Cllr J Ballman queried when the full contract renewal process would need to take place.

It was confirmed the full contract comes to an end in 2025.

The group were informed that the review process would likely commence in late 2023, as to allow for 12-18 months to complete.

Item noted.

The group were advised the next working group meeting will be held in approx. 2 months time.

No other business raised.

Meeting finished at 6.22pm.