

Coventry City Council
Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held at 2.00 pm on Tuesday, 7 April 2020

(This meeting was held remotely)

Present:

Members: Councillor G Duggins (Chair)
Councillor K Caan
Councillor AS Khan (Deputy Chair)
Councillor K Maton
Councillor J O'Boyle
Councillor P Seaman
Councillor P Hetherton
Councillor T Khan
Councillor M Mutton

Deputy Cabinet Members Councillor P Akhtar
Councillor G Lloyd
Councillor D Welsh

Non-Voting Opposition Councillor A Andrews
Members: Councillor G Ridley

Other Members: Councillor N Akhtar
Councillor R Brown
Councillor R Lakha
Councillor J McNicholas
Councillor K Sandhu
Councillor R Singh

Employees: M Reeves (Chief Executive), G Quinton (Deputy Chief Executive), R Amor, S Bennett, V Birchall, N Cowper, P Fahy, N Hart, B Hastie, P Jennings, L Lewis, R Martin, R Moon, J Newman, M Salmon, A Williams, S Wesson, A West

Apologies: Councillor R Ali
Councillor L Harvard

Public Business

110. Declarations of Interest

There were no disclosable pecuniary interests.

111. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 10th March 2020 were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

112. **Transition of the Benefits within Passport to Leisure and Learning Scheme into GoCV**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Business, Investment and Culture that sought approval to transition of the benefits within the Passport to Leisure and Learning Scheme into GoCV to create a unified concession Go CV card. An appendix to the report provided insight data of both Go CV and Passport to Leisure and Learning Cardholders.

The Go CV card was free to obtain and available to all Coventry residents and currently operated two levels of discounting - a standard discount and an enhanced discount (Go CV+) for residents in receipt of qualifying benefits. Go CV+ was effectively the equivalent to the Passport to Leisure and Learning (PTLL) scheme. The Go CV scheme enabled residents to use sports, events and cultural facilities. In turn the Go CV card informed the development of initiatives to support increasing participation, especially amongst those least likely to participate.

It was proposed to transition the PTLL scheme and transfer members to the Go CV+ scheme which would simplify the collection and analysis of information and improve cost effectiveness through removing duplication of resource whilst improving the customer journey. There was no detriment to PTLL members through this proposal which would affect residents currently using a range of partner services, Council services, including adult education and parks.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approves:

- 1) **The merging of the existing Passport to Leisure and Learning concession scheme into the new Coventry residents discount scheme creating a unified concession Go CV card.**
- 2) **Using Corporate earmarked reserves to fund 2020/21 costs, expected to be £72k. This allows time for officers to finalise a review of the scheme to understand the best way for GoCV to become self-funding.**
- 3) **That services across the Council incorporate Go CV as a means of addressing health inequalities, and that, where possible, Go CV cardholders are offered discounts or other advantages across Council facilities, attractions and events.**

113. **Procurement of Insurance**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Finance and Corporate Services that sought approval of a procurement process to purchase further insurance for a range of services for a period of up to 5 years.

The Council purchased a variety of insurance policies including property, terrorism, contract works, fine art, combined liability, crime, personal accident and travel, school journeys, computers, medical malpractice and motor fleet. These insurance policies were procured via an OJEU compliant ESPO/CCS framework. The contract would expire on 30 November 2020. The Council's Financial Procedure Rules required that the Cabinet approved any procurement which involved an annual contract value in excess of £1m per annum.

The Council's activities resulted in a certain amount of predictable financial loss. It was not considered financially viable to insure against all these losses, as the insurance company will charge a pound in premium for each pound it anticipates it will pay in claims. In addition, it will charge a further amount for its administrative expenses, profit and insurance premium tax. In these circumstances the purchase of insurance is uneconomic. The Council's strategic approach to the purchase of insurance was to insure large losses which would have a significant impact on budgets and the provision of services. This was achieved by purchasing insurance with a deductible (the amount you pay before your insurance is triggered). The Council carried substantial self-insurance and the external insurance cover protected the Council above the policy deductible. Most losses/claims were paid from the Council's internal self-insurance fund.

In 2019-20 the Council's premiums amounted to £941,588 plus £112,990 for insurance premium tax. There was an additional charge of £66,360 for claims handling services. The total was £1,120,938.

This report sought approval for the Council's nominated insurance broker, Arthur J Gallagher, to carry out a further competition (on behalf of the Council) against an OJEU compliant DPS (ESPO 649) for insurance services. The intention was to enter into a three-year contract with the potential of a further 2 years extension period. A one-year contract would only be accepted if premiums were much higher than anticipated.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1) Grants authorisation for Arthur J Gallagher to (on behalf of the Council) carry out a further competition against ESPO 649 Framework for Insurance Services for a period of up to 5 years.**
- 2) Grants delegated authority to the Deputy Chief Executive (People) and the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, following consultation with Director for Law and Governance, to undertake all necessary due diligence and, following completion of the competition, to agree the contract award to the successful suppliers under the Framework.**
- 3) Grant authorisation to the Director of Law and Governance to enter into a 3-year contract (with a potential extension for a further 2 years) with the successful suppliers.**

114. European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Grant funding towards Roof Mounted Solar PV Installations

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director of Project Management and Property Services that sought approval for acceptance of European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) grant funding to support the delivery of roof-mounted solar photovoltaic systems on 39 public buildings owned and operated by Coventry City Council.

Under current UK policy, there was a need to deliver projects that would transition the UK towards a “net Zero” target by 2050. The proposals set out in the report were a first step to addressing how Coventry City Council could meet part of its electrical demand from local low-carbon or renewable sources. This would contribute to the aims of the city’s climate change strategy which had a clear objective of delivering reductions to the City’s carbon emission levels.

The proposed project would deliver 899kWp of Solar PV panels across the 39 eligible properties, set out in paragraph 2.1.3.2 of the report, capable of generating 644 MWh of renewable electricity each year to council owned and operated properties across the city. The cost of delivering this project was £1.26m, however there were opportunities currently available to reduce the investment required significantly through grant funding and finance. Coventry City Council had been invited to submit a full application for ERDF funding to cover 50% of the project cost. Due to the value of the grant that would be offered, Cabinet approval of the grant acceptance was required. If the application was submitted following this report a grant award was expected to be made in May 2020. Award would be contingent on the commitment of Coventry City Council to provide the match funding required (50%) in return for net revenue savings estimated at £75k per year.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the proposal for the implementation of the Roof Mounted Solar PV Installations as set out in the report (“the Project”).**
- 2) Approves the proposal for the Council to act as Accountable Body and, if the Council’s grant bid is successful, the acceptance of the ERDF grant funding offer up to the value of £630k from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to support delivery of the Project.**
- 3) Delegates authority to the Director of Finance and the Director of Project Management and Property Services, following consultation with Director of Law and Governance, to finalise the terms and conditions of the ERDF grant and any other legal agreements required to facilitate delivery of the Project and incorporate the grant within the Capital Programme as necessary.**
- 4) Approves the proposal to spend the grant award on the delivery of the Project as set out in the report.**
- 5) Approves the commencement of any necessary procurement exercises and following completion, to award such contracts to the preferred supplier.**
- 6) Approves the provision of a further £630k match funding either entirely from earmarked reserves or a combination of earmarked reserves existing resources and an interest free loan offer from Salix Finance Ltd which shall be used solely for the delivery of the Project.**

- 7) **Requests that officers continue to pursue feasibility options for ground based solar arrays on Council owned land around the city and explore suitable funding routes.**

115. **Procurement for Property Asset Management Framework**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Director Property Services and Development that sought approval of a procurement process to establish a set of multi-supplier term contracts for the provision of property maintenance, repairs and improvements.

Coventry City Council's Compliance and Surveying Team provided a property management service for Council buildings and schools as well as a number of external clients. The works mainly include repairs and maintenance with some property improvements and are undertaken on either a planned or reactive basis depending on the work required. The provision of these works has been via Term Contracts for a number of years.

As the existing term contracts are coming to an end, in order to deliver these works it was proposed to undertake a restricted tender process to set up a multi-lot, multi-supplier term contract for a period of 4 years. A term contract was an agreement whereby there was no guarantee of work. However, should there be a requirement for such work the term contractor would be approached.

The first placed supplier on each lot would be offered the work. The others would be approached if the first place was unable to undertake the work. Bringing all term contracts that were expiring at the same time under one umbrella, reduced the time taken to undertake the necessary procurement process for both the Council and relevant suppliers who may have interest in more than 1 of the contracts.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1) **Authorises a procurement process to establish a set of multi-supplier term contracts for an original term of two (2) years with the option to extend by a further two (2) twelve (12) month periods for the provision of property maintenance, repairs and improvements i.e. a maximum contract length of 4 years in total.**
- 2) **Delegates authority to Director for Property Services and Development, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Jobs and Regeneration, to agree the award of the contract(s) following the restricted tender process in conjunction with Procurement.**
- 3) **Authorises the Council to enter in to Contract(s) with the successful suppliers for up to four (4) years.**

116. **Civil Engineering Support framework**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive that sought approval to tender for a replacement 4-year multi-supplier framework for Civil Engineering Support, to commence 1st October 2020.

Coventry City Council's Highways section managed and maintained a road and pavement network of over 880km. Types of work included pothole repairs, resurfacing of roads and footpaths, highway drainage installations, as well as new civil engineering projects/public realm schemes and was delivered through planned and reactive programmes of work.

Additional funding may be available from the Council securing circa £43m of funding from the West Midlands Combined Authority and Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, to improve public realm in the City Centre on the run up to City of Culture 2021.

A lot of work could be reactive, leading to peaks and troughs of work volumes. It was in the Council's interest to deal with reactive works as quickly as possible, to mitigate against insurance claims from vehicle damage due to potholes etc.

The Council currently had a Civil Engineering Support framework in place, which was used to obtain additional resources as and when needed to undertake the work, who had the necessary skills and experience. This avoided having to recruit additional internal staff.

The current projected annual spend was £1.75m, however, there was the potential to allow a total spend of £12m for any additional funding for the duration of contract. This was funded internally and through external grants and income.

This framework was due to expire at the end of September 2020. Highways were satisfied with the current framework and suppliers' performance. Research had been carried out to identify if there were any suitable frameworks that Coventry could potential use, none had been identified.

It was therefore proposed to tender for a Coventry only framework. This would be structured in a way that allowed local suppliers and small and medium enterprises to apply. As this was a framework, no commitment was given on volumes of work. The intention would be that this could be used by Highways and any other Council Department where the in-house Highways team were unable to carry out the work or did not have the resources.

This report sought approval to tender for a replacement 4-year multi-supplier framework for Civil Engineering Support, to commence 1st October 2020. The intention would be to carry out a restricted tendering procedure, to ensure only suppliers meeting mandatory requirements would be considered at tendering stage.

No significant financial implications had been identified.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet:

- 1) Approves the commencement of a competitive procurement process using the restricted procurement process to set up a 4-year multi-supplier Council wide framework for Civil Engineering Support.**

- 2) **Grants delegated authority to the Director of Transportation and Highways, following consultation with the Director of Law and Governance, to award the Framework to the successful suppliers as well as any subsequent call-off contracts under this Framework.**
- 3) **Grants authorisation to the Director of Law and Governance to enter into all necessary contracts with the successful suppliers.**

117. **Healthwatch Coventry - Grant Aid Agreement**

The Cabinet considered a report of the Deputy Chief Executive that sought approval to enter into a new grant aid agreement for Healthwatch Coventry.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 placed a statutory responsibility on the City Council to commission an efficient and effective local Healthwatch, which worked to strengthen the voice of patients and the public who used health and social care services and spoke out on their behalf.

The Healthwatch network across England worked together to share information, expertise and learning in order to improve health and social care services for adults.

Healthwatch Coventry was established in 2013 through the Here 2 Help Consortium (now dissolved) and the service was grant funded. The service was now managed through Voluntary Action Coventry, which was one of the constituent members of Here 2 Help Consortium.

The proposals contained within the report were for Healthwatch Coventry to continue to fund through grant agreement to 2023. This would enable the local focus and understanding of Coventry's Health and Care system gained by Coventry Healthwatch since its inception to continue. Cabinet's approval for this approach was requested to enable the continued service to carry on beyond current arrangements that ended on 30th July 2020.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet approves entering into a new grant aid agreement for Healthwatch Coventry from 1st August 2020 to 31st July 2023.

118. **Outstanding Issues**

There were no outstanding issues.

119. **Any other items of public business which the Chair decides to take as a matter of urgency because of the special circumstances involved.**

There were no other items of public business.

(Meeting closed at 2.30 pm)