

REPORT TO CABINET

17 October 2018

Subject:	The Establishment of a Framework Agreement for the Supply of Goods and Provision of Bereavement Related Services
Presenting Cabinet Member:	Councillor Syeda Khatun – Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Communities
Director:	Director – Monitoring Officer – Surjit Tour.
Contribution towards Vision 2030:	 
Key Decision:	Yes
Forward Plan (28 day notice) Reference:	SMBC03/10/2018
Cabinet Member Approval and Date:	Councillor Syeda Khatun
Director Approval:	Surjit Tour
Reason for Urgency:	Urgency provisions do not apply
Exempt Information Ref:	Exemption provisions do not apply
Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):	Ward councillors have not been consulted
Scrutiny Consultation Considered?	Scrutiny have not been consulted
Contact Officer(s):	Mark Satchwell – Service Manager – Registration mark_satchwell@sandwell.gov.uk

DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet:

1. Authorise the Director – Monitoring Officer to establish and enter into a new framework agreement for the Supply of Goods & Provision of Bereavement Related Services, as outlined in Appendix 1 from 1st November 2018 for a period of four years, with an annual spend of approximately £112,000.

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The existing contract for the supply of Bereavement Related Goods and Services is due to end on 31 October 2018 therefore, following a tendering exercise and in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules, the purpose of the report is to authorise the Director - Monitor Officer to enter into a new framework agreement with suppliers.
- 1.2 These goods and services include the supply of memorial items for the placement of ashes after cremation, inscriptions on plaques, memorial maintenance, book of remembrance services and other burial and cremation items, all of which are essential to the delivery of services to the bereaved.
- 1.3 The framework agreement with the suggested suppliers is for 4 years with an anticipated annual spend of £112,000.

2 IMPLICATION FOR THE COUNCIL'S AMBITION

- 2.1 The establishment of the new framework will support the council's ambition that Sandwell towns will be successful centres of the community and places where people choose to bring up their families.
- 2.2 It will also support our ambition for Sandwell to have a national reputation for getting things done.

3 BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 The existing framework for the supply of goods and provision of bereavement related services is due to end on 31st October 2018.
- 3.2 The Council has an on-going requirement for the supply of goods and services to support its front-line service delivery in relation to the burials, cremations and for memorial products.
- 3.3 The Council's Bereavement Services Team have an excellent understanding of the needs and requirements of bereaved families and it was determined that the project team could utilise this knowledge and wealth of experience, including taking on board previous feedback from customers and funeral directors, to develop and produce the specifications to ensure the Council can deliver a diverse range of services to meet its customer needs at a difficult time in their life.

- 3.4 An EU compliant tendering process was undertaken to assess tenderers against prescribed minimum selection criteria of a pass/fail nature including financial and economic standing, reliability, health and safety, professional accreditations and professional qualifications. This ensured that only tenderers who met these minimum requirements would be considered at award stage.
- 3.5 To support the Council's ability to access and offer a wide selection of goods available from the supply market, attainment of value for money and to offer a choice to bereaved families it was deemed that several tenderers would be appointed to this framework. Therefore, the tender was split in ten lots covering the various goods and service provision requirements of the Council.
- 3.5 A competitive tendering exercise was undertaken taken in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Following advertisement, nine bids were received. These were initially assessed in accordance with the published evaluation criteria.
- 3.6 The framework agreement will include seven lots with a total of five suppliers and service providers.
- 3.7 The agreement will in some instances allow mini competitions to be undertaken to ensure that continued value for money is obtained.
- 3.8 The anticipated total expenditure associated with the supply of goods and provision of bereavement related services for the duration of the contract is estimated to be £448,000.
- 3.9 The framework agreement will support the Registration Services in the delivery of bereavement related services at key moments in people's lives.
- 3.10 Most of the goods and services covered by this framework agreement were previously subject to similar framework which was introduced in 2014. However, once again there have been no successful bids achieved for lot four or lot six therefore it is recommended that this requirement is subject to annual quotation exercises to maintain competitiveness.
- 3.11 It was also felt that lot ten could not be awarded due to significant discrepancies on price and quality submissions. This will require a re-evaluation and re-issue on a separate ITT. The current framework expires on 31st October 2018 therefore, an exemption report to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules will be submitted to the Executive Director of Resources for approval to extend the existing arrangement until 31st March 2019.

- 3.12 The objective of the framework is to ensure value for money is achieved and the needs of bereaved families are met. Expenditure associated with the supply of bereavement related goods and services is dictated by the demand from families for services provided by the Council.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION

- 4.1 The existing framework agreement is due expire on 31st October 2018. Many of the current suppliers have again submitted successful bids and will be included in the new framework.

5. CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

- 5.1 Consultation has taken place with the Procurement Services Manager to establish this course of action, ensuring the Council can demonstrate the best value for money option has been recommended.
- 5.2 It was not considered appropriate to invite customer involvement with this project due to the subject nature being sensitive and excellent understanding of the needs and requirements of bereaved families that exists from within the Bereavement Services Team.

6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 6.1 The council could choose to engage directly with individual suppliers and undertake mini tenders annually once spend reached levels which would determine this approach. However, this would prove to be extremely time consuming, resource intensive and would not be cost-effective as rates would be subject to individual negotiation.
- 6.2 In addition, the bespoke nature and sensitivity of services to be provided to the bereaved could not be delivered by a mini tender approach in a timely manner.
- 6.3 The goods and services to be procured are of a specialized nature, therefore the voluntary sector cannot be considered in this instance.

7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The estimated annual expenditure on bereavement related goods and services is £112,000.
- 7.2 For the duration of the new framework agreement this equates to £448,000
- 7.3 Prices tendered are comparative to with those of the previous tender, therefore it is not anticipated to show a significant increase in spend on these items.

8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 Legal Services have reviewed contract documents in relation to the procurement exercise.

9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 Clauses contained within the tender documentation requiring compliance with all Acts and Codes of Practice applicable for equality and diversity have been included.

10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 10.1 All Tenderers were required to certify that they comply with all relevant Data Management regulations and requirements.

11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT

- 11.1 All Goods are to be sourced from sustainable and legal sources, with the focus on building strong communities and sustainable businesses in the countries sourced from; ensuring that working conditions are acceptable and workers receive a fair living wage.

12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS

- 12.1 Consideration was made of sustainability and environmental factors. A Clause was included within the terms and conditions for Suppliers/Service providers to perform its obligations under any Call-Off Contract in accordance with the Council's environmental policy.

- 12.2 The specification also stated that: -

The Suppliers would support and assist the Council in meeting their Environmental Policy aims, including packaging which is recycled, recyclable and minable, together with offering a free disposal service for all packaging, removing such immediately following installation, with such being recycled in the most beneficial way available.

13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)

- 13.1 All tenderers were required to answer social value questions in accordance with EU Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Responses were scored against weighted award criteria to ensure social value impact was taken in to account.

14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND

14.1 None

15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 The Council recognises the profound impact bereavement has on families and the importance of the funeral and other services of this type has on a healthy grieving process.

15.2 Through its Registration Service, the Council provides a suite of bereavement related services for the residents of the borough and those organisations and families who chose to use its excellent facilities.

15.3 The competitive tendering exercise in line with the Councils Contract Procedure rules and Public Contracts Regulations 2015, has been undertaken.

15.4 The need to establish value for money arrangements with external suppliers for bereavement related goods and services is necessary to ensure the needs of bereaved families can be met.

15.5 It is felt that this recommendation ensures the needs of bereaved families can be met and value for money will continue to be achieved.

16 BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Description of Lots and Successful Suppliers

Surjit Tour

Director – Law and Governance

Appendix 1

Lot	Number of tenders received	Number of tenders excluded	Companies to be included within the framework
1. New cremation memorials for scattered remains	2	1	Odlings Ltd t/a Columbaria Company 59 New Cleveland Street, Hull, East Yorkshire HU8 7HB
2. New cremation memorials for the internment of cremated remains (above ground)	2	0	Odlings Ltd t/a Columbaria Company 59 New Cleveland Street, Hull, East Yorkshire HU8 7HB Greenbridge Designs, Unit 27 Weston Industrial Estate, Honeybourne, Evesham WR11 7QU
3. New statues, benches (non-tablet) & planters for memorial gardens	2	1	Greenbridge Designs, Unit 27 Weston Industrial Estate, Honeybourne, Evesham WR11 7QU
4. Replacement tablets / renovation of tablets / additional inscription for existing memorials	1	1	Not awarded. 3.7 - Background and main considerations
5. Sundry items (Including standard issue urns & name plates)	5	3	Treasured Memories Limited, Unit 21 Kimberley Way, Kimberley Business Park, Staffordshire WS15 1RE Teleshore UK Ltd Unit 5 Oakdale Court, Oakdale, Blackwood NP12 4AD
6. Memorial keepsakes	2	2	Not awarded. 3.7 - Background and main considerations

7. Book of remembrance	2	1	Scribes Plus Ltd, Hall 11 Armitage Road, Hawkesyard, Rugeley, Staffs WS15 1PU
8.Safety inspection of memorials	1	0	Teleshore UK Ltd Unit 5 Oakdale Court, Oakdale, Blackwood NP12 4AD
9.Repair and remedial works to memorials following safety inspection and damage.	1	0	Teleshore UK Ltd Unit 5 Oakdale Court, Oakdale, Blackwood NP12 4AD
10. Muslim burial chambers	2	2	Not awarded. 3.8 - Background and main considerations