



CORPORATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

MEMBERS UPDATE 2018/19

ISSUE: 2

Article of: Director of Development and Regeneration Services

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SUBJECT: Exemption from Contract Procedure Rules in relation to a Low Carbon and Renewable Energy study required for the Local Plan Review

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF ARTICLE

1.1 To brief Members on the grant of an exemption from Contract Procedure Rules by the Chief Executive in relation to a Low Carbon and Renewable Energy study required for the Local Plan Review.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 The Council are currently preparing a Local Plan Review (LPR) which will guide development in the Borough between 2012 and 2050. The production of the LPR must be informed by a robust evidence base and a low carbon and renewable energy study comprises one of the key elements of this evidence. The study is required to update the evidence relating to renewable energy, assess the opportunities and constraints for low carbon and renewable energy delivery across the Borough, and identify any specific areas suitable for renewable or low carbon energy development.

2.2 The Local Plan Review is one of the Council's strategic objectives. Should the Council not undertake a low carbon and renewable energy study then there will be an unsound evidence base with which to inform policy development which will be detrimental to the overall soundness of the Local Plan Review.

3.0 CURRENT POSITION

- 3.1 Undertaking a Low Carbon and Renewable Energy study (LCRE) requires particular expertise and, as such, the Council wishes to appoint a suitably experienced consultant to undertake the study on the Council's behalf.
- 3.2 Officers from Strategic Planning went out to seven consultancy firms with a reputation for being able to deliver studies of a similar nature to the LCRE study in March 2018 to invite them to tender for the LCRE study. Unfortunately we received no bids, with some consultancies informing us that the timing of the bidding process (over the Easter period) meant that they were not able to respond. As a result, in July 2018, officers again invited tender bids from the same seven consultancy firms (but allowing more time for them to respond and having explored the possibility of inviting tender bids from other consultancy firms) and this time received just one bid. It is clear that the Council cannot secure three written quotations for the required project from consultancies with the necessary knowledge, skills and experience.
- 3.3 The one quote received was for a fixed fee of £19,400. No other bids were received to enable comparison. Following the gathering of references (and after considering the written submission with the bid), officers consider that Wood Consultancy offer a suitable level of knowledge, skills and experience to undertake the LCRE study and that the fee quoted is reasonable for the scope of work.
- 3.4 The estimated value of the contract will exceed £10,000 and therefore three written quotations would normally be obtained but, as explained above this has not been possible on this occasion despite two attempts. An exemption was therefore requested from the Chief Executive from the requirement to obtain three written quotations under the contract procedure rules and the Chief Executive granted this request.

4.0 ACTION BEING TAKEN

- 4.1 The purpose of this update is to notify Members that an exemption from contract procedure rules was granted by the Chief Executive for the reasons set out above.

5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no significant sustainability impacts associated with this report and, in particular, no significant impact on crime and disorder.

6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There is a financial implication arising from this article as it relates to the purchase of consultancy services to produce a Low Carbon and Renewable Energy study. The costs for the study can be covered within the Planning Service's budgets.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This item is for information only and makes no recommendations. It therefore does not require a formal risk assessment and no changes have been made to risk registers.

Background Documents

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

Equality Impact Assessment

This report does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

Appendices

None.