

WIRRAL COUNCIL

EMPLOYMENT & APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE – 16TH SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF TECHNICAL SERVICES

PARKS & COUNTRYSIDE SERVICES PROCUREMENT EXERCISE – CREATION OF NEW CONTRACT MANAGER POST

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 On 22nd July 2010, Cabinet agreed to proceed with a major procurement exercise to deliver a new 'Total Service with Single Provider' service delivery model for Parks & Countryside Services commencing winter 2011.
- 1.2 Specialist senior-level expertise will be required to ensure this procurement exercise and subsequent contract management arrangements are a success and at their meeting Cabinet also endorsed the creation of a new Parks & Countryside Services Contract Manager post.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to seek Committee approval for the creation of this post and the commencement of advertisement and recruitment procedures with immediate effect.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At its meeting on 26th June 2008, Cabinet agreed that "a review of the Parks and Countryside Service be carried out using the Gateway Review process" (Minute 96 refers).
- 2.2 As detailed in a subsequent report to Cabinet on 5th February 2009 (Minute 356 refers): "The scope of the Parks and Countryside Services Procurement Exercise (PACSPE) includes all elements of the Department of Regeneration's Parks and Countryside Service and also the Streetscene Services grounds maintenance contract which Cabinet agreed to extend to the end of March 2011 at its meeting on 23rd January 2008 (Minute 463 refers)". The Streetscene Services highway verge and tree maintenance contracts have subsequently been extended until 30th November 2011 (Cabinet 18th March 2010, Minute 347 refers).
- 2.3 The gross budgets for these services for 2010/11 total in excess of £14.4M and include parks and open spaces, golf courses, cemeteries and crematoria, rangers, beach lifeguards, allotments, maintenance of highway verges and trees and war memorials.
- 2.4 Consultant Capita Symonds were subsequently commissioned to develop an Outline Business Case for PACSPE and on 3rd September

2009, Cabinet requested a more detailed analysis of three service delivery options (Minute 98 refers). Capita Symonds carried out a more detailed appraisal of the three options and produced an Outline Business Case report setting out their recommendations. This report was updated in June 2010 and presented to Cabinet on 22nd July 2010 (Minute 84 refers).

2.5 The report to Cabinet on 22nd July compared the following service delivery options:

- Option 1 – In-house plus External Support
- Option 2 – Separate Lots with Service Providers
- Option 3 – Total Service with Single Provider

2.6 The qualitative and quantitative benefits of each option were assessed in detail and Capita Symonds concluded that Options 2 and 3 offered significantly higher potential gains than Option 1, but also presented higher risks. Capita Symonds concluded that “providing associated risks can be managed effectively through the procurement process and during the life of the contract, both options offer tremendous opportunities to address the Authority’s primary objectives and to introduce a step change in the future service delivery of Parks and Countryside Services at Wirral Council”.

2.7 Cabinet approved the recommendation to proceed with Option 3 based on the greater potential for improvements in efficiency and consistency of service delivery, but recognised that as this option involves transferring all services to a single contractor then it is particularly important that the Council does everything possible to ensure that the procurement process selects the most appropriate contractor and that the contract management arrangements are fit for purpose.

2.8 The proposal to establish a new Parks & Countryside Services Contract Manager post was endorsed by Cabinet on 22nd July based on these considerations.

3.0 PROPOSAL

3.1 It is proposed that a new Parks & Countryside Services Contract Manager post is established at a senior level reporting directly to the Head of Service.

3.2 Based on the significant and specialist knowledge, skills and experience required, it is proposed that the post is graded at EPO9 (£46,423 - £48,979) and the draft Job Description and Person Specification are appended to this report. The requirements and grading of this post have direct parity with other equivalent positions in the Technical Services Department responsible for managing the Streetscene Environment Services and Highway & Engineering Services strategic contracts.

- 3.3 During the procurement process, it is anticipated that at least one senior postholder (over 60 years of age) within the existing Parks & Countryside Service will take the opportunity to retire.
- 3.4 It is proposed that the post is advertised and filled as soon as possible so that the successful candidate can play a key role in shaping the proposed new service delivery arrangements to commence in winter 2011. This will help to ensure essential knowledge transfer from the procurement stage through to contract mobilisation and commencement and the postholder will play a key role in determining the new 'lean intelligent' client contract management arrangements to be put in place and used throughout the life of the contract.
- 3.5 Once the new service delivery arrangements are in place, it is proposed that the postholder will have overall line management responsibility for all aspects of Parks & Countryside Services including policy and strategy development and any small-scale retained functions/ operations.

4.0 JUSTIFICATION

- 4.1 The move to the new 'Total Service with Single Provider' arrangement presents the Council with the opportunity to achieve a step change in service delivery both in terms of efficiency savings and quality and consistency of service standards.
- 4.2 The Capita Symonds Outline Business Case indicates efficiency savings of £7.841M over a ten year contract term as a result of moving to a new single strategic contract with no diminution in service delivery.
- 4.3 This post is considered to be of crucial importance to enable the Council to successfully implement the new service delivery arrangements by winter 2011 and ensure the new strategic partnering contract administered by a new 'intelligent thin' client is a success.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The total cost of this new post based on top of grade and including on-costs is £61,714 to be funded from within existing resources.

6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES/ EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 Equal opportunities will be an important consideration during the advertisement and recruitment process for this post in accordance with usual corporate procedures.

7.0 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS/ IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 There are no implications under this heading.

8.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no implications under this heading.

9.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no implications under this heading.

10.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no implications under this heading.

11.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no implications under this heading.

12.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no implications under this heading.

13.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no implications under this heading.

14.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT

14.1 The information contained in the Parks & Countryside Services Procurement Exercise – Outline Business Case report to Cabinet of 22nd July 2010 has been used in the preparation of this report.

15.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 The new Parks & Countryside Services contract will have implications for all Wards.

16.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

16.1 Committee is requested to approve the creation of a new Parks & Countryside Services Contract Manager post at salary grade EPO9 and commencement of external advertisement and recruitment procedures with immediate effect.

DAVID GREEN
DIRECTOR, TECHNICAL SERVICES