

PARKS AND COUNTRYSIDE GATEWAY REVIEW

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report gives members an update on the Parks and Countryside Service Procurement Exercise (PACSPE) and Gateway Review. Members are asked to agree that the previous initial allocation of £40,000 from the Efficiency Investment Fund to provide support for the review be increased to £85,000.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 At its meeting on 26th June 2008 (Minute 96 refers) Cabinet agreed that:

- 1) A review of the Parks and Countryside Service be carried out using the Gateway Review process,
- 2) A Parks and Countryside Options Steering Group be established and members be nominated;
- 3) An initial sum of £40,000 be allocated from the Efficiency Investment Fund to provide support for the Gateway process.

3.0 PROGRESS REPORT

3.1 Following his assistance to the Council on the procurement exercises involving waste and highways services, a consultant has been appointed to advise the Council on the Parks and Countryside Service Procurement Exercise (PACSPE).

3.2 The scope of the PACSPE includes all elements of the Department of Regenerations 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 total net value of both contracts is £7.8M.

3.3 The PACSPE Project Team has now been established and held its first meeting on 18th December 2008. It is responsible for the day-to-day management and implementation of the project.

3.4 A PACSPE Project Board has also been established and is due to meet on 19th January 2009. This is an officer group, which is responsible for the overall direction and management of the project.

3.5 A PACSPE Member Options Steering Group has also been established and is due to meet in the near future. They will review the options for service delivery which will be given final consideration by Cabinet.

3.6 The PACSPE Project Team has advertised for consultants to develop a “Business Case” and service delivery options. Outline market testing of a number of consultancy firms has indicated that a realistic estimate of the cost of producing the information required is £65,000. In addition an estimated £20,000 will be required to cover the consultant’s fees in supervising the Gateway Review process.

- 3.7 Members are therefore asked to agree that the allocation from the Efficiency Investment Fund to provide support for the review be increased to £85,000.
- 3.8 The Office of Government Commerce (OGC) is changing their charging policy for Gateway reviews which will result in additional costs. This will be the subject of a separate report.
- 4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**
- 4.1 The cost of engaging consultants to support the Gateway Review process is likely to be in the region of £20,000. The cost of engaging consultants to produce the Business Case and service delivery options is likely to be £65,000.
- 4.2 Members are therefore requested to increase the initial allocation for consultancy fees to £85,000 to be paid in 2008/2009 and 2009/2010.
- 5.0 STAFFING IMPLICATIONS**
- 5.1 Support will be required for the review from existing staff within the Department of Regeneration, Technical Services, Finance, Law, Human Resources and Asset Management and Corporate Services.
- 6.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**
- 6.1 There are none arising from this report.
- 7.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1 There are none arising from this report.
- 8.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS**
- 8.1 There are none arising from this report.
- 9.0 PLANNING IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1 There are none arising from this report.
- 10.0 ANTI-POVERTY IMPLICATIONS**
- 10.1 There are none arising from this report.
- 11.0 SOCIAL INCLUSION IMPLICATIONS**
- 11.1 There are none arising from this report.
- 12.0 LOCAL MEMBER SUPPORT IMPLICATIONS**
- 12.1 There are none arising from this report.

13.0 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

13.1 There are none arising from this report.

14.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

14.1 That the sum allocated from the Efficiency Investment Fund to provide support for the Gateway process be increased from £40,000 to £85,000 with this sum to be spent in 2008/09 and 2009/10.

Alan Stennard
Director of Regeneration

This report was prepared by Dave Cowling who can be contacted on 666 4792