

**DEPUTY LEADER
17th March, 2014**

Present:- Councillor Akhtar (in the Chair).

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors Gosling and Sims.

N53. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Consideration was given to the minutes of the previous meeting held on 17th February, 2014.

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 17th February, 2014 be approved as a correct record.

N54. RENEWAL OF AQUA SQL SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT - APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION FROM STANDING ORDERS

Consideration was given to a report presented by Stuart Booth, Director of Finance, which sought approval to invoke Standing Order 38, which permitted exemption from normal Contract Standing Orders as the contractor concerned was the only supplier able to provide quotes, due to the fact that they were the only system supplier that could provide annual support and maintenance for their system.

The AQUA SQL system held course and learner details for adults enrolled on Skills Funding Agency (SFA) funded projects including Community Learning, the Adult Skills Budget and ESF Co-Financed projects.

The Council held a perpetual licence and renewed the annual support and maintenance of that licence on an annual basis.

Resolved:- That the contract for the annual support and maintenance of the AQUA SQL System be exempted from the provisions of Standing Order 47.6.2, the requirement to invite at least two oral or written quotations for contracts with a value of £5,000 but less than £20,000.

N55. RENEWAL OF INSURANCE CONTRACTS 2014/15

Consideration was given to a report presented by Andrew Shaw, Insurance and Risk Manager, which provided information on the outcome of the Insurance Contract renewals for the insurance year commencing 28th February, 2014.

In accordance with OJEU Tendering Procedures, the provision of insurances to the Authority was subject to tendering procedures in 2012/13 and, as a consequence, Long Term Agreements with the respective insurers were agreed which took effect from 28th February, 2013.

Consequently, on the basis of this analysis, cover for Cross-Class (Major Liability) Risks, Personal Accident, Travel and School Journey Risks and Fidelity Guarantee Risks was awarded to Risk Management Partners (RMP), whilst cover for Property and Contract Works Risks was awarded to Zurich Municipal Insurance (ZMI), to take effect from 28 February 2013.

In accordance with the terms of the contracts, declaration forms must be completed and submitted to insurers at the end of each insurance year, so that performance over the preceding year can be analysed and adjustments made to premiums as appropriate.

Following recent meetings with both RMP and ZMI, at which they presented their renewal terms for the coming year, it was revealed that the Authority had realised an overall saving on premiums of £95,394.

Predictably, a large proportion of this (£68,455) was on property and partly down to the reduction in the size of the property portfolio. However, ZMI also stressed that the Authority's excellent claims experience and the fact that the Council suffered only one loss during 2013/14 (the Museum break-in) also contributed. Similarly, the reduction in the Terrorism premium (£11,400) was largely down to the reduction in the portfolio and staff numbers.

A pleasing saving of £15,410 was also achieved on claims handling charges. Whilst part of this was down to a slight decline in claims numbers, it was also a consequence of the Governance Section handling more property-related liability and motor claims 'in-house' rather than routinely referring to appointed claims handlers, Gallagher Bassett. This was a policy that the Council would be aiming to continue in the future.

Resolved:- (1) That the savings achieved for 2014/15 across various insurance policies and claims handling charges be noted.

(2) That the key role that the Council's Risk Management strategy had played in driving down the numbers and costs of claims leading to savings in insurance premiums be noted.

N56. BASELINE PERSONNEL SECURITY STANDARD FOR PUBLIC SERVICE NETWORK USE

Consideration was given to a report presented by Richard Copley, Corporate ICT Manager, which outlined the new security checking arrangements required for users of the Public Services Network (PSN) to ensure compliance.

The Public Services Network provided for:-

- A faster and more secure network.
- Access to a range of critical services such as Blue Badge, Revenues and Benefits, Registrars and Elections.
- Secure data-sharing between all UK public sector organisations.
- Access to the 'G-Cloud'- this is a secure market place and hosting environment provided by Central Government. It enables any part of the UK public sector to procure hundreds of different cloud based services.

The Council achieved Public Services Network compliance in 2013 despite having yet to fully adopt BPSS checking as current processes were considered robust enough at that time. However, with the recent tightening of compliance criteria for the 2014 audit, the Council was being asked to improve the rigour with which it security checked employees and ensure adherence to all the requirements outlined in the BPSS to achieve re-accreditation.

Due to the large numbers of employees this would involve and the expense and time required to undertake BPSS level of checking, the Cabinet Office have allowed Councils to undertake the process on a three staged basis, over three years.

As the report suggested for Stage One, it was identified that this would involve 400 current employees, 200 for Stage Two and for Stage Three the remainder of the computer using workforce making a grand total of 4,500 employees who needed security checking to BPSS level.

This figure did not include schools because at present time the schools network was suitably segregated for them not to be included, although this could change in the future.

If the Council were to fully BPSS check all employees this would cost over £100k. It was, therefore, proposed that the recommended approach, was to only check employees who were new starters or who have worked for the Council for less than three years. The majority of the Council's workforce have been in employment for over three and were, therefore, deemed to be 'known and trusted' employees, but there would be a commitment to checking all new employees and those who have been with the Council for less than three years to the BPSS level within the recommended timescales.

Therefore, in order to be able to address the timescales outlined by the Cabinet Office and also to keep the resource requirements (both financial and physical) to a minimum it was recommended that employment history checks be undertaken with verification of criminal records as described above.

It was noted that with effect from the 1st April, 2014 recruitment processes would be amended to ensure all new employees to the Council have the relevant level of checks required for Public Service Network compliance.

Working with ICT, HR would update the HR and Payroll system to indicate which posts required the BPSS level of checking to ensure managers were clear which posts were affected. All relevant recruitment documentation and training materials would also be updated to reflect the new requirements.

Subject to confirmation it was proposed the cost of this check be charged to the recruiting manager.

Resolved:- (1) That a funding method for the required disclosure checks (both for retrospective and future checks) be approved.

(2) That the proposed approach i.e. focus on new starters and employees with less than three year service be approved.

N57. CABINET REPORTS AND MEMBERS' ISSUES

Phil Howe, Director of Human Resources, reported on:-

- The potential for industrial action by schools on the 26th March, 2014 over national terms and conditions and pensions
- National Pay Award and the significant increase being sought by Trades Unions above the 1% budgeted
- A report was being prepared for consideration by the Staffing Committee on the proposals for the Council to pay the Living Wage rate and the impact
- An invitation had been received for attendance at the Self Regulation Select Commission on Thursday, 27th March, 2014, to share information on agenda spend.

Richard Copley, Corporate ICT Manager, reported on:-

- Approaches to changes to Members' ICT and an information sharing session on this subject scheduled for Tuesday, 25th March, 2014 at 5.00 p.m.
- Progress regarding Digital Region closedown and the proposals going forward to provide superfast broadband to 95% of the U.K.'s population by Central Government

Jacqueline Collins, Director of Legal and Democratic Services, reported on:-

- A report was to be submitted to the next meeting of the Cabinet on the creation of a company to replace the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation

- Dates had not yet been finalised regarding the hearing of the Judicial Review appeal relating to the distribution of EU funding
- The proposed changes going through Parliament on the grounds on which a Judicial Review could be brought
- The letter that was to be distributed to all Members of the Council regarding Purdah, which would commence on 14th April, 2014

Stuart Booth, Director of Finance, reported on:-

- The various financial reports that were being submitted to Cabinet on the 19th March, 2014
- The challenges facing the Council in taking forward the 2015/16 budget

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

N58. PROCUREMENT OF ANNUAL SOFTWARE SUPPORT AND MAINTENANCE FROM NORTHGATE - NDR SOFTWARE

Consideration was given to a report presented by Stuart Booth, Director of Finance, which provided details on how to enable the Council to ensure ongoing use and reliability of the Northgate Revenues and Benefits System functionality from 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015, there was a need to have a Support and Maintenance agreement with the software supplier.

Maintaining the reliability of Northgate was essential in maintaining an excellent customer service in the administration of benefits, ensuring efficient billing of Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates and ensuring that income collection was maximised.

Exemption from Standing Orders for procuring this software support and maintenance was sought as the provision of the document management and workflow software support could only be supplied by Northgate.

Resolved:- That the contract for the purchase of annual Support and Maintenance for the Northgate Revenues and Benefits System be exempt from the provisions of Standing Order 47.6.2 (requirement to invite at least two oral or written quotations for contracts with a value of £5k but less than £20k) and the purchase be made from Northgate.

N59. TRAINING OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE WORKFORCE

Consideration was given to a report presented by Nigel Mitchell, Learning and Development Manager, which sought approval for exemption from normal Contract Standing Orders, so that three existing training providers may continue to be contracted to repeat their specialist 'branded' training

courses in support of a capable and skilled adult social care workforce across Rotherham.

Further information was provided on the broad range of training and development activities for the entire adult social care workforce across Rotherham including courses, qualifications, distance learning, e-learning and coaching. The majority of the training needs identified for the workforce would now be met going forward through the Council's new Dynamic Purchasing System for Learning and Development that had been let by the Corporate Procurement Team. There was, however, a very small number of existing specialist sole training provider courses planned to continue. As such, a request was made for the following four courses, from three existing providers, to be exempt from the provisions of Standing Orders: 45 Pre-tender quotations and enquiries, 47 Contracts valued at less than £50,000, and 48 Contracts valued at £50,000 or more.

Whilst there were other training providers in the marketplace that could deliver training similar course content in the areas covered above – carers, exercise and movement, dementia – these were specialised courses required as part of existing training pathways that were only available from the providers detailed with some courses being trademarked products.

Clarification was sought on who were the recipients of the training, costs associated with this provision and whether value for money was demonstrated.

Resolved:- That the contracting of training courses for Dementia Care Mapping, Cornerstones of Dementia Care, Carer Information and Support Programme, and The OTAGO Exercise Programme Leader be exempt from Standing Orders: 45 Pre-tender quotations and enquiries, 47 Contracts valued at less than £50,000, and 48 Contracts valued at £50,000 or more.

(THE CHAIRMAN AUTHORISED CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING URGENT ITEM IN ORDER TO PROCESS THE CONTRACT REFERRED TO WITHOUT DELAY)

N60. RENEWAL OF CIPFA ASSETMANAGER.NET LICENCE AND SYSTEM MAINTENANCE AND SUPPORT AGREEMENT - APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION FROM STANDING ORDERS

Consideration was given to the report presented by Stuart Booth, Director of Finance, which sought approval to invoke Standing Order 38, which permitted exemption from normal Contract Standing Orders. This was to allow CIPFA Business Ltd. to provide a three year licence plus annual support and maintenance for the CIPFA Assetmanager.NET system.

CIPFA's Assetmanager.NET system was used by eighty-five local authorities including Wakefield District Council and Hull City Council and enabled the production of reports for financial and asset management purposes.

The contractor concerned was the only supplier able to provide quotes, due to the long lead in time that would be required to move to an alternative supplier, which would take the Council beyond the statutory deadline for the closure of accounts and due to the fact that only the system supplier could provide annual support and maintenance for their system.

Resolved:- That the licence and contract for the annual support and maintenance of the CIPFA Assetmanager.NET be exempt from the provisions of Standing Order 47.6.3, the requirement to invite at least three written quotations for contracts with a value of £20,000 but less than £50,000.

N61. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:- That the next meeting take place on Monday, 14th April, 2014 at 8.30 a.m.