

NOT FOR PUBLICATION: Appendix 1 to this report contains information considered to be exempt under Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended

Agenda Item No.

REPORT TO: Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Communities

DATE: 24 January 2023

SERVICE AREA: Housing & Property

REPORTING OFFICER: Team Leader (Housing Assistance) & Housing
Renewal Manager
Paula Donachy & Emma Jesper

SUBJECT: **Appointment of Contractors for Specialist
Equipment**

WARD/S AFFECTED: ALL DISTRICT

FORWARD PLAN REF: Key Decision no.: 13H&P22

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from Cabinet Member for the appointment of a number of contractors for the purchase and installation of specialist equipment via a direct award under the ESPO procurement framework. The proposed contracts will be for a period of 1 year with the potential to be extended twice to 3 years in total, 1+1+1.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet Member approve the award of contracts via the ESPO procurement framework to the following contractors :
1. Contractor A for the supply and installation of stair lifts for both Disabled Facilities Grants and council house adaptations.
 2. Contractor B Ltd for the supply of Through Floor lifts for both DFGs and council house adaptations.
 3. Contractor C for the supply and installation of Step lifts for DFGs and council house adaptations.

3.0 RECOMMENDED REASON/S FOR DECISION/S

- 3.1 We currently have no existing contracts for the supply of stair lifts, step lifts and through floor lifts. The direct awards will allow us to access significant

savings on equipment allowing our budgets to go further and provide more adaptations to residents across the district, in all tenures.

3.2 The types of equipment are extremely specialised with only a few providers of the equipment and as such Housing and Property Services considers that there would be no added value or benefit in going out to tender.

3.3 The appointment of three contractors will reduce administration time. This is because, we currently obtain 3 quotes for each DFG or council house adaptation. This process is time consuming and proves problematic as it can be difficult to obtain 3 quotes. We will receive a dedicated account manager for each contractor who will be available to assist us with queries and provide a more quality wrap around service. It will give us a guaranteed lead time for works which will help to speed up the process and the installations.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTION/S CONSIDERED AND RECOMMENDED FOR REJECTION *(Must be used for reports to Cabinet & Cabinet Members)*

4.1 We continue to get 3 quotes for each DFG and council house adaptation request. This is time consuming and proves problematic as it can be difficult to obtain 3 quotes. This has a direct consequence for the disabled and vulnerable residents the referrals and adaptation works aim to help.

5.0 THE REPORT

5.1 The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996 places a duty on unitary and district councils to provide Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG). The grant is means tested and funds certain eligible works to enable a disabled person to remain as independent as possible in their home. The grant may fund works in the private sector only. Aids and adaptations for council tenants are paid for through the Housing Revenue Account.

5.2 Each year there are numerous requests for the installation of stair lifts, step lifts and through floor lifts to enable local people to remain independent in their homes. Stair lifts, step lifts and through floor lifts are given a high priority by adult social care due to the associated risks. By reducing the risks on stairs by implementing adaptations in to homes for those who struggle with mobility, the intention is that there will be less hospital admissions due to falls. It also enables those people to remain at home for a longer period and reduces care costs. Year on year, we are receiving more referrals from Adult Social Care, which we anticipate will continue to rise as the elderly population expands.

5.3 The DFG budget is for capital works and our allocation for 22/23 is £1million. In 21/22 we had an over spend, our final spend in this year was just over £1m. This year we are on track to spend £1.1m. We anticipate that we will receive the same grant allocation of £825,000 for 22/23. Our annual spend on lifts for the last 3 years (all 3 elements) is as follows:

20/21 **£73,000**

21/22 **£124,000**

22/23 **£81,000** spent so far.

- 5.4 On Council stock we have spent **£82,000** for the 3 years in total.
20/21 **£14,413**
21/22 **£58,846**
22/23 **£7342** spent so far this year
- 5.5 We therefore anticipate that the value of the three contract for the specialist equipment will be approximately **£400,000**. We currently pay approximately £2,200 for each lift. By awarding 3 contractors for each element of kit from the Espo framework, we will be able to access better prices which will allow the grant monies for the DFGs to go further.
- 5.6 The Pricing Schedules available on the Espo Framework were accessed and a table was drawn up to compare prices and lead times, this is attached at exempt Appendix A.
- 5.7 We accessed the pricing schedules and lead times on the Espo website and a desk top exercise was carried out. We were able to see that we are paying higher prices currently for all equipment and installation. A table which outlined the pricing differences between all the suppliers on the framework was drawn up so that we could compare the prices, lead times and warranties provided by all suppliers. We were able to identify the proposed suppliers with the most favourable prices and lead times.
- 5.8 We anticipate that we will receive the same allocation of funding of £825,000 for 23/24 along with previous years unspent grant, we have a budget for 23/24 of £1m. With the increase in referrals of DFGs from Occupational Therapists, we estimate that we may run out of funding before the end of the financial year 23/24, therefore any savings that we can make will be beneficial. We anticipate that we will make considerable savings by accessing these competitive prices, whilst also improving our response times.

6.0 REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS AND IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The following were considered: Financial Implications; Human Resources Implications; Legal Implications; ICT Implications; Strategic Property/Asset Management Considerations; Risk Assessment; Equality and Diversity (the Public Sector Equality Duty and impact upon people with protected characteristics). If applicable, the outcomes of any consultations, assessments, considerations and implications considered necessary during preparation of this report are detailed below.
- 6.2 Financial implications: Finance have been consulted and are agreeable to the recommendations and their comments are included within the report.
- 6.3 Legal and Procurement implications: Legal and Procurements services have been consulted in respect of the preparation of this report and its comments are within the body of the report. The appointment of contractors via a direct award via the ESPO framework complies with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 Using the ESPO procurement framework and awarding direct contracts to TK Access Solution's, Wessex Lift Co Ltd and The Terry Group for specialist equipment will speed up turnaround times, have significant cost savings and reduce administrative times obtaining quotes. This will improve the service to the disabled clients, and make sure that their adaptations are carried out in a timely manner.

8.0 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Pricing Schedules available on the Espo Framework- These prices are confidential .

Background Papers – None

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