

INDIVIDUAL CABINET MEMBER DECISION – 17 April 2024

Decision by	Councillor Deirdre Costigan
Subject	Award of Arboricultural Services Contract Lots 6-8
Portfolio	Deputy Leader and Climate Action
Authority	<i>Constitution part 3 Section 3</i>

Decision: That, the Cabinet Member for Deputy Leader and Climate Action:

- i. awarded the three lots of the term arboriculture contracts to three separate contractors: for a minimum annual value of £0.093m as set out below, for a period of 3 years commencing on 1st May 2024, with the possibility of two three-year extensions.
- ii. LOT 6 (east wards): Barber Environmental Ltd
- iii. LOT 7 (central wards): Complete Tree Care Ltd
- iv. LOT 8 (west wards): Contract And Personnel Services Ltd

Reason for decision
And Options
Considered:

Please see report
attached

- i. The Arboriculture Service maintained trees on highways, parks and housing estates throughout the borough, and was responsible for tree planting. This involved the management of 90,000 council owned trees on Highways, Parks and Open Spaces, Cemeteries, Housing and Education, Social Services and other land.
- ii. The existing arboriculture service was split into 11 Lots covering three elements: Lots 1-5 Arboricultural Works, Lots 6-8 Basal Growth, and Lots 9-11 Tree Planting. This structure was developed in response to extensive soft market research (2015), which highlighted the competitive limitations of large contracts, which were beyond the financial thresholds of many smaller arboricultural contractors. The reduced financial threshold allows small and medium size contractors to compete through an open tender process. Having multiple contractors had also delivered better quality services for our customers and communities: recent storms and the 2022 drought created spikes in the work volumes on Lots 1-5, previously this would have been a huge challenge for an individual contractor, but under the new structure, the work was easily distributed amongst the five contractors.
- iii. The contracts for Lots 1-5 were tendered in 2022 and awarded in January 2023 for a 3-year period, with the availability of two three-year extensions to January

2032. The contracts for Lots 9-11 were due to expire in September 2025 and would have no further extensions available to use. All contracts for Lots 1-5 and 9-11 were delivering an excellent service.

- iv. Lots 6,7 and 8 concern the removal of basal growth from council trees, the Lots were aligned geographically as east, central and west wards respectively. The contractors previously delivering this service declined the optional three-year extension, and this element expired in September 2022.
- v. An exception was granted to award contracts for 2023 to three existing arboricultural contractors (April 2023), who were already delivering Lots 1, 2, and 3, and working in the same geographical areas. All three companies successfully completed the task at competitive rates. This arrangement started on the 1st May 2023 and expired on 31 December 2023.
- vi. The service provision was tendered using an Open Tender Procedure for years 2024-2033 (3+3+3yrs). Tendering the contract over these timescales was considered necessary to achieve best value for the service. Soft-market testing has suggested that three years was the minimum period to justify the investment in resources, and the delivery of a good service can be rewarded through the longer-term financial stability of the extensions. The basal growth contract needs to commence in mid-May 2024.
- vii. Within the arboricultural industry the removal of basal growth was considered a lower skilled task, the detailed technical specification and the KPIs would ensure high standards, therefore Lots 6-8 were assessed on a 60% price, 30% quality and 10% social value ratio.
- viii. The confidential Tender Report – Appendix 1 – provided details of the tender results, justification and recommendations to award the lots.

Date of Implementation
(if not called in):

25 April 2024

Report published	9 April 2024
Opposition consulted	9 April 2024
Decision recorded	17 April 2024
Decision published	18 April 2024

Call-in deadline

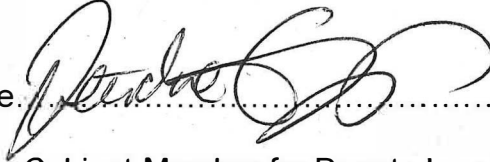
24 April 2024 at 5pm

Reason for urgency

Not Applicable

Please see report
attached

Cabinet member's signature



Date: 17 April 2024

Councillor Deirdre Costigan, Cabinet Member for Deputy Leader and Climate Action

Officer recording decision

merkesha grant

Date: 17 April 2024

Designation

Merkesha Grant
Democratic Services

