

Report to the Council

Committee: Council
Date: 28 July 2022
Subject: Contracts and Commissioning Portfolio
Portfolio Holder: Councillor Nigel Avey

Recommending:

The report of the Contracts and Commissioning Portfolio Holder be noted.

Waste Management:

As part of the Great British Spring Clean 2022 that took place between the 25 March-10 April 2022 in which we had 5 litter picks during that period in Thornwood Common, Matching Tye, Roydon, Sheering and The Limes. A total of 72 bags of litter were collected.

This year, to date we have had 16 applications for support and equipment with litter picks from volunteers and 15 of those have been completed. The remaining one is due to take place shortly.

In addition to this we are very grateful and appreciative that there are many other voluntary organisations and town/parishes that carry out litter picks throughout the year.

Litter picking brings together individuals, community organisations, businesses, and councils to make a difference to the environment on their doorsteps. Feedback shows a significant increase in the number of people litter picking in the great outdoors to help their mental wellbeing, following the additional pressures triggered by the pandemic.

Missed collections update:

As you aware we are suffering from ongoing missed collections at present, we have been working closely and in daily conversations with Biffa to resolve these issues as swiftly as possible. Below are the main reasons why we are experiencing this at the present time.

Summary of Current Biffa Issues:

- National shortage of staff – Drivers, Dustmen/women and Supervisors/Managers and retention of staff post recruitment. Drivers are being approached and offered more money to work on HGVs etc elsewhere. Waste collectors and drivers are being abused and threatened by members of the public and walking off the job.
- Local Knowledge – The knock-on effect of these issues is that there are not regular crews doing regular rounds and consequently local knowledge of “Assisted Collections” for example has been lost and these properties have in some instances been missed.
- Fleet Management – Vehicles breaking down and vehicle maintenance impacting on the rounds. Hire Vehicles are being used but these are not equipped with CCTV cameras so this impacts on the missed collection/BNO process. There is a national shortage of new and hire vehicles as well as long lead in time for new parts and new vehicles.
- Access Issues – some roads throughout the District have access issues due to parked cars and in addition new drivers are having difficulties manoeuvring narrower/restricted streets.

Leisure Management:

Contract Performance

Leisure centre usage trends have started well this financial year, with good performances across the four centres. Swimming is still very strong with high numbers of attendance; however gym membership is slightly down on forecast. Management fees for FY22-23 revert to fixed monthly fees as operational risk reverts to Places Leisure. Open book accounting will continue on a quarterly basis, instead of monthly.

Energy Saving Initiatives

Working in partnership with our leisure contractor Places Leisure, EFDC are exploring energy saving initiatives at our leisure facilities to reduce operating costs and reduce carbon emissions. The initiatives include LED lighting conversions, pool covers, variable speed drives and BMS and is estimated to cost £140,000. Funding to implement these initiatives are being explored.

Procurement and Contracts:

Insurance Tender

The Procurement and Contracts Team have been conducting a re-tender of the Council's Insurance requirements, which has now been awarded and came into effect on 01/07/2022.

For the Council's main Insurance tender, the annual premium was reduced from £716,593.88 per annum to £562,731 per annum, which over the maximum five-year contract could see savings of £769,314. By advertising the tender with the option of individual lots or a package deal, we were able to assess the market and get the best deal possible. After assessing the bids, a decision was made to award the lots individually, with 9 of the 12 lots being awarded to Zurich Insurance, 2 to Risk Management Partners and 1 to Maven Public Sector.

For the Leaseholder element of the Insurance, the lowest cost and highest quality bid came from Protector Insurance, but still led to an increase in premium from £97,288.33 per annum to £225,933.36 per annum. The increased premium is due to a number of reasons, in particular the rising cost of construction materials due to inflation and supply shortages. This element of the insurance is recharged to Leaseholders, and they have been informed of the outcome of the tender.

Procurement Checklist

The Procurement and Contract Development Team created a new Checklist to help colleagues who run Procurement processes on behalf of EFDC, and from 01 April it has been mandatory that a checklist is completed before a tender goes ahead. The aim of the checklist is to ensure that buyers are considering all relevant factors before proceeding with a Procurement process, such as ensuring budget are in place, checking for collaboration opportunities (within EFDC and with other Councils) and ensuring all departments that will be impacted have been consulted prior to going ahead.

The checklist has received positive feedback since coming into effect and the document will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is capturing all the relevant information.