

Report of Parks Technical Officer

Report to the Chief Officers of Parks & Countryside and Elections & Regulatory Services

Date: October 2020

Subject: Permission to Procure and set up a bespoke Framework Agreement for the supply of Veterinary Services

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, access to information procedure rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary

1. Main issues

- Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside service operates three licensed zoo collections at Tropical World (Roundhay Park), Lotherton Wildlife World (Lotherton Hall) and the West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre (Pudsey Park). The service also operates a rare breeds and traditional farm animals farm at Home Farm (Temple Newsam). The four collections house a variety of rare, exotic and domestic animals.
- The Council has an obligation to ensure the welfare of the animals by ensuring adequate veterinary services are provided and available whenever required.
- In addition Leeds City Council's Environmental Health Service's requirement for veterinary services will also be covered in this report. Environmental Health Services operates the Council's Dog Warden Service which has a responsibility to provide veterinary treatment to stray or lost dogs that are collected by our wardens and require urgent veterinary attention due to injury or disease.
- Leeds City Council's Environmental Health Service also require suitably qualified veterinary inspectors to undertake inspections of dog breeders and horse riding establishments.

- Leeds City Council is therefore looking to develop a bespoke procurement framework agreement to put in place future contractual arrangements for suitably qualified and experienced organisations to deliver veterinary services for a range of animals. We anticipate that providers will be able to meet different aspects of the service and do not expect one provider to cover the whole requirement.

2. Best Council Plan Implications (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

The priorities identified in the Best Council Plan 2019/20 – 2020/21 of most relevance to this project are;

- Enhancing the image of Leeds through major events and attractions
- Supporting healthy, physically active lifestyles
- Improving educational attainment and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes
- Improving social, emotional and mental health and wellbeing

3. Resource Implications

- The zoos and farm contribute to the revenue income of the authority. Visits to these attractions also encourages secondary spends in café's and shops where they are located, not to mention the potential for secondary spend throughout the city.
- The welfare of the animals and regular site visits by veterinary expertise is paramount to the running of these attractions and the requirements of the zoo licence legislation.

Recommendations

- a) The Chief Officers of Parks & Countryside and the Chief Officer of Elections & Regulatory Services are requested to approve the development of a bespoke procurement framework agreement to put in place future contractual arrangements for suitably qualified and experienced organisations to deliver veterinary services for a range of animals.
- b) The Chief Officers of Parks & Countryside and the Chief Officer of Elections & Regulatory Services are also recommended to approve the acceptance onto the bespoke framework of all suppliers who successfully pass the Standard Selection Questionnaire (SSQ) and method statement.
- c) The Chief Officer Parks & Countryside is requested to provide the authority to spend and the potential expenditure of £288,000 over a call off period of 6 years through the framework.
- d) The Chief Officer of Elections & Regulatory Services is requested to provide the authority to spend and potential expenditure of £72,000 over a call off period of 6 years through the framework.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report is to seek approval from the Chief Officers of Parks & Countryside and the Chief Officer of Elections & Regulatory Services to develop a procurement framework agreement to put in place contractual arrangements to deliver veterinary services to a range of animals.
- 1.2 To seek approval from the Chief Officers to approve the expenditure as detailed above for veterinary services.

2. Background information

- 2.1 The Leeds City Council zoos are all licensed under zoo licence legislation as required by DEFRA. The collections have a legal requirement to provide the best care possible for its stock.
- 2.2 The zoos and farm form part of the Parks & Countryside's estate visitor attractions. As part of the last Leeds Parks Survey that was undertaken in 2016 the estimated number of adult visits across the four sites is over 13.5 million visits per annum. This generates a significant amount of income for the authority, in 2018/19 the collective income generated from admissions alone into the zoos and farm was over £3.25 million.
- 2.3 In addition Leeds City Council's Environmental Health Service has an obligation to ensure the welfare of animals by ensuring adequate veterinary services are available and provided when required for dogs collected by Dog Wardens that require urgent veterinary attention due to injury or disease.
- 2.4 Leeds City Council's Environmental Health Service are also responsible for the Animal Welfare Licensing Service. It is a requirement of The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 for Horse Riding establishments to be licensed by the Local Authority and for an inspection to be carried out every 12 months. It is a requirement of the regulations that the vet appointed to carry out the above inspections be registered on the RCVS riding inspectorate approved list. On receipt of an application for Dog Breeding it is also a requirement of the regulations for a vet to accompany an inspector on the initial inspection.
- 2.5 A Market Sounding Exercise was undertaken in May 2019 in conjunction with the Council's Procurement and Commercial Service which identified a lack of appetite within the market. The intention of the framework agreement is to provide a flexible but contractual approach for the provision of veterinary services. To date veterinary services have been contracted through annual waivers. The establishment of this new framework agreement will allow the Council to request that practices we currently work with join the framework by completing a Standard Selection Questionnaire and basic method statement to confirm their ability to deliver the service along with other practices who may be interested in joining the framework. Once appointed to the framework agreement direct awards or calls for competition can then be made with providers.

We envisage appointing a preferred provider per lot with other providers available to use if required in exceptional circumstances or in cases of emergencies when the preferred supplier may not be available.

The preferred providers will be issued with an annual order, which invoices can be paid from throughout the year. Separate orders to the preferred providers or other

providers in the event of emergencies may also be produced. The use of LCC purchase cards will also be an option for payment to the providers.

- 2.6 As the provision of Veterinary Services is classified as 'light touch' under EU Procurement regulations this allows greater flexibility in the establishment of the bespoke framework agreement. Entitling it to run for longer than the standard 4 years of a framework and allowing it to remain open for new applicants during the lifetime of the framework agreement.

3. Main issues

- 3.1 Leeds City Council, Parks and Countryside service operates three licensed zoo collections at Tropical World (Roundhay Park), Lotherton Wildlife World (Lotherton Hall) and the West Leeds Country Park Visitor Centre (Pudsey Park). The service also operates a rare breeds and traditional farm animals farm at Home Farm (Temple Newsam). The four collections house a variety of rare, exotic and domestic animals.
- 3.2 The Council has an obligation to ensure the welfare of the animals by ensuring adequate veterinary services are provided and available whenever required. The wide variety of animal types and species has meant that one single veterinary group does not have the specialist expertise to provide a service for all four collections.
- 3.3 Along with the requirements for Parks and Countryside this report also covers the requirements for Leeds City Council's Environmental Health Service who need veterinary services for dogs collected by the Dog Warden and the Animal Welfare Licensing Service will also be encompassed within this framework agreement which matches a list of qualifying suppliers that gives flexibility based on the individual requirements.
- 3.4 The framework will be developed in conjunction with Environmental Health to procure veterinary services for a wide range of animals and it is our intention to therefore split the procurement into separate lots i.e. lot 1: exotic animals, lot 2: domestic animals, lot 3: farm animals, lot 4: equines, lot 5: small animals. Veterinary Services are classed as 'light touch' under the EU regulations which will give us greater flexibility in how the framework agreement can be managed.
- 3.5 Each veterinary practise will be asked to complete a standard selection question and provide a brief method statement with pre agreed core information. The surgeries must be registered as a member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) and provide evidence of their qualifications.

In addition the surgeries must be able to work with LCC to ensure we remain compliant with the Zoo Licensing Act and they must be able to undertake regular site visits to our zoos which is a statutory requirement of the Act.

4. Corporate considerations

4.1 Consultation and engagement

- 4.1.1 Consultation was not undertaken on the proposal to develop the framework given that the decision being taken does not materially affect the general public.

4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration

- 4.2.1 A screening document was completed in respect of the decision proposed to be taken within this report and that process established that a full equality impact assessment was not required.
- 4.2.2 In support of the above statement, it is felt that the proposal does not adversely affect how services are organised, provided or located. The service is seeking to improve the way in which a service is delivered to the public through better access to the existing resources. Furthermore, the changes made will have no discernible negative effects on service users and will provide only benefits to those using the site.

4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan

- 4.3.1 The Vision for Leeds 2011 to 2030 is to be the best city in the UK by 2030. It has specific aims that the economy will be prosperous and sustainable and that all Leeds' communities will be successful, where there are high quality buildings, places and green spaces which are clean, looked after and respect the city's heritage.
- 4.3.2 Effective management of the animal collections will enable Parks and Countryside to sustain and grow existing revenue streams. The zoos also contribute to the priority of 'Improving educational attainment' through both active and passive learning experiences.

Climate Emergency

- 4.3.3 The main objectives of the animal collections are for educational and conservational purposes. Part of this objective is to teach and promote the importance of climate change.
- 4.3.4 The Parks & Countryside service are pro-actively adapting to climate change in all aspects of management practises. Climate change will form an integral part of the new Parks and Green Space strategy which is currently being prepared.
- 4.3.5 Further information on adaptation to climate change can be found in the Executive Board report from April 2017 'Leeds Quality Park Assessments (Adaptation to Climate Change).

4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money

- 4.4.1 The animal collections contribute to the revenue income of the authority and visits to these attractions also encourages secondary spend in café's and shops where they are located and increases the potential for secondary spend throughout the city.
- 4.4.2 The framework is to be developed with the assistance of the Procurement and Commercial Services team to ensure that LCC's resources are managed effectively and that we are receiving the best value for money.

4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in

4.5.1 This report is not eligible for call in due to the proposed value and nor is the marginal impact considered to be significant, meaning this therefore represents a 'significant operational' decision. No sections of this report are restricted under the access to information rules.

4.6 Risk management

4.6.1 There are no significant risks associated with this decision.

5. Conclusions

5.1 It is therefore proposed to approve the development of a bespoke framework agreement to procure the veterinary services for LCC's Parks and Countryside and Environmental Health services to ensure the continued welfare of animals within these collections and any lost or stray dogs found.

6. Recommendations

a) The Chief Officers of Parks & Countryside and the Chief Officer of Elections & Regulatory Services are requested to approve the development of a bespoke procurement framework agreement to put in place future contractual arrangements for suitably qualified and experienced organisations to deliver veterinary services for a range of animals.

b) The Chief Officers of Parks & Countryside and the Chief Officer of Elections & Regulatory Services are also recommended to approve the acceptance onto the bespoke framework of all suppliers who successfully pass the Standard Selection Questionnaire (SSQ) and method statement.

c) The Chief Officer Parks & Countryside is requested to provide the authority to spend and the potential expenditure of £288,000 over a call off period of 6 years through the framework.

d) The Chief Officer of Elections & Regulatory Services is requested to provide the authority to spend and potential expenditure of £72,000 over a call off period of 6 years through the framework.

7. Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.