

Management of Tethered Horses Contract

Date: 05/08/2022

Report of: Horses Team Manager

Report to: Chief Officer Elections and Regulatory and Deputy Returning Officer

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The Council works with a contractor to deal with horses being kept or tethered on Council land without lawful permission or authority. The contractor regularly monitors sites through the area, erects and maintains warning notices, issues enforcement notices and where necessary, safely removes horses prior to them being returned to their owners or disposed of.

The Council deals with an average of 60 requests for service per year in relation to horses tethered on council land. Requests for service are routinely received from members of the public, Ward Members, the Police and other council services. Whilst most horses are removed by their owners on service of an enforcement notice it has been necessary to impound and dispose of on average 6 horses a year.

The council does not employ staff who can impound horses and does not have an equine pound. Therefore, a specialist contractor is required to undertake this activity.

The current contract for the control of horses that are illegally tethered on council owned has expired. There are no options to extend the current contract and therefore a tender exercise has been completed and the evaluation has identified Property Protection Services as the preferred supplier. The proposed contract is for three years with options to extend for a further one or two years.

The estimated contract value is £23,460 per annum.

Recommendations

- a) The Chief Officer approves the award of the contract to Property Protection Services.
- b) The Chief Officer approves a contract duration of three years with the option to extend for a further one or two years.

What is this report about?

- 1 The report outlines the proposal to award a contract for the management and control of horses being kept on council land without permission or authority.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 Horses being illegally grazed on land without the landowner's permission, fly-grazing, is a problem for most Local Authorities. Concerns surround the welfare of the horses and the risk of damage or nuisance to property and people. As well as fouling and causing damage to the land, horses can attack people and cause serious road accidents. They also cause problems for residents by depriving them of the safe use and enjoyment of land provided for the public benefit.
- 3 The contract will allow the effective control and management of fly grazing on council land by monitoring sites throughout the area, the use of warning and enforcement notices, and the safe removal of horses where necessary.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 4 The control and management of fly grazing on council land contributes towards our Best City Priority of safe, strong communities, keeping people safe from harm and tackling anti-social behaviour.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected: All wards

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 5 The Executive Member for Environment and Housing has been briefed on the proposal.
- 6 The Procurement Team have been fully engaged in the tender process to ensure compliance with all relevant regulations and standing orders.

What are the resource implications?

- 7 The cost of a new contract is estimated at £23,460 a year. However, the service is mainly demand led and this amount can fluctuate depending on the number of horses impounded. There is budget provision for the whole amount.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 8 Property Protection Services meet the evaluation criteria of value for money and the required performance standards.
- 9 Failure to award a contract for the management of tethered horses would mean the Council would not have the provision to deal with the ongoing issue of fly grazing on council land.

What are the legal implications?

- 10 The Control of Horses Act 2015 allows local authorities to remove and impound unauthorised horses from their land.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 11 Due to the specialist nature of the work it cannot be provided by the Council's own workforce.

How will success be measured?

- 12 Performance targets and indicators are in place to monitor the effectiveness and success of the contract.
- 13 Regular meetings will be held with the contractor to review performance.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 14 It is proposed that the contract be in place by August 2022.
- 15 Implementation will be undertaken by the Horses Team with support from Procurement Services.

Appendices

- None

Background papers

- None