

SOUTH SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Grounds Maintenance Contract 2018/19

Full Council – 19 December 2017

1. Introduction

The current Grounds Maintenance Contract is for one year and the Contract for 2018/19 needs to be considered.

2. Report Details

2.1 The Shadow Parish Councils were only set up in November 2016 and because the budget had to be set by February 2017, there was no option but to use the services of StreetSmart for the first year.

2.2 Following the elections on 4 May 2017 the new Parish Council was set up and had a lot of work to do to start the process of operating as a Parish Council.

What soon became apparent was that there was going to be insufficient time for the new Parish Council to go through the tendering process for the Contract for 2018/19.

Firstly, the Parish Council needs to obtain far more information from StreetSmart about the detail of the work involved. Then this needs to be put together in a tendering document; followed by the tendering process which due of the value would require EU procurement rules to be followed. Next tenders would be received and evaluated. The whole process needs to start early in the new year for the Contract to be considered as part of the budget process this time next year.

2.3 A Parish Council would normally be expected to carry out a tendering process for a Contract of this size. The Clerk has spoken at length to the Internal Auditor about the lack of time available to carry out the process and the Internal Auditor has supported the position of the Parish Council continuing the current Contract for a further year.

2.4 The Contract with StreetSmart this year has worked well, especially the decision of the Shadow Parish Council to increase the cutting of the grass to every 3 weeks. The office staff has received very few complaints and those have been dealt with very quickly by StreetSmart. The continuation of Swindon Borough Council handling the phone calls has saved considerable office staff time.

2.5 Councillors asked at the last meeting about the Service Level Agreement and a copy of this is attached. This needs to be reviewed for 2018/19 in terms of the work being carried out and more definite timings need to be added. The maps for the grass areas has also been provided by email to Councillors.

2.6 Cllr Wood has made a request that the litter picking in his Ward is increase and a copy of the litter picking schedule for the parish has been emails to Councillors. If litter picking was increased by double, so that those road that are once a month would increase to twice a month, then the additional cost would be approximately £85K. If this was agreed, then this amount would either have to be added to the budget or savings made from another budget head. To add £85K to the budget would increase a Band D from £114.90 to £119.61.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1** The Grounds Maintenance Contract be renewed with StreetSmart for 2018/19.
- 3.2** That the view of Councillors is sought about changes to the Contract work for 2018/19.