

## **SOUTH SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL**

**Grounds Maintenance Contract 2019/20**

**Full Council – 18 December 2018**

### **1. Introduction**

The current Grounds Maintenance Contract is for one year and the Contract for 2019/20 needs to be considered.

### **2. Report Details**

- 2.1** The Parish Council commissioned a Best Value Review at the Full Council Meeting in March 2018. The Best Value report was considered at the Full Council Meeting in July 2018 and the decision made not to carry out a full tendering process. The Services Working Party made a report to the Full Council Meeting in September 2018 where the recommendation was to negotiate the Grounds Maintenance Contract and the Street Cleaning Contract separately due to the outcome of the Best Value Review; the Grounds Maintenance being recommended for a 5 year contract and the Street Cleaning a 1 year Contract.
- 2.2** Since then the Chair and the Clerk have met with the Head of Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning separately and had very positive meetings. However, since the meetings the information requested has not been forthcoming.
- 2.3** The Parish Council intended to take over the maintenance of Queens Park and Town Gardens from 1 April this year, but due to problems with the TUPE process this has not happened. As this is now due to take place from 1 February 2019 it is not suggested that any large-scale additional work be taken on from 1 April 2019. However, there are 2 areas where it would be good to tidy up the current arrangements. StreetSmart still carry out a small amount of work at the allotments, mainly cutting hedges and some other small job. It makes sense for the Parish Council to fully take over the maintenance of the allotment sites. The same applies to the play areas where the Parish Council is taking leases. The Parish Council carries out the weekly inspections, annual inspections, minor maintenance and will be carrying out refurbishments. StreetSmart carry out larger maintenance issues and it would be easier for the Parish Council to take responsibility for all aspects of the play areas. The cost within the Contract is £20K and this would be a reduction in the Contract Figure.
- 2.4** The current Contract price is £932,010 and with the reduction for the additional work to be taken by the Parish Council of £20K, this figure would reduce to £912,010. The Parish Council has allowed for an inflation increase of 2.5% and this would take the Contract figure to £934,810. This is the amount that has been put into the budget for 2019/20.
- 2.5** Swindon Borough Council has now informed the Parish Council on 22 November 2018 that there are going to be changes made to the delivery model which will mean that the Contract will be overseen by a single Service Manager, supported by dedicated Parish Team Leaders for each Parish. More details about the new model are included on the attached paper.

Swindon Borough Council has also decided that they will need to start charging for management costs in the Contract, which have not been included for the last 2 years. The amount to be added to the Contract figure is £44,800.

The Clerk has met with the Head of StreetSmart and he referred to the Best Value Review and that

the report had highlighted that management fees were not included in the Contract price. The Clerk asked why, when this report was completed in the summer, it had taken to the end of November to notify the Parish Council of this significant change to the Contract. He accepted that this should have been done earlier and he is keen to find a compromise solution.

- 2.6** The recommendation is that Parish Council could continue the StreetSmart Contract for 1 year for Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning in order to access the new delivery model. The price of the Contract for 2019/20 be confirmed at £934,810 and the Services Working Party work with StreetSmart to look at where savings can be made within the Contract to absorb the additional management charges.

### **3. Recommendations**

- 3.1** That the additional work detailed in 2.3 be taken on by the Parish Council from 1 April 2019.
- 3.2** That the StreetSmart Contract be renewed for 1 year in order to assess the new delivery model.
- 3.3** That the StreetSmart Contract be renewed at the Contract figure of £934,810.
- 3.4** That the Services Working Party work with StreetSmart to find a solution to cover the proposed additional management costs of £44,800.