

City of London Corporation Committee Report

Committee(s): Port Health and Environmental Services Committee – For Information	Dated: 02/06/2025
Subject: Report of Action Taken	Public report: For Information
This proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Delivers Corporate Plan 2024-29 outcomes	Providing Excellent Services Flourishing Public Spaces See background papers
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	No
If so, how much?	£N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of:	Town Clerk
Report author:	Kate Doidge, Governance & Member Services Team

Summary

This report provides details of delegates decisions taken under urgency between Committee meetings.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

Delegated Decisions Under Standing Order 41B

Cemetery and Crematorium Administration System

1. The City of London Cemetery and Crematorium's administration system was outdated, non-compliant with statutory legislation and unable to serve the needs of a modern cemetery and crematorium.
2. A recent procurement exercise ended with one preferred bidder, GSS (NI) Ltd (PlotBox). However, all bidders had failed the financial assessment performed during the procurement process, including the preferred bidder and current provider. All bidders were financially appraised by the City of London's Treasury Team.

3. It was proposed that the financial risk be mitigated and minimised by paying the supplier upon receipt of goods or services, rather than upfront. A termination clause would be submitted should the supplier encounter financial difficulty and would enable the City Corporation to exit the contract without incurring additional costs. Regular contract meetings between the department, supplier and Commercial Services were also proposed, to allow performance to be monitored, with regular financial monitoring checks carried out on the supplier.
4. It was not recommended to run an additional tender as the additional time and resources required was considered unlikely to result in a different outcome, especially as it would be unlikely the financial situation would have changed significantly. The Service was unable to proceed without the Committee's approval and was utilising a system which was outdated (with the current provider being bespoke and unable to develop or upgrade further), non-compliant with statutory legislation (such as demonstrating compliance with the new medical examiner certification) and unable to serve the needs of a modern Cemetery and Crematorium Service (such as accepting electronic signatures).
5. At its meeting on 7th January 2025, the Committee raised concerns that the preferred bidder had failed the financial assessment, and the Committee felt that it could not progress until it had heard and were satisfied with the explanation. It was agreed to Delegate Authority to the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, to approve the contract award subject to the Committee's satisfaction on the explanation for the failure of the City Corporation's standard financial appraisal.
6. The Executive Director for Environment sought review and approval from the Chamberlain, to seek assurance that the Chamberlain was content with the proposed mitigations for the risks associated with the preferred bidder. The preferred bidder was a market leader in the industry, with 60 sites across the UK and more across US and Australia, which meant a lower risk. It was also not a bespoke system and thus would mitigate the risk of additional costs if the preferred bidder were unable to develop the administration system appropriately. The Service would also follow the agreed mitigations laid out by the Commercial Service (described above), which will require the Service to manage the contract closely to reduce any exposure to contract and supplier failure.
7. The Chamberlain indicated via email that they were content to proceed with the awarding of the contract to the preferred bidder given the explanation and mitigations provided. This was shared with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Committee, who indicated that they were content with the explanation and mitigations provided and agreed for the Delegated Authority to progress under Standing Order No. 41(B).
8. Approval under urgency procedures was sought for the awarding of the contract to the preferred bidder GSS (NI) Ltd (PlotBox), as the Cemetery and

Crematorium Service was running a system which was not legally compliant, and with the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee not meeting again until June 2025, the approval of the contract would enable the Service to commence the migration to a compliant system as soon as possible.

9. The Town Clerk therefore agreed, in consultation with the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Port Health and Environmental Services Committee, to approve the awarding of the contract to the preferred bidder GSS (NI) Ltd (PlotBox).

Background Papers

- Public Report – Cemetery and Crematorium Administration System

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