

# Cabinet

23 November 2016



<b>Title</b>	Disabled Facilities Grant Framework Agreement		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To make a decision		
<b>Report Author</b>	Tracey Willmott-French		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Jean Pinkerton	<b>Confidential</b>	Yes
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Housing		
<b>Recommendations</b>	To award the Disabled Facilities Grant Framework Agreement to the successful tenderers listed in <b>Appendix 2</b> .		
<b>Reason for Recommendation</b>	The implementation of this disabled facility grant framework agreement will:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- reduce the time taken to process grants and waiting time for building work to start</li><li>- offer greater protection for residents through the introduction of warranties to cover the building works</li><li>- provide a fair and transparent system of procurement</li></ul>		

## 1. Key issues

- 1.1 On average each year the Council provides 62 disabled facility adaptation grants (DFGs) to Borough residents to enable them to have works carried out in their homes that help them live more independently. The Council has a statutory duty to provide DFGs.
- 1.2 Currently, to ensure that best value is obtained in respect of each grant, the Council obtains three quotes from building contractors in accordance with the Council's Contract Standing Orders.
- 1.3 This request for quote process lengthens the DFG approval process up to four weeks for each DFG. This process is also consuming officer time.
- 1.4 A detailed schedule of works and rates has been drawn-up, which includes all the building works associated with the general DFG (e.g. level access showers, ramps, door widening, etc). This new schedule of works and rates will reduce the approval process by four weeks, reduce officer time for obtaining quotes, and ensure that best value for the Council is still obtained. A copy of the unpriced schedule of rates is provided at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.5 The Council engaged the services of a building surveyor, who specialises in DFG works, to review the DFG works specification mentioned in 1.4 above and to provide a general cost for each work item on the specification.

- 1.6 The Council went out to the open market to tender, inviting building contractors to submit prices against the new schedule of works and rates. Each compliant tender was 'sense checked' against the building surveyor's priced schedule of rates for the five most typical jobs.
- 1.7 The top 10 to 16 'best value for money' tenders submitted has been used to produce an averaged priced schedule of rates, which will then be used to cost DFG works for the next four years. The successful contractors will be asked to carry out the works on a 'next in turn' basis against a proposed start date.
- 1.8 Tender submissions have been evaluated and officers wish to award the contract to the 9 most suitable tenderers. Those tenderers are listed in **Appendix 2**.

## **2. Options analysis and proposal**

- 2.1 If Members award the contract to the tenderers listed in **Appendix 2**, there will be the following advantages:
  - (a) the Council will achieve cost savings (per grant) by having a set pricing structure rather than obtaining varied quotes as and when a DFG application needs to be processed;
  - (b) the tender evaluation criteria ensured that only TrustMark approved building contractors were taken forward to the next stage of evaluation. TrustMark means that the building contractors will provide a guarantee for the building works done to residents' accommodation;
  - (c) each building contractor will be given a fair chance of obtaining work under the framework agreement;
  - (d) there will be a unified form of contract each time DFG works are to be undertaken.
  - (e) time taken to complete the DFG application will be reduced by four weeks.
- 2.2 If Members did not agree to award the contract then officers will resume their current practise of obtaining quotes as and when a DFG application is processed. This will result in varied expenditure and will not achieve cost savings, or reduce the time taken in the DFG application process.
- 2.3 Members are asked to agree to the award of the contract to the successful tenderers listed in **Appendix 2** for the reasons stated in paragraph 2.1 above.

## **3. Financial implications**

- 3.1 The detailed schedule of works and rates which includes all the building works associated with the general DFG, will provide fixed prices for DFG works for the next 4 years.
- 3.2 The schedule of rates will increase by the Retail Price Index (%) every 12 months from commencement of the contract.
- 3.3 In addition the approval process for applications will be reduced by four weeks, reduce officer time for obtaining quotes, and ensure that best value for the Council is obtained.
- 3.4 This explains the main criteria upon which the decision is to be based.

#### **4. Other considerations**

- 4.1 The Council intends to enter into a JCT Framework Agreement with the successful tenderers. This is a standard form of contract to ensure ease of use, transparency and best value.
- 4.2 An annual costing review will be built into the framework agreement to ensure that the schedule of works remain viable. The successful tenderers will then provide work against the average-priced schedule of rates.
- 4.3 The Framework Agreement will ensure that building contractors will be called-off at the best rate.
- 4.4 The provision of disabled facility adaptation grants to the public provides great opportunity, dignity, quality of life, and freedoms for people affected by disability. The implementation of this framework agreement will enhance smooth and speed-up the DFG process and building work.
- 4.5 The implementation of the framework agreement will effect a reduction in the work involved in obtaining quotes for the costs disabled facility works for the Council's grant officers and the Home Improvement Agency caseworker. It will also provide greater transparency in the pricing process.

#### **5. Timetable for implementation**

- 5.1 The Invitation to tender was issued on the 5 September. The tenderers will be notified about the contract award decision on 25 November. The contract will commence on 1 January 2017.

**Background papers: None**

#### **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1** - Schedule of rates – unpriced

**Appendix 2** - List of successful tenderers (**exempt**) – Appendix 2 has been circulated to members of the Cabinet only because it contains exempt information within the meaning of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 and by the Local Government (Access to information) (Variation) Order 2006 Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) and in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because, *disclosure of the successful tenderers to the public prior to awarding the contract, would be likely to give an advantage to a person entering into or seeking to enter in a contract with the authority.*