

# Briefing Note

## Overview and Scrutiny Board

### Extension of Upminster Cemetery Phases 2&3

### Authority to award Contract

#### Background

In 2013, a piece of land of 5.5 hectares was identified adjacent to the existing cemetery, sufficient to provide burial space for approximately 30 years at that time. To date only phase 1 of this land has been developed. A report was approved by Cabinet on the 18th September 2019 which agreed to the further extension of Upminster Cemetery (Phases 2 & 3). An overall project budget of £5,500,000 has been agreed to carry out these works as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Phases 2 & 3 of the extension site at Upminster Cemetery will provide additional space for approximately 4,425 graves.

Since the Cabinet decision to extend Upminster Cemetery, there has been a Covid-19 pandemic. This has increased the overall demand for burial spaces, although due to lockdown measures etc. recently, demand has fallen to near pre-covid levels. At present, there are just over 500 new burial spaces available at Upminster Cemetery and based on current demand, without the planned extension, we will run out of burial spaces by December 2021. It should also be noted that if there is a second wave of Covid-19, then burial space is likely to run out sooner.

#### Proposed Procurement Route

This report seeks authorisation to award a construction contract up to a maximum value of £5,050,000. This is above the OJEU threshold levels for Work related contracts and as such, the procurement is subject to the full EU tender requirements under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

In arriving at the proposed procurement route, the following options were considered:

#### 1. Do Nothing

Rejected, as this will not provide the required burial space in Havering.

#### 2. Tender via Construction line

Rejected, as the works are likely to be above the EU Threshold.

#### 3. Full OJEU Procurement Process

Rejected, as there is insufficient time to meet the programme requirements and there are significant procurement costs associate with a full OJEU process.

It is therefore proposed to procure this project via the Transport for London (Tfl) London Highways Alliance Contract (LoHAC) Framework Agreement. The framework is a single supplier framework, which has three area based lots. Lot 2 (Northern Area) covers a number of London Borough's including the London Borough of Havering. This approach has been agreed with Corporate Procurement and legal services.

This framework agreement has successfully been used for a variety of previous civil engineering base projects by a wide range of London Boroughs, including the London Borough of Havering.

## **Progress to Date**

To date the following tasks have been successfully completed:

1. Full planning approval has been obtained.
2. The detailed scheme design has been completed.
3. Ecology surveys have been commissioned and are currently being undertaken.
4. Archaeological investigations have been commissioned and are due to commence at the end of this month.
5. We have engaged with the contractor under the terms of the Transport for London (TfL) London Highways Alliance Contract (LoHAC) Framework Agreement
6. The contractor is currently obtaining prices for the various work packages and is due to provide these to us at the end of this month.

## **Value for Money**

We have employed an independent Quantity Surveyor as part of the project team. The quantity surveyor will ensure that adequate benchmarking is undertaken for each of the sub-contractor packages to ensure that value for money is being achieved. Prices will be benchmarked against the previous phase of works, against industry standards and against similar schemes currently being undertaken.

The independent quantity surveyor has prepared a detailed pre-tender estimate. Once the main contractors priced work packages have been received, each of these will be compared and analysed against the pre-tender estimate to ensure that value for money is being achieved.

In addition to the above, three written quotations will be provided by the main contractor for the larger work packages. These will be scrutinised by our independent quantity surveyor and assessed for value for money.

The project team will comprise staff from Technical Services, Bereavement Services and Procurement along with a number of externally appointed consultants including an independent quantity surveyor.

## **Timescales**

In order to meet the current programme, the following key dates will need to be achieved:

Award of Contract	24 <sup>th</sup> August 2020
Contractor mobilisation	24 <sup>th</sup> August 2020 – 29 <sup>th</sup> September
Start on Site	29 <sup>th</sup> September 2020
Project Completion	30 <sup>th</sup> August 2021

It should be noted that based on current predictions, we will run out of burial spaces by December 2021 and possibly sooner, if there is a second wave of Covid-19.