

Approval to accept tenders for the Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Outdoor Playground Equipment and Play Area Surfacing

Date of Issue:	7 January 2025	
Date of Decision:	15 January 2025	
Report to:	Cabinet Member - Public Health and Wellbeing	
Report of:	Assistant Director – Operational In-House Services	
Portfolio:	Public Health and Well Being	
Wards affected:	All	
Is this a key decision:	No	No
Included in Forward Plan:		
Exempt/confidential report:	No	

Summary:

Sefton Council's Green Sefton service manages 100 play facilities including children's playgrounds, multi-use games areas and outdoor gyms, and the service annually has need to maintain these sites, replacing play equipment and surfacing to ensure reasonable standards of maintenance are continued.

Given the annual budget available and cumulative level of spending on some types of item, in order to meet procurement requirements, it was agreed with Cabinet Member that a procurement framework be put in place to ensure best value, and a faster speed when procuring ad-hoc small works across the year. As such Green Sefton has publicly tendered for the Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Outdoor Playground Equipment and Play Area Surfacing and this report seeks to make awards following the completion of this process.

The tender has sought a supplier for a term period of 4 years, with the contracts taking effect immediately through to April 2029.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) Approve the setting up of the framework as detailed within this report and including the following suppliers Kompan Ltd, Groundwork and Leisure Services Ltd, Playsound Services Ltd and Wicksteed Ltd, The total value of the contract is estimated to be £500,000 (including VAT) over a 4-year period.
- (2) Delegate the awarding of call-off contract for works under the framework to the Assistant Director for Operational In-House Services and note that works will be offered in order of framework lot ranking. Where a supplier ranked 1 for Lots 1 and 3 is unable to supply works we would source works from the next available ranked supplier and so forth.

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

The Council has a requirement to engage with suitable suppliers to carry out safety surfacing, play equipment and fencing installation and maintenance to play areas located across the borough of Sefton.

Procurement process:

Procurement colleagues received instructions to commence work on the tendering of the service on 31/8/2023. It was decided that the use of a national framework would not be suitable for the Council's requirements, therefore a custom-built framework and specification were developed for sole use by the Council.

The framework was comprised of the following lots:

- Lot 1: Equipment and Fencing Supply, Installation, Maintenance and Repair.
- Lot 2: Surfacing Supply, Installation and Repair (Macadam, Wet Pour and Synthetic Play Surfaces)
- Lot 3: Equipment, Fencing and Surfacing Supply Installation and Repair

It was the intention of the Council to appoint a maximum of six Providers to supply under each Lot of the Framework and there was no restriction on the number of Lots that Providers could bid for.

An open tender was published on the Chest portal on 5/3/24 with a deadline for submissions of 28/3/24. The opportunity was viewed by 22 potential providers and at the close of the tender, 5 submissions were received on time however one was found to be non-compliant and was excluded.

Evaluation Process:

The evaluation of the submissions from suppliers was carried out by Council officers.

The initial (Selection Stage) evaluation was conducted by Procurement in consultation with Finance and the Service Area which commenced on 8/2/24 and concluded on 1/5/24. All compliant bids successfully passed against the selection criteria assessed and hence achieved a place on the framework. The rankings on the framework of each of the successful providers was determined by evaluating their submissions against Quality, Social Value and Price Award Criteria. The quality evaluation (Award Stage) commenced on 7/5/24 and concluded with a moderation session which took place on 16/9/24 (the delay being due to staff capacity and availability).

Outcome:

Following the evaluation, it can be concluded that the framework contracts should be awarded as follows:

LOT 1

Ranked 1 Kompan Ltd
Ranked 2 Groundwork and Leisure Services Ltd
Ranked 3 Playsound Services Ltd

LOT 2

Ranked 1 Groundwork and Leisure Services Ltd

LOT 3

Ranked 1 Groundwork and Leisure Services Ltd
Ranked 2 Wicksteed Ltd

It is recommended that the direct award of work packages should be made in accordance with the above rankings. We would first offer works to the supplier ranked 1, and if they were unable to supply, offer alternatively to the supplier ranked 2, and then ranked 3.

2. Financial Implications

In terms of value, it should be noted that the sums of works we are likely to procure will vary from year to year, as the tender seeks a supplier to do both programmed works and reactionary repairs funded from both revenue resources, and capital funds/ grants etc received at the time. In terms of the value of works we estimated the total value of the contract at £500k over the full 4 years.

Any new capital or revenue grants received for this purpose will be approved in line with the requirements of the Financial Procedure Rules prior to any expenditure being committed over and above the existing budget.

3. Legal Implications

The works being undertaken are necessary to ensure that the Council's play facilities continue to meet adequate standards of safety, as such protecting the Council from the risk of claims of damages under the Occupiers Liability Act.

4. Corporate Risk Implications

There are no risks associated with accepting this Framework arrangement, as there is no commitment to offer subsequent contracts. The process for advertising the opportunity to tender for this framework was advertised, and the competition run in consultation with the Procurement team.

5 Staffing HR Implications

There are no staffing implications

6 Conclusion

Having now been completed the tender process for the Supply, Installation and Maintenance of Outdoor Playground Equipment and Play Area Surfacing will mean that the Council has in place robust procurement processes for securing suppliers when works are necessary to the Council's play facilities including children's playgrounds, multi-use games areas, skate parks and outdoor gyms.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None. This is a procurement process.

Equality Implications:

There will be a significant improvement in children's playgrounds as a consequence of the tender process we have undertaken. Green Sefton is committed to ensuring new play developments include equipment which is better designed to be inclusive for children with disabilities. Cabinet Member has recently been asked to agree a revised Green Sefton Policy Statement on Access to Playgrounds, which requires that we will pay added attention to improving play sites for children with mobility issues and other disabilities. We have undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment as part of the procurement. The scope of this work is concerned with those having:

- Impairment - A physical or mental factor which affects the ability of the person. For example, this may be someone who may be short sighted, unable to run as fast as others etc.
- Mobility – some people may have restricted mobility affecting limbs and use, either temporary or permanently, the use of a wheelchair or other mobility aid.
- Non-Disabled person – some people will have no impairment that has any measurable effect on their ability to use play facilities.

The equality Implications have been identified and mitigated.

(Please note that Council have agreed care experience should be treated like a protected characteristic.)

Impact on Children and Young People:

The proposal will see a significant amount of investment in children's play facilities, helping to ensure sites remain compliant with BS EN 1176/77. The tender process has now allowed us to more quickly source suppliers when works are required, helping to reduce the amount of time that play equipment is out of commission.

Children and Young People will see a significant improvement in play facilities as a consequence of this framework having been completed and finalised.

Climate Emergency Implications:

The recommendations within this report will likely have a small negative impact. This arises as the equipment we source will be steel (a standard for the play industry owing to the longevity it provides as a material) and the play manufacturers / suppliers source materials from outside the UK.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director of Corporate Services and Commercial (FD.7881-2/24.) and the Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD.5981/24) have been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report.

(B) External Consultations

'not applicable'

Implementation Date for the Decision :

Following the expiry of the "call-in" period for the Cabinet Member decision.

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Papers:

There are no background papers to this report