

BRIEFING NOTE: PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY SUPPLIER CONTRACTS

SEPTEMBER 2020

Background

The local public rights of way (PROW) network consists of around 100+km of footpaths, bridleways, greenways and cycle paths, mainly running through open spaces and along watercourses. The network must be maintained to a safe standard and be accessible for all, in particular, citizens with limited mobility. This involves the Council's Traffic and Safety service area carrying out safety and condition inspections, obtaining quotes and appointing local suppliers to carry out improvements, enhancements and repairs.

A safe and well maintained network has many benefits to citizens and the environment. It supports the Councils policy on encouraging sustainable active travel, improving health and wellbeing, access to open and green spaces, and will help deliver a Carbon Neutral City. A well maintained network has been extremely important during the COVID-19 restrictions so citizens can exercise locally. The Councils Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP 1 and 2) has a number of policy commitments for managing the network (view here www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/rightsofway).

Finance and procurement

The annual budget allocated to public rights of way through the Local Transport Plan (ITB walking and cycling programme) is £75,000. This is approved by the Councils Executive Board in February for the following financial year. This amounts to £300,000 over the proposed four year contract period.

The current supplier arrangements have been in place since 2004, and costs have been continually benchmarked against regional public rights of way services. In order to comply with Financial Regulations each supplier needs a contract. This is an opportunity to review current prices, investigate alternative suppliers, ensure continued value for money and identify efficiency savings.

Contract proposal

Each supplier will be invited to quote for a range of works, including amongst other items, vegetation cutting, erecting signs posts, repairing and improving surfaces, installing structures and day to day maintenance. Contracts will be awarded to a maximum of four suppliers for a period of four years.

DDM authorisation to enter into contractual arrangements

The DDM requests authorisation to:-

- 1) Commence the procurement process and award up to 4 contracts for a period of 4 years each contract

- 2) Continue with the current supplier arrangements for a maximum period of 6 months (the value of work during this period will be no more than £25,000)
- 3) Authorise the Head of Service Traffic and Safety to award the contracts to the successful bidders

Other options considered

The public rights of way network must be managed in a safe and accessible condition and the procurement and tendering process is the only option to appoint suppliers. To comply with Financial Regulations, contracts need to be in place with suppliers. No other options are available.