

Appendix 1 - Background Information

Tree Services runs on a limited budget where H&S tree work is carried out by our internal team but there are situations where contractors are also required due to large scale work requiring specialist equipment. There is currently £88,000 worth of tree work that needs to be completed by March 2023 as that is the H&S target date provided for these works. If any of the trees failed as the work had not been completed within the recommended timescale then it would make it difficult to defend a case if it went to Court.

Tree services currently have a framework agreement in place to use contractors for tree work. The framework includes Standard Tree Works and Emergency Works, and other associated services. There are four suppliers on this framework.

To be awarded, and retain, a place on the framework, each of the suppliers had to evidence their suitability in regards to their insurances, accreditations, method statements and risk assessments.

This framework expires at the end of March 2023. A new framework is being developed in conjunction with Procurement. The approvals for the new framework are part of a wider report, and so have not been granted yet. The request is to extend the framework under its current terms for a period of five calendar months and increase the associated CPAs to allow essential works be undertaken by already approved and commercially assessed suppliers. The request is to approve this decision to allow spend on tree work to continue until the new framework is in place and to extend the current framework agreement. This will enable us to continue to carry out urgent H&S tree work. All works will be awarded following a further competition, ensuring both the immediate and commercial needs of the Council are met.

The current CPA limit for the existing framework has been reached, however there is urgent H&S tree work that requires completing in 2022/23 and commissioning for 23/24. Tree services were successful in acquiring £800,000 of Streets For People funding to carry out tree work but this must be used by March 2024. Any funds not used shall need to be returned. Work is being scheduled with our Contractors to carry out tree work and utilise this funding but we require the CPA limit to be extended by another £250,000 which should provide enough flexibility until the new framework Contract has commenced.

Given the urgency of the tree works and the need to ensure that health and safety risks are managed appropriately, the service seeks an extension to the existing framework as this is the most efficient method of procuring the works. The service does not have the capacity or time to carry out individual tender processes for each of the emergency and urgent works packages as these processes will create lengthy delays at times when work needs to be carried out quickly and at a pace that is not achievable within the normal tender processes. In this exceptional case this decision is required in order to bridge the gap between the end of the existing trees service framework contract and the retendering and establishment of a new tree service framework contract in early 2023/24.