



ALL WARDS

CABINET

9th April 2001

Advice Services Tender

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, DEVELOPMENT & COMMERCIAL SERVICES

1.0 Purpose of the Report

This report details the current position with respect to the tender for advice services currently being provided by Leicester Law Centre and Leicester Citizens Advice Bureau.

2.0 Background

On 30th November 2000, Council made a decision to proceed with a tender process in respect of services currently being provided by the Law Centre and CAB. This process required both of those agencies to make bids to deliver a new service specification with the intention of making savings in the region of £125,000 from that currently expended to both agencies by the City Council.

Prior to the decision of Council, the issue had been discussed in the Cabinet meeting of 6th November and the Strategic Planning and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee of 14th November. The Scrutiny Committee has requested that a further report be presented once the tender applications have been received.

3.0 Recommendations

- (i) That Cabinet note the progress being made in this matter;
- (ii) That Cabinet consider the comments of officers with regard to the evaluation of the bids and endorse the officers recommendations in this matter.
- (iii) That the tender decision and officer advice be reported to the Strategic Planning & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee to be held on 9th May 2001.

4.0 Report

The Tender Process

On 2nd January 2001, both the CAB and Leicester Law Centre were issued with the tender documents and an outline of the process. This detailed two stages:

- (a) the exchange of information between the organisations on staffing and related matters in order to inform any potential TUPE implications;
- (b) the submission of detailed bids.

The first stage was due to be completed on 12th January 2001 and the second stage would then allow a further six weeks for the receipt of bids by the city council.

However, the completion of the first stage was delayed due to objections to the exchange of information by Leicester Law Centre and a period of leave taken by critical staff within that organisation. These matters have been resolved and stage two of the process was started on 16th February 2001.

The timescale for receipt of completed bids is therefore **30th March 2001**. A panel of officers within Environment and Development will then receive presentations from both agencies and make detailed recommendations to Cabinet on 9th April. Cabinet will therefore need to take a detailed report at short notice at its meeting of 9th April.

Termination of Current Contracts

In order for a decision on the tender to be put into effect at the earliest possible date it has been necessary to serve notice of termination of the current contracts on both the CAB and the Law Centre. Three months notice was served on 22nd January 2001 and is due to expire on 25th April. If a decision on the award of the contract is not made by that date then it will be necessary to provide a bridging agreement to the two agencies. This eventuality was made clear at the time that notice was served.

5.0 Conclusion

It is not possible to make detailed recommendations at this stage as the bids will not be received until 30th March 2001.

6.0 Legal Implications

There are no implications arising from this report.

Officer to Contact:
Damon Gibbons – Ext 8650

