

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET MEMBER
SIGNING HELD ON FRIDAY, 13TH OCTOBER, 2017, 10.30am
PRESENT:**

Councillors: Claire Kober (Chair)

150. FILMING AT MEETINGS

Noted.

151. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

152. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

**153. WAIVER AND AWARD OF THE STATUTORY HOMELESSNESS REVIEWS
FUNCTION TO HOUSING REVIEWS LIMITED (HRL)**

The Leader considered the report, which sought approval to waive Contract Standing Orders (CSO) 8.03 (requirement to obtain the quotation) as allowed under 10.01.2 (d); and to award a contract to Housing Reviews Limited to conduct reviews of allocation and homelessness decisions under Parts VI & VII of the Housing Act 1996. If approved, the contract would be awarded for a period of 6 months, commencing from 1 November 2017 to 31 May 2018 with an option to extend for a further period of up to 6 months.

RESOLVED that

- i) The requirement of CSO 8.03 as permitted under CSO 10.01.21 (d) (ii) (the estimated total value of the contract being £40,000 including any anticipated extension) be waived; and
- ii) The contract for the conduct of reviews of allocation and homelessness decisions be awarded to Housing Reviews Limited for a period of 6 months from 1 November 2017 to 31 May 2018, with an option to extend for a further period of up to 6 months.

Reasons for decision

The Council has statutory responsibilities under Parts VI and VII of the Act that it can either carry out itself or delegate to third parties under the terms of the Local Authorities (Contracting Out of Allocation of Housing and Homelessness Functions) Order 1996.

The current contract expires on 31st October 2017; so an award of a contract to HRL for 6 months is required to avoid disruption in the review process. This will also allow for all reviews contracted to HRL to be determined while a programme of transformation is undertaken. Failure to do so would pose a significant risk to the Council.

The rates for conducting reviews will be fixed for the duration of the contract and the contractor will be paid in arrears upon completing a review.

The cost of employing HRL to carry out the Housing Review function was £11,592 in 2016, but is expected to rise to around £17,500 per annum in 2017/18 due to the enactment of the Homelessness Reduction Act. The cost of carrying out the function within the Council would be approximately £50,000 per annum. Employing the external provider will therefore deliver significant savings to the council.

Alternative options considered

If HRL is not formally awarded the contract, it will not be authorised to carry out reviews on behalf of the Council. Any reviews conducted by HRL would be open to legal challenge.

Procurement through an open tender process was considered. However this would not enable the efficiencies and improvements that could be gained through a strategic commissioning exercise with partners. An open tender process may also result in an increase in the price of contracts without corresponding value for money benefits.

154. URGENT BUSINESS

None.

CHAIR: Councillor Claire Kober

Signed by Chair

Date