

**MEETING OF HIGHWAYS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE POLICY AND
SERVICE COMMITTEE: MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday 2nd February 2016

Time: 10:00am-10.15am

Present: Councillors Ashwood, Butcher, Chapman, Connor, Criswell, Gillick, Hickford (Chairman), Hunt, Moghadas, Reeve (Vice-Chairman), Rouse, Scutt and Taylor

174. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

175. MINUTES AND ACTION LOG

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th January 2016, as tabled, were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Action Log was noted.

176. PETITION

There were no petitions.

177. EASTERN HIGHWAYS FRAMEWORK 2

The Committee received a report on the results of the Eastern Highways Framework 2 procurement exercise to deliver a new highways construction framework on behalf of the Eastern Highways Alliance (EHA), a formal collaboration between eleven Local Highway Authorities in the East of England. The Framework would be used by the County Council to complement the delivery options available through the Council's new Highway Service, for major schemes including City Deal schemes. The total contract value could reach £750M over four years, and it would deliver significant benefits to the EHA partners. The County Council had acted as the lead authority on behalf of the EHA, and LGSS Law and LGSS Procurement had supported the process. The detail of the procurement process in terms of tenders and shortlisting were noted.

Arising from the report, Members:

- asked for the names of the successful companies. Officers explained that for legal reasons they could not provide the detail without going into confidential session, but once approved by legal and procurement, this information would be freely available. The focus of the report under consideration was the processes which had been undertaken in terms of procurement, and the outcome of those processes;

- noted that the other local authorities which formed the EHA partnership were Hertfordshire, Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Peterborough, Southend, Central Bedfordshire, Bedford Borough, Thurrock and Luton;
- Councillor Butcher commented that when he had been the Chairman of the Enterprise, Growth & Community Infrastructure Overview & Scrutiny Committee some years earlier, there had been a commitment to involve Members in processes such as this. It was confirmed that there had been no direct Member involvement in this process, which Cambridgeshire had led on behalf of the other authorities in the EHA. However, it was noted that the Committee Chairman and Vice-Chairman were members of the Highways Transformation Board, which advised on these issues. One particular issue raised by Members which had been taken forward was the opportunity for smaller contractors to be involved, which had been really well received. It was confirmed that there had been an encouraging response from smaller contractors from across the region;
- welcomed the thorough process that had been undertaken. In response to questions, Members were advised: (i) that schemes did not have to go through the Framework Contract – there was still the option of either using the existing Highways Contract, or going out to tender; (ii) appropriate Due Diligence had been undertaken on all of the Framework contractors; (iv) if one of the Framework contractors did not perform satisfactorily, that the framework had a mechanism to address; (v) that part of the rationale behind the Framework Contract was to increase competition and knowledge through an iterative process;
- in respect of the potential contractors on both lists who were not prepared to conform to mandatory requirements, it was confirmed that those contractors had been aware before the process started i.e. about the pass/fail question that was in the documentation, officers advised that they would be speaking to all contractors once the process was finalised, to see if there were any issues;
- noted that the Contract was for four years, which was the maximum period allowed for such contracts.

A Member commented that the “up to £1.5M” category still effectively excluded many smaller businesses, and it would be helpful to have a category “up to £500,000”. It was confirmed that this was not part of the transformation process, but producing a list of smaller contractors was something that could be considered.

It was resolved, by a majority, to:

1. approve the award of Lot 1 of the Framework to seven providers;
2. approve the award of Lot 2 of the Framework to six providers.

178. AGENDA PLAN AND APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Members noted the Agenda Plan, with the following update: the item on ‘Streetlighting attachments’ would be reported to the May 2016 meeting.