

Minutes of a meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 5 October 2021 at 5.00 pm in Council Chamber, City Hall - City Hall, Bradford

Commenced Time Not Specified
Concluded 6.30 pm

Present – Councillors

LABOUR	CONSERVATIVE	LIBERAL DEMOCRATS	INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST
Azam Tait Akhtar D Green Arshad Hussain Nazir	Riaz	Griffiths	Jenkins

Councillor in the Chair

Apologies: Councillor J Sunderland

25. ALTERNATE MEMBERS (Standing Order 34)

Councillor Griffiths for Councillor J Sunderland.

26. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest in matters under discussion.

27. INSPECTION OF REPORTS AND BACKGROUND PAPERS

No request to remove the restriction on a report or background paper was made.

28. REFERRALS TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

There were no referrals to the Committee.

29. NETWORK INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT FOR BRADFORD DISTRICT

Officers from Bradford Council, informed Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Councillors that they would be going to market to procure a network infrastructure partner for 20 years to deliver full fibre gigabit network infrastructure for the Council and the Bradford Learning Network, (BLN).

Members also learned that this would also deliver significant social value, that would otherwise be “left behind”, for some years using inadequate broadband. Members were keen to explore what the wider benefits of this work would be and to also ensure that Bradford Council was not taking any unnecessary risks.

Bradford Council officer’s members that the wider benefits would support the business requirements so that Bradford can compete with sectors across the country and that the project would be delivered within budget, whilst also making cost savings.

Moreover, officers also highlighted that successful organisations would be able to secure savings in the long term and that they would also be looking to stimulate areas across the Bradford district, that may have otherwise been left behind.

Member enquired about the length of the contract being 20 years, as Information Technology is developing fast. As well as this member also felt that more detail should have been included in the report and by doing this, the authority would be investing in a “motorway”, for the next 20 years.

Furthermore, members were also keen to understand how this could be maximised for disadvantaged communities across the District and access to Information Technology.

In response, officers highlighted to members that they would need to work with communities across the District, to look at affordability and that there were a number of options that they were considering at developing with the infrastructure partners.

In response, officers informed members that 20 years was the normal length of such contracts and that’s there was no new technology on the horizon. Moreover, benchmarking would be incorporate into the contract to ensure that best value is achieved.

Resolved –

- (1) That the comments raised by members be considered as part of this procurement exercise.
- (2) This Committee requests that officers share the findings of the soft market testing exercise with members of this Committee.

(Paul Wilson – 07812 490703)

30. VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY AND ENTERPRISE SECTOR (VCSE)

INFRASTRUCTURE PROCUREMENT STRATEGY

Officers from the Department of Place informed Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee members of the forthcoming procurement of a combined Voluntary Community Sector Enterprise (VCSE) Infrastructure Procurement Strategy.

Members learned that this was a combined VCSE grant with a value in excess of £2million, in line with the requirements of Contracts Standing Orders (CSO 7.2.1) and members were being informed of this, prior to the commencement of the procurement process.

Members of the Committee were of the view that this was a more informed and detailed report, in comparison to the report that had been presented at the last meeting of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny on Thursday 16 September 2021.

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee members were keen to understand how the performance and value for money aspects of this procurement activity would be monitored.

In response, Bradford Council officers stated that there would be quarterly meetings to monitor the performance and value for money aspects.

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee members were very keen to keep an overview of this and for the performance against the contract to be included in the Stronger Communities updates to this Committee.

Resolved –

This Committee requests that the performance against the contract be included in the Stronger Communities update to this Committee.

(Ian Day – 01274 433507)

Chair

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a correct record at the next meeting of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

THIS AGENDA AND ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTS HAVE BEEN PRODUCED, WHEREVER POSSIBLE, ON RECYCLED PAPER