

REPORT TO	DATE OF MEETING
Cabinet	7 th September 2016

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SUBJECT	PORTFOLIO	AUTHOR	ITEM
Worden Park Conservatory and Vine House	Neighbourhoods and Streetscene	Andrew Richardson	5

SUMMARY AND LINK TO CORPORATE PRIORITIES

This report requests approval to commit capital expenditure and accept the most economically advantageous tenders for the proposed replacement of the Formal Gardens Conservatory (Display House) and Walled Garden Vine House at Worden Park.

The proposals in the report link directly to all of the Council's corporate priorities but especially Clean, Green and Safe.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet agree:

1. That Tender 1 in Table 1 is accepted for the replacement of the Formal Gardens Conservatory frame at Worden Park.
2. That Tender 1 in Table 2 is accepted for the replacement of the Walled Garden Vine House frame at Worden Park.
3. To grant authority under section 3.4 of the Financial Regulations to incur capital expenditure of up to £291,000 for the above works at Worden Park.
4. To vire £61,000 from savings in Parks and Open Spaces capital schemes (Worden Park entrance & car parking /Open Spaces budgets) to the Conservatory (£43,000) and Vine House (£18,000) capital budgets.

DETAILS AND REASONING

Background

Both the conservatory and vine house frames are listed structures and are subject to planning consents. Due to this the initial consideration was to replace both with like for like structures which is what would normally be required. Therefore the forecast capital budgets were based on wooden replacements which replicates the original designs. However, even though wood is a cheaper option compared to other alternatives for the initial capital cost, the ongoing maintenance costs are significantly higher for wood compared to aluminium or steel due to the need for regular painting. Also, the lifespan of wood is significantly less.

Following further research alternative products produced by specialist companies were identified which are of a standard suitable to meet the requirements for planning consent. Tenders were therefore sought accordingly.

Whilst the alternative products are more expensive than wood, they are considered value for money due to the increased lifespan, robust guarantees and significantly reduced maintenance over their life.

Tenders were initially invited for both the conservatory and vine house. One tender was received for the vine house and one late tender was received for the conservatory which was rejected in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. The conservatory was therefore submitted again for tender and three were received.

a) Details of Proposals - Conservatory

The conservatory dates back to around the 1860s and was built as a 'display house' for exotic plants overlooking the formal gardens following their improvement along with the adjacent main hall building in the 1850s. The timber frame will have been replaced many times section by section in the building's lifetime due to deterioration caused by external weather and the humid conditions of the interior. The current frame has now reached a point where it requires wholesale replacement and is closed to public access.

As previously mentioned the opportunity was taken to investigate longer lasting materials for the glasshouses and one increasingly popular option is to replicate the design of the existing timber frame in a suitable metal which, when powder coat painted, has an identical appearance with the benefit of a far longer design life and the removal of the need for regular maintenance such as repainting.

The highest scoring tender (Tender 1) proposes to replace the existing timber frame and doors with powder coat painted aluminium to exactly replicate the existing frame dimensions. The company has developed a system suitable for exactly replicating historic timber glasshouse frames with virtually all fixings hidden within the structure to provide the appearance of painted wood both inside and out.

The bid also includes electric vent openers. The company guarantees the frame for 25 years against damage from wind/snow loading and defective materials and workmanship. The frame's paintwork is guaranteed for 10 years, the doors and bonded glazing bars are guaranteed for 5 years and the electric vent openers are guaranteed for 1 year. It should be noted that the painting of the frame is purely cosmetic due to aluminium not corroding in the same way as steel.

Tender 2 received the next highest score and proposes replacing the existing frame in powder coat painted steel to match 'as closely as possible' the existing frame, suggesting there may be some variance in dimensions. The company's bid includes electric vent openers, however, replacement doors would be in timber and photos submitted of similar work suggests less fixings are hidden within the frame.

The company has carried out works in historic locations requiring listed building consents but the examples provided were for replacement of lost glasshouses or new structures within historic settings rather than the replication of existing historic glasshouse frames. It is considered that this product would not as closely replicate the original design as Tender 1 which may be a consideration for the required planning consent.

The wooden doors are a negative feature of this bid due to the need for regular maintenance and reduced lifespan compared to aluminium.

The company guarantees the frame for 50 years but only against damage caused by wind/snow loading and suggests steelwork would only be replaced if it 'prevents the glass house from performing'. Defective materials and workmanship are guaranteed for 1 year but paintwork, doors and electric vent openers do not receive a guarantee. The limited guarantee for defective materials and workmanship is a concern as is the no guarantee at all for paintwork. For a steel frame the paintwork is an essential element bearing in mind steel's susceptibility to corrosion.

A summary of the guarantees is as follows:

Guarantee	Tender 1	Tender 2
Frame – wind/snow loading	25 years	50 years
Frame – defective materials and workmanship	25 years	1 year
Paintwork	10 years	No guarantee
Doors and bonded glazing bars	5 years	No guarantee
Electric vent openers	1 year	No guarantee

b) Details of Proposals – Vine House

The Walled Garden dates back to 1777-1778 and the Vine House is likely to be mid to late Victorian appearing on the maps by 1894. The vine inside, a Black Hamburg is thought to date back to the early 20th century. Steps will be taken to protect the vine throughout the proposed installation due to its heritage links. The timber frame is thought to have been completely replaced during the 1980s which would make it approximately 25 years old. It has now reached a point where it also requires wholesale replacement and is closed to the public.

Tender 1 proposes to replace the existing timber frame and doors with powder coat painted aluminium to closely replicate the original frame dimensions (the dimensions of the current frame are slightly different to the frame it would have replaced). The company has developed a glasshouse system suitable for replacing historic timber glasshouse frames working with the Architectural Board of the National Trust for use in their historic properties, with virtually all fixings hidden when viewed from the outside to provide the appearance of painted wood.

Planning approval has been granted in a number of historic locations for the replacement of existing timber frames with this aluminium frame system.

The bid also includes electric vent openers. The company guarantees the frame for 25 years against damage from wind/snow loading and defective materials and workmanship. The frame's paintwork is guaranteed for 10 years, the doors and bonded glazing bars are guaranteed for 5 years and the electric vent openers are guaranteed for 1 year.

c) Tendering Process

Open tenders have been invited in line with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules via the Chest - the regional e-procurement portal that enables tenders and quotations to be advertised, invited and received electronically. In addition, as an openly advertised opportunity, tenders were also advertised on Contracts Finder, the national e-procurement portal.

The invitation to tender documentation included details of the evaluation criteria to be used to determine the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT). This was 50% cost and 50% quality, taking account of methodology and proposed frame system and materials, work programming, allocation of resources at each stage and guarantees provided by the bidder for their product.

Tender submissions received via the Chest/Contracts Finder have been evaluated in accordance with the MEAT evaluation criteria and are listed in Table 1 (for the Conservatory) and Table 2 (for the Vine House). Tender 1 is the overall highest scoring compliant tender for the Conservatory and is recommended for acceptance. The tender received for the Vine House is compliant and of suitable quality and is therefore recommended for acceptance.

Table 1 – Formal Gardens Conservatory, Worden Park

Tender / Firm	Cost £	Cost Score (50%)	Quality Score (50%)	Total Score (100%)
1	£ 192,500.00	36	49	85
2	£ 139,622.00	50	32	82
3	£ 177,750.00	39	31	70

Table 2 – Walled Garden Vine House, Worden Park

Tender / Firm	Cost £	Cost Score (50%)	Quality Score (50%)	Total Score (100%)
1	£ 97,755.00	50	49	99

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

In the preparation of this report, consideration has been given to the impact of its proposals in all the areas listed below, and the table shows any implications in respect of each of these.

FINANCIAL	<p>The approved capital programme for 2016/17 includes a capital budget allocation of £150,000 for the replacement of the Conservatory frame and £80,000 for the replacement of the Vine House frame at Worden Park. Following the tendering exercise the total cost is £291,000 which leaves a shortfall of £61,000. However, it is proposed that this additional cost is justified due to the change from wooden to aluminium structures which significantly reduces ongoing maintenance and increases the lifespan.</p> <p>The shortfall in funding can be contained within the overall parks and open spaces capital programme following tendering efficiencies and monies carried forward from the 2015/16 programme (Worden entrance and car park/overflow car park and Open spaces capital budgets). Therefore a virement of £61,000 from these Parks and Open Spaces capital budgets has been requested.</p>
LEGAL	<p>This procurement is in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and Standing Orders.</p> <p>The works will be subject to Planning consents that will be obtained prior to placing orders with the successful bidders.</p> <p>The successful tenderer will enter into a formal contract with the Council.</p>
RISK	<p>The proposed improvement works will address the current issues being experienced with the failing Conservatory and Vine House frames. Failure to carry out these works would lead to the glasshouse frames being removed which would still require planning consents and may attract adverse comment.</p>
THE IMPACT ON EQUALITY	<p>Equality issues have been fully considered and incorporated into the design proposals.</p>

<i>OTHER (see below)</i>	<p>Efficiency Savings/Value for Money The proposed replacement frames should require very little future maintenance of the structures compared with the existing timber frames. Also the lifespan of the frames will be significantly increased.</p> <p>Health and Safety The improvements will remove the current health and safety risks and would allow public access into the glasshouses again.</p>
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<i>Asset Management</i>	<i>Corporate Plans and Policies</i>	<i>Crime and Disorder</i>	<i>Efficiency Savings/Value for Money</i>
<i>Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion</i>	<i>Freedom of Information/ Data Protection</i>	<i>Health and Safety</i>	<i>Health Inequalities</i>
<i>Human Rights Act 1998</i>	<i>Implementing Electronic Government</i>	<i>Staffing, Training and Development</i>	<i>Sustainability</i>

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Cabinet report Financial Strategy, Budget and Council Tax 2016/17