

Ref PHD : 025/09

Subject:	Approval to award framework contract for the supply and installation of park and playground equipment and deliver the Playbuilder scheme.
Responsible Officer:	Brendon Hills, Corporate Director for Community and Environment
Portfolio Holder:	Councillor Chris Mote Portfolio Holder for Community and Cultural Services
Key Decision:	Yes
Urgent/Non Urgent:	Urgent
Power to be exercised:	Portfolio holder responsibilities and paragraph 3 of the appendix to the Executive Procedure Rules part 4d of the constitution
Exempt:	No (except for appendix 2, exempt information under paragraph 3 of part 1 of schedule 12a to the Local Government Act 1971 (as amended))
Enclosures:	Appendix 1: Evaluation criteria Appendix 2: Tenderers and Scoring results Appendix 3: Draft list of Playbuilder sites

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out:

- (1) an overview of the competitive tendering process undertaken to seek a new contract for the delivery and installation of Park and Playground Equipment
- (2) an overview of the Playbuilder scheme for Harrow

Recommendations:

The Leader (or in his absence the Deputy Leader) is requested to:

(1) approve the decision to award a framework agreement to four companies:

- Wicksteed Leisure Ltd
- Playdale Playgrounds Ltd
- Playworld Systems (Europe) Ltd
- Sutcliffe Play Ltd

For a term of 3 years with the option to extend for another 1 year.

(2) approve the proposed Playbuilder scheme for Harrow.

Reason: (For recommendation)

(1) To enable the Council to secure a framework contract for the provision of playground and park equipment.

(2) To enable the Council to deliver the Playbuilder initiative as part of the Government's national Play Strategy and Harrow's local play strategy.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

The decision to award this contract and proceed with the delivery of the Playbuilder scheme will support the council to achieve its corporate priority to:

Build stronger communities

The recommendation to approve the award of the framework agreement and deliver the Playbuilder scheme contributes to this priority by ensuring that the council provides and improves park and playground facilities across the Borough. The provision of these facilities enables all sections of the community, particularly children and families to come together and enjoy Harrow's parks and open spaces.

The competitive tendering process has identified the highest scoring bidders who have demonstrated their qualities and ability to supply innovative, competitively priced, attractive, good quality, safe playgrounds to Harrow Council. The local community and park users have been integral in the selection of supplier and will continue to be involved in the design of playground facilities.

Value for money

The evaluation criteria for the selection of suppliers is designed in a way to identify bids that offer the best value for money. A price per play value ratio is calculated as part of the scoring matrix and helps ensure that the playground designs offer best value in terms of price, quality and play value.

Options considered

Background

An Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) tender process was conducted according to the European Union (EU) procurement rules for contract values above the prescribed threshold.

A complex, pre-defined evaluation model was constructed to fairly evaluate each tender against a set of criteria established by Public Realm Maintenance and Corporate Procurement as the most important aspects of Park & Playground equipment and installation (please see attached Appendix 1 evaluation criteria).

The tender was split into four live projects and tenderers were asked to bid for each project separately. The four projects were chosen for their distinctly different requirements, with the intention of allowing suppliers with different strengths and weaknesses the platform to showcase their potential and provide the Council with a wide breadth of skills and experience to draw from to meet the need of the diverse play environments required across the borough.

Wicksteed won scheme 1 & 2

Playdale won scheme 3

Playworld won scheme 4

And Sutcliffe Play had the next best overall score for the 4 schemes.

The framework will provide a platform for the provision of all future playground installations for the term of the contract. The framework suppliers will be invited to quote in a 'mini-competition' on a project-by-project basis. This should give both flexibility, opportunity for innovation and market competitiveness whilst being compliant with EU procurement rules.

In early 2007 the Government through the Department for children, schools and families (DCSF) announced two funding streams (Play Pathfinder/Playbuilder) aimed at improving the infrastructure of play space and embedding sustainable development of children's play by challenging local authorities to provide staff to develop and supervise play opportunities. Harrow Council were allocated Playbuilder funding as a Wave 2 authority as part of the national roll-out of the scheme. This was granted to the value of approx £1.1m over two years from 2009-2011.

This project builds on the work already taking place in Harrow to deliver the Council's Play Strategy and BIG Lottery Fund play projects. The Playbuilder project will deliver improvements to existing provision through active engagement with children and young people and use of innovative design. The play spaces have been identified through existing audit and consultation information that will be updated as the project progresses (see draft list attached at appendix 3). The project will also have a focus on developing 'door step' provision by providing much needed improvements to play spaces that serve some of the more disadvantaged areas in the Borough.

Why a change is needed

- The existing contract and framework agreement has expired and the funding available for Playbuilder projects is over the EU thresholds.
- The framework agreement is to be put in place with 4 successful contractors enabling the council to undertake a robust, mini-competition on a project-by-project basis. This should give both flexibility, opportunity for innovation and market competitiveness whilst being compliant with EU procurement rules.
- The framework agreement will also be made available to Schools, Housing and other potential users to gain maximum economies of scale, and to provide a robust, cost effective and safe purchasing solution.

Consultation

Consultation with playground users (for the 4 schemes tendered) was undertaken in a secret ballot format. The scheme proposals were displayed and users invited to score them. The outcome formed 10% of the overall evaluation. For each of the playgrounds to be developed, there will be further extensive consultation carried out by the short listed supplier.

Implications of the Recommendation

The framework will provide a competitive platform for developing exceptional, innovative, adventurous and best value play spaces in the London borough of Harrow. Not only will the competitive nature of the framework provide lower prices but also encourage innovation and creative playground design in line with the expectations of the Playbuilder initiative.

Staffing / workforce implications

A project manager has been appointed from within the existing workforce to project manage the delivery of the Playbuilder scheme. The delivery of capital projects has been planned for within existing work programmes.

Equalities impact

The provision of high quality play and park equipment through the Playbuilder scheme will improve access for all communities to play opportunities. The Play Strategy aims to ensure equal access to play for all children and young people and identified that children with disabilities were one group that were disadvantaged in accessing play opportunities. The Playbuilder scheme aims to address the need to ensure DDA (Disability Discrimination Act) compliance for some playgrounds in the Borough.

Legal comments

The tender process has been conducted in accordance with all EU and domestic procurement requirements.

Community safety

The delivery of the Playbuilder scheme contributes to the prevention of crime and disorder by providing safe and stimulating play areas for children and young people. Delivery of the proposed action plan will provide opportunities for engaging children and young people in the provision of age-appropriate and usable facilities.

Financial Implications

Local authority playbuilders and pathfinder schemes will deliver the Government's £235m investment in play and transform local areas into innovative and adventurous play spaces. This programme is a major part of the National play strategy, Fair Play, launched in April 2008

From the latest round of the Playbuilder Scheme, Harrow Council has funding of Capital £1.1m and Revenue of £45k for staff and sundry costs. This arrangement will provide the Council with the opportunity to use the proposed framework for park and playground installations for the duration of the proposed contract.

Performance Issues

The proposal contributes to the achievement of the following National Indicators:

NI 5 Overall/general satisfaction with local area: Current performance from the last Place Survey indicates our performance at 70.3%. A similar question asked in the Quality of Life Survey over each of the last four years showed a gradual decline from 70% to 65 % recorded as satisfied or very satisfied. The Place Survey result, although in a slightly different form seems to return satisfaction to 2005 levels. The Council's score of +55 percentage points (i.e. those very or fairly satisfied minus those fairly or very dissatisfied) compares with an Outer London average of +58.

NI 110 Young people's participation in positive activities: Current performance shows that significantly more young people participate in positive activities in Harrow (74.6%) than both the London and national average. (London average: 67.9% and National average 69.5%)

The approval of the framework contract and delivery of the Playbuilder scheme has the potential to impact positively on both indicators through the provision of high-quality play provision. DCSF expectations regarding the delivery of the Playbuilder initiative include requirements to consult with children, young people, families and the local community. This active involvement will in turn impact on the overall general satisfaction of residents and engagement of young people. Delivery against these outcomes will also be part of the performance management arrangements for the framework contract, so that both DCSF expectations are met and the Council meets its objectives in this area.

Environmental Impact

Delivery of the Playbuilder scheme will aim to make best use of natural materials and blend play spaces in to the existing landscape. Local authorities are encouraged to use the principles outlined in 'Design for Play: a guide to creating successful play spaces', published by the Department for Media, Culture and Sport and the Department for Children, Schools and Families, as a guide to delivering innovative and sustainable play projects.

Risk Implications

The main risk identified for the Playbuilder scheme is the ability to meet the very tight deadlines to deliver 22 play schemes between 2009-2011. To help us meet these this report is marked urgent to ensure that approval to go ahead with the award of the framework contract can proceed and in turn the delivery of the Playbuilder scheme can commence.

Risk included on Directorate risk register? No
Separate risk register in place? No

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Signature:

Name: Sheela Thakkrar



on behalf of the*
Chief Financial Officer

Date: 19 August 2009

Signature:

Name: Matthew Adams



on behalf of the*
Monitoring Officer

Date: 19 August 2009

Section 4 – Performance Officer Clearance

Signature:

Name: Martin Randall



on behalf of the*
Divisional Director
Partnership, Development
and Performance

Date: 18 August 2009

Section 5 – Environmental Impact Officer Clearance

Name: John Edwards



Divisional Director
(Environmental Services)

Date: 18 August 2009

Section 6 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Kashmir Takhar, Interim Head of Services – Community Development
Tel: 020 8420 9331

Background Papers:

Appendix 1: Evaluation Criteria

Appendix 2: Draft list of Playbuilder sites

Signature:

Position *Divisional Director of Environmental Services*

Name (print) John Edwards

Date: 18 August 2009

For Portfolio Holder/Leader

* I do agree to the decision proposed

* I do not agree to the decision proposed

* Please delete as appropriate

Notification of personal interests (if any):

(Note: if you have a prejudicial interest you should not take this decision)

Additional comments made by and/or options considered by the Portfolio Holder

Signature:

Portfolio Holder

Date: