

16. PROCUREMENT ARRANGEMENTS – DECORATION VOUCHERS FOR TENANTS

The Council Executive considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Finance and Estates seeking approval to use the Procurement for Housing (PfH) framework for Decoration Vouchers for tenants.

The Head of Finance and Estates explained that Housing currently operated a Decoration Vouchers scheme to provide an incentive to tenants to take Void properties. This scheme had grown to include several suppliers including national companies and small and medium enterprises. However the way the scheme was set up was not compliant with current Procurement Regulations and was no longer being used as originally intended.

Therefore a Quality Improvement Team (QIT) was set up following discussions between Housing and their tenants on how to improve the current scheme. Following a series of meetings of the QIT the Corporate Procurement Unit began preparing their Contract Strategy and found that the PfH framework suited the council's needs and could be utilised as soon as the council became a member.

The PfH scheme operated by B&Q issuing pre-loaded cards to Housing with Housing being given access to a website where they activated the card and could set a time limit on them or cancel them if required. Housing would issue the card in person to a tenant. The cards could also have a limit set on what could be bought to ensure that they were used for decoration items.

The Head of Finance and Estates continued to advise that Standing Orders recommended the use of frameworks where they were in place and that the council's participation in Framework Agreements arranged by other public bodies may only happen with the prior written approval of the Corporate Procurement Manager under delegated authority from the Head of Finance and Estates.

The report continued to provide information on in-house capability, procurement issues including the criteria to be applied at the tender stage which would be 40% for Price and 60% for Quality, sustainability considerations and budget implications. Costs were estimated to be £115,000 per annum and would be funded from the HRA revenue budget.

It was recommended that the Council Executive approve the use of the Procurement for Housing (PfH) framework with B&Q to the end of the current contract in 2017, for the provision of Decoration Vouchers for tenants, noting the price/quality criteria that would be used in the procurement exercise.

Decision

To approve the terms of the report.