

Decision by Portfolio Holder



Report reference: CCS-002-2020/21

Date of report: 22 June 2020

**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Customer & Corporate Support Services – Councillor S Kane

Author: Susan Lewis (01992 564508) **Democratic Services:** J Leither

Subject: Out of Hours Mears Call Handling Contract Extension

Decision:

That agreement be given to continue to use Mears for our out of hours emergency call handling service on a twelve-month rolling contract basis.

ADVISORY NOTICE: <i>A Portfolio Holder may not take a decision on a matter on which he/she has declared a Pecuniary interest. A Portfolio Holder with a non-pecuniary interest must declare that interest when exercising delegated powers.</i>	
I have read and approve/ do not approve (delete as appropriate) the above decision:	
Comments/further action required: None	
Signed: Councillor S Kane	Date: 1 st July 2020
<i>Non-pecuniary interest declared by Portfolio Holder/ conflict of non-pecuniary interest declared by any other consulted Cabinet Member:</i> None	<i>Dispensation granted by Standards Committee:</i> Yes/No or n/a N/A
Office use only: Call-in period begins: 2 nd July 2020	Expiry of Call-in period: 9 th July 2020

**After completion, one copy of this pro forma should be returned to
Democratic Services IMMEDIATELY**

Reason for decision:

The current contract with Mears expires on 28th September and so in order to continue to provide an out of hours call handling service we need to secure a new contract.

Options considered and rejected:

A tender exercise was completed however no interested parties submitted a bid. Feedback was obtained from these parties to identify the reasons why. Due to the small size of the contract several parties confirmed it was not commercially viable, some did not reply, others confirmed due to Covid 19 they did not have the capacity to consider the tender.

The tender deadline was extended for a further two weeks for suppliers to re-consider their decision, however, still no bids were received.

Bringing the out of hours call handling in house and resourcing ourselves was considered as this was previously the way it was managed however the cost was approx. £80,000 so this is not a viable option.

Background Report:

Our out of hours call handling provider manages calls for EFDC during the following hours:

Weekdays:	Monday to Thursday 5.15pm to 9.00am
Weekends:	Friday 5.00pm to Monday 09.00am
Bank Holidays & Christmas shutdown:	As above

Call handling is required for the following areas:

- Street Lighting
- Leisure centres
- Car parks
- Noise
- Drainage and flooding
- Trees & Hedgerows
- Planning & development
- Dangerous structures
- Public health
- Highways
- ICT
- CCTV
- Waste
- Homelessness
- Housing Repairs
- Facilities management
- North Weald airfield
- EFDC buildings and depots

Average of 586 calls per month for Housing Repairs - note volumes increase with poor weather conditions, major incidents, power loss, flooding etc - and an average of 58 calls per month for other service areas.

The contract has a annual value of approximately £36,000.

Resource Implications:

No additional EFDC resource implications

Legal and Governance Implications:

N/A

Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:

N/A

Consultation Undertaken:

Contract tender process was followed under procurement rules however with nil response Mears have reconsidered and agreed to continue with the contract on a twelve-month rolling basis

Background Papers:

None

Impact Assessments:

N/A

Risk Management:

The extension of this contract creates minimum risk to the Council, there are no risks of challenge from any unsuccessful bidders as no one bid for the tender.

Equality Analysis:

The Equality Act 2010 requires that the Public Sector Equality Duty is actively applied in decision-making. This means that the equality information provided to accompany this report is essential reading for all members involved in the consideration of this report. The equality information is provided at Appendix 1 of this report.

Key Decision Reference (Y/N):

N/A