

<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Head of Environmental Health</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Mike Walker</b>
<b>Telephone No:</b>	<b>4480</b>
<b>Portfolio Leader:</b>	<b>Environment</b>
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Report Track:</b>	<b>Council: 16/11/16</b>

**COUNCIL  
16 NOVEMBER 2016  
PEST CONTROL SERVICE**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 To seek Council approval to reintroduce charging for the treatment of pests, with the exception of rats and mice.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 That Council agrees to the reintroduction of charging for pest control treatment on domestic premises, except for rats and mice.

**3 Key Issues and Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 The current contract awarded to Mitie Pest Control Limited in 2014 was scheduled to expire on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.
- 3.2 The Company has exercised the option to withdraw from the contract having given the Council 3 month notification period. The contract will formally end on the 8<sup>th</sup> December 2017. Negotiations are currently in hand with the Contractor to extend the contract until 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016 to enable a replacement contractor to be engaged.
- 3.3 The likelihood of engaging a new contractor to deliver the contract on the current basis at the same or a lower price is negligible. It is considered that an increase in funding to maintain the same level of service or a reduction in the range of free services on offer would be required if funding is not increased.
- 3.4 Additional funding may be secured by either an uplift in the budget for the service or alternatively by increasing the range of treatments in respect of which a charge is made.

- 3.5 The Council is not required by law to provide a pest control service. Its statutory duty extends to the control of rats and mice, which may be discharged by the use of enforcement powers against those responsible for rodents infestations conferred by the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949. However, savings on the cost of a pest control contract would be significantly reduced by the cost of additional enforcement activity.
- 3.6 At the meeting on 22 September 2016 Cabinet resolved to re-tender the contract on the basis that the contractor would be required to offer the treatment of rats and mice free of charge and a fee would be applied to all other pest treatment provided.
- 3.7 Cabinet's decision was ratified by an extra-ordinary meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016 and the tender was subsequently published.
- 3.8 The closing date for bids was set at 24<sup>th</sup> October 2016 and the five bids received are being evaluated.

#### **4 Relationship to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 This report supports the Council's Corporate Priorities as follows:

- (i) **Striving for cleaner, greener and attractive public environments across the District**

The control/eradication of pests assists in promoting cleaner, greener and more attractive environment for local residents and visitors to the district.

#### **5 Report Detail**

- 5.1 The current pest control contract was initiated on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, initially for 2 years and the option to extend for a further year was taken with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.
- 5.2 The contract provided for three elements of service, namely
- The provision of a free pest control service to the public for rats, mice, bedbugs, fleas, cockroaches and wasps.
  - The provision of a prescribed pest control service for specified council – operated buildings and sites at a preferential rate.
  - The provision of optional pest control services on a one-off basis at a preferential rate.
- 5.3 The contractor has exercised its option to terminate the contract with effect from 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016 and has given the required three months notice.

- 5.4 Negotiations are currently in hand with the Contractor to extend the contract until the end of the year to enable a replacement contractor to be engaged with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017
- 5.5 Cabinet considered a range of options at the meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016 and resolved to have the contract tendered on the basis of providing a free service for rats and mice only. All other pest treatments were to attract a charge.
- 5.6 To ensure that sufficient time was available to properly tender the contract with a view to it commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017, it was necessary to publish the tender before the expiry of the call-in period.
- 5.7 In the absence of agreement from all three main party leaders to a request to waive the call-in procedure, Cabinet's decision was referred to an extra-ordinary meeting of the Environment Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny.
- 5.8 Members of the Environment Scrutiny Committee resolved to confirm Cabinet's decision at the meeting held on the 29 September 2016.
- 5.9 The contract was subsequently re-tendered on this basis and the closing date for bids was 24th October 2016. The five bids submitted are in the process of being evaluated and once concluded, the winning contractor will be notified.
- 5.10 The levels of charges to be applied will be set under delegated powers and will commence from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2017.

## **6 Implications**

### **6.1 Financial**

The tenders for the Pest Control Service are currently being evaluated .However it is considered that the cost of the service will be contained within existing budgets subject to the extension of the charging regime to all pest species other than rats and mice.

Additional costs may however be incurred if there are material variances in the demand for the service.

### **6.2 Legal**

Whilst the Council is not obliged to provide a pest control service, it does have statutory obligations in relation to the control of rats and mice in the district. By providing a pest control service, it reduces the demand on enforcement officers who would otherwise be required to investigate and pursue enforcement action to resolve rat and mice infestations.

### **6.3 Human Resources**

The present contractor has confirmed that there will not be any TUPE implications as staff engaged in the delivery of the service for the Council will be redeployed within the contractors organisation

6.4 **Section 17 (Crime Prevention)**

None.

6.5 **Human Rights Act**

None.

6.6 **Data Protection**

None.

6.7 **Risk Management**

Having an effective pest control service in place assists the Council in discharging it's duties under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949.

6.8 **Equality & Diversity**

None.

6.9 **Best Value**

Best value has been sought by undertaking a competitive tendering process.

<b>7 Appendices to the Report</b>
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None.

<b>Previous Consideration</b>
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Cabinet 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016.

Environment Scrutiny Committee 29<sup>th</sup> September 2016

<b>Background Papers</b>
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None.