

RECOMMENDED that: an exception to the Council's standing orders to allow Gibberds plc to be appointed to project manage the planning application, procurement for construction and oversight of construction for the proposed Bishops College residential development be approved.

Purpose

To seek agreement for an exception to contract standing orders allowing Gibberds plc to work on the design and planning application, pre and post contract project management for the proposed residential development at Bishops College.

Background

Previously the Council ran a competitive tender for preliminary design work on four projects, Fawkon Walk Shopping Centre, The Spinning Wheel, Bishops College New River site and Waltham Cross Northern High Street.

Gibberds plc architects was the successful supplier and prepared initial design concepts for all four projects. The Council is now in a position to move forward with a planning application, procurement and tender and possibly construction of the development at the Bishops College site.

The Bishops College site lies within a conservation area and although allocated for a residential development in the Local Plan the proposal is for the development to be of a greater density than suggested in the Local Plan

Gibberds having now been through the initial designs and consulted with the Council's Planning Section has submitted a fee for pursuing the next steps for Bishops College in order for a satisfactory planning permission to be obtained and should the Council then decide to proceed with the tendering and construction to manage this process for the Council.

The fee is broken into stages and the next stage will only proceed with approval from the Council. The fee is broken down as follows:

Stage 0 and 1 – now complete	
Stage 2 Optioneering and redesign -	£16,584.75
Stage 3 – Spatial co-ordination	£ 73,710.00
Stage 4 – Technical Design Client	£36,818.15
Total	£127,112.90

Once tendering and procurement is complete, should the Council decide to proceed with the project a further fee of £73,636.29 is proposed.

Gibberds has now been working on the design, planning and co-ordination of the surveys required for over nine months is fully acquainted with the requirements of the Council both as owners of the land to be developed and also as the Local Planning Authority and are best placed to advise and move the project forward.

Financial, Legal and Risk Management Implications

The Council has secured a grant from Homes England under the Local Authority Accelerated Construction project for £1,000,067 to enable the design and pre construction work required on the site. There is a time limit on the grant which must be spent by 30 September 2021 but an extension is being sought. The budget for this element of the project is already agreed. The Council will be in danger of losing the grant if the project is not progressed and there would be a danger of extended planning discussions and perhaps a refusal of planning permission if new consultants were to be brought in at this stage as they would not have the advantage of the already completed negotiations.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

To go to a full tender would not be acceptable to Homes England and their spend requirements and so this option was rejected.

Contribution to the Council's Objectives and Environmental Sustainability Priorities

Thriving Economy

3. Pursue the implementation of the housing and infrastructure needed to support a thriving economy

Sustainable Living

10. Deliver affordable homes for local residents and reduce homelessness.

Conclusion

Due to the knowledge and previous work already undertaken by Gibberds on the development of this site which lies in a conservation area it is in the Council's best interests to appoint Gibberds.

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Action reported to the Cabinet on:
