

CABINET MEETING – 5 SEPTEMBER 2012

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I

Title of Report:

Sunderland Seasonal Lifeguard Service

Author(s):

Executive Director of City Services

Purpose of Report:

The purpose of the report is to seek approval from Cabinet to begin a process to procure the services of an external organisation to deliver the seasonal beach lifeguard service at Seaburn and Roker from the months of May to September for a five-year period from 2013.

Description of Decision:

Cabinet is requested to:

- i) approve the commencement begin a process to procure a Seasonal beach Lifeguard Service to be delivered at Roker and Seaburn Beaches to commence May 2013 for a five year period
- ii) Agree to incorporate the provision of a Water Safety Education Programme to be delivered annually to Sunderland Schools as part of this service.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? *Yes/No

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

Suggested reason(s) for Decision:

Based on the cost of the current service with the incumbent provider, the RNLI, for the operation of a seasonal beach lifeguard service, the contract value over a 5 year period would be in excess of the limit whereby Cabinet approval to tender is required. The current cost of delivery of a Beach Lifeguarding service and water safety education programme is in the region of £70,000 per year. It is therefore envisaged that a five year contract for delivery of this service commencing 2013 would be in the region of approximately £350,000 (2013 – 2018 inclusive)

Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:

The alternative options would be for the Council to:

- i) Return the Beach Lifeguarding Service in-house and continue to deliver in-house the Water Safety Education Programme. In doing so, the Council would need to secure additional resource to the value of approximately £25,000 per year in order to provide the required staffing, resources and equipment needed to deliver this service. No budget currently exists to support this.

ii) To cease delivery of a Beach Lifeguarding Service and Water Safety Education Programme from 2013 onwards. The provision of Beach Lifeguarding and Water Safety Education is not a statutory service, however, it is considered that to withdraw beach lifeguarding from Roker and Seaburn Beaches during the Summer Season and Water Safety Education to Sunderland schools would impact significantly on the safety and wellbeing of young people, residents and visitors to the Seafront and in addition impact negatively to the image and reputation of the City Council.

Is this a “Key Decision” as defined in the Constitution?

Yes

Scrutiny Committee

Is it included in the Forward Plan?

No

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CITY SERVICES

SUNDERLAND SEASONAL LIFEGUARD SERVICES

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to seek approval from Cabinet to begin a process to procure the services of an external organisation to deliver the seasonal beach lifeguard service at Seaburn and Roker from the months of May to September for a five-year period from 2013.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF DECISION (Recommendations)

- 2.1 Cabinet is requested to
- i) approve the commencement of a process to procure a Seasonal beach Lifeguard Service to be delivered at Roker and Seaburn Beaches to commence May 2013 for a five year period
 - ii) Agree to incorporate the provision of a Water Safety Education Programme to be delivered annually to Sunderland Schools as part of this service.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Lifeguard service for Seaburn and Roker was provided by the Royal National Lifeboat Institute (RNLI) under the terms of a one year contract during the summer of 2009. The contract was awarded under the delegated powers of the then Director of Community and Cultural Services in March 2009. Following a tendering process undertaken in 2010 the RNLI were contracted to deliver a three year contract ending in September 2013. This has enabled officers to assess the quality, expertise and value for money of the service as provided by an external organisation.
- 3.2 The partnership between the Council and RNLI has proved successful, in particular with regard to access to equipment and resources. City Services liaise regularly with the RNLI with regard to any operational/infrastructure issues and strong two way communications arrangements are in place to ensure a safe high quality service continues to be provided.
- 3.3 The provision of the service for a longer term five-year contract period is considered essential in terms of attracting the necessary commitment and investment from a third party provider and in terms of delivering a quality service. The current arrangements have been reviewed as the contract is now in the final year of delivery and this report proposes arrangements for future delivery.

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The review of the contract has identified clear benefits associated with partnership working in the form of:

- Delivery of a professional Beach Lifeguard Service for Roker and Seaburn beaches during the summer season
- Sharing of resources and associated specialised equipment
- Delivery of tailored education programme activity through “Hit the Surf Sessions to children and young people
- Options for future delivery of water safety education to Sunderland Schools

5.0 WATER SAFETY EDUCATION PROGRAMME

5.1 The Water Safety Education Programme provides education and safety advice to approximately 10,000 children each year at Key Stage One and Two during the months of September to March.

5.2 Following a review of the operational arrangements it is proposed to incorporate this activity within the arrangements for Beach Lifeguarding enabling a more joined up approach to future delivery arrangements.

5.3 Commissioning this service through an external provider will ensure wider access to educational material and resources, continuation of a professional and tailored programme of water safety as well as the realisation of efficiencies associated with delivery of this service.

6.0 REASONS FOR DECISION

6.1 Based on the cost of the current service with the incumbent provider, the RNLI, for the operation of a seasonal beach lifeguard service, the contract value over a 5 year period would be in excess of the limit whereby Cabinet approval to tender is required. The current cost of delivery of a Beach Lifeguarding Service and Water Safety Education Programme is in the region of £70,000 per year. It is therefore envisaged that a five year contract for delivery of this service commencing 2013 would be in the region of approximately £350,000 (2013 – 2018 inclusive).

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

7.1 The alternative options would be for the Council to

- i) Return the Beach Lifeguarding Service in-house and continue to deliver in-house the Water Safety Education Programme. In doing so, the Council would need to secure additional resource to the value of approximately £25,000 per year in order to provide the required staffing resources and equipment needed to deliver this service. No budget currently exists to support this.

- ii) To cease delivery of a Beach Lifeguarding Service and Water Safety Education Programme from 2013 onwards.

The provision of Beach Lifeguarding and Water Safety Education is not a Statutory Service, however, it is considered that to withdraw beach lifeguarding from Roker and Seaburn Beaches during the summer season and water safety education to Sunderland schools would impact significantly on the safety and wellbeing of young people, residents and visitors to the Seafront and in addition impact negatively to the image and reputation of the City Council.

8.0 RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS / CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 Financial Considerations - Provision for the award of this contract is within the existing base budget. The comments of Corporate Procurement have been taken into account in this report.
- 8.2 Risk Management – As mentioned in Section 8 above a decision not to procure the services of a Beach Lifeguard Service would place the Council at risk in terms of ensuring the safety and wellbeing of visitors to the beaches of Seaburn and Roker.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 The following background information has been relied upon to complete this report:
- Assessment of RNLI 2012 Contract
 - Communication with Corporate Procurement
 - Corporate Procurement Scoping Report

