

Report to CABINET - PART A

Alexandra Park Eco Centre (Phase 1)

Portfolio Holder(s):

Cllr Shah, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Economic and Social Reform

Cllr Abdul Jabbar, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance and Low Carbon

SRO: Helen Lockwood, Deputy Chief Executive – People and Place

Officer Contact: Emma Barton, Director of Economy

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20th September 2021

Reason for Decision

The purpose of the report is to seek approval to proceed with the construction of the new depot and energy sources in Alexandra Park Eco Centre, as an early phase of the wider Eco Centre masterplan.

Executive Summary

On 25th January 2021, Cabinet approved Phase 1 of the Alexandra Park Eco Centre, comprising a new office building that is heated by an air source heat pump/mains electricity power system, with a new substation, and new CCTV and external lighting over the car park and landscaping areas.

On 18th May 2021, the main contract for the project was put out to tender, with three contractors submitting prices for the construction element of the project. A robust assessment and evaluation process, and a preferred contractor identified – refer to the details in part b paper.

Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to approve the construction of the new depot and energy sources in Alexandra Park Eco Centre, as an early phase of the wider Eco Centre masterplan.

**Alexandra Park Eco Centre (Phase 1):
Appointment of the main contractor and construction commencement**

1 Background

1.1 Alexandra Park Depot is a base for 222 staff that deliver the following services:

- Maintenance of the borough's parks and gardens
- Plant growing to service planters and hanging baskets
- Greenspace and countryside management
- Tree maintenance
- Playground maintenance
- Street cleansing
- Weed spraying
- Running and maintenance of the borough's cemeteries
- School grounds maintenance (via SLAs)
- Delivery of environmental projects with s106 and LIFT monies

1.2 Currently, staff are spread over several buildings and structures throughout the depot, with the main office being the former Gardener's Lodge. A number of these structures (including the Gardener's Lodge) were identified in a 2016 condition survey as requiring varying degrees of maintenance. In recent years, the Gardener's Lodge has come into a serious state of disrepair, raising significant health and safety concerns for staff and visitors, and has had to be propped at its gable end due to ground movement in the vicinity.

1.3 On 25th January 2021, Cabinet approved the construction of a new office building to be heated by a carbon reducing air source heat pump system and mains electricity. The appointed design team have developed the plans which were subsequently put out to tender in May 2021, with returns in early July. Following a robust tender evaluation process, a preferred contractor has been identified. It is proposed that the appointment is confirmed, funding drawn down to allow a start on site in November 2021.

2 Options Overview

2.1 As set out in Part B of this report.

3 Financial Implications

3.1 Finance implications are covered in Part B of the report.

4. Legal Services Comments

4.1 Legal implications are covered in Part B of the report.

5. Co-operative Agenda

5.1 The Alexandra Park Depot project will serve to build a sustainable co-operative workforce that innovates based on the principle of being equal partners and co-creators. The work that the Environmental Services workforce will continue to do from the depot will directly benefit residents throughout the borough.

6. **Human Resources Comments**

6.1 N/A

7. **Risk Assessments**

7.1 Risk implications are covered in Part B of the report.

8. **IT Implications**

8.1 IT implications are covered in Part B of the report.

9. **Property Implications**

9.1 Property implications are covered in Part B of the report.

10. **Procurement Implications**

10.1 Procurement implications are covered in Part B of the report.

11. **Environmental and Health & Safety Implications**

11.1 Environmental and Health and Safety implications are covered in Part B of the report.

12. **Equality, community cohesion and crime implications**

12.1 The new facility is essentially a working office. However, there will be opportunities for the wider public to use the facility through either hire agreements or as part of Environmental Services ongoing collaboration with Oldham college. As with all Council enterprises, the new facility will promote community cohesion.

13. **Implications for Children and Young People**

13.1 Environmental Services has an ongoing relationship with Oldham College. The new facility will provide additional space for lectures and seminars when required.

14. **Strategic Links**

14.1 This project links directly into the overarching Creating a Better Place strategic framework and supports our economic recovery plans.

15. **Equality Impact Assessment Completed?**

15.1 Not required

16. **Key Decision**

16.1 Yes

17. **Key Decision Reference**

17.1 ESC-04-21.