

Finance and Resources Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 16 June 2022

Demolition of the former Castlebrae High School, Craigmillar

Executive/Routine Executive
Wards
Council Commitments

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Finance and Resources Committee notes the contract awarded to Dem Master Demolition, via a waiver of Contract Standing Orders (CSOs), for the demolition of the former Castlebrae High School, undertaken as an urgent decision in accordance with section 4.1 of the Council's Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions by the Executive Director of Place, in consultation with the Chief Executive.

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Executive Director of Place

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Report

Demolition of the former Castlebrae High School, Craigmillar

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The new Castlebrae High School, in Craigmillar Town centre, opened on 26 April 2022. Following relocation of the pupils, the old school immediately became the target for unforeseen vandalism which, despite security measures being taken, continued to escalate. Given the emerging health, safety and related liability risks, a decision was taken to urgently secure demolition of the building. This report asks Committee to note the decision taken to award the contract for demolition of the building, under a waiver of CSOs to Dem Master Demolition, at a value of up to £750,000, via the urgency procedure under 4.1 of the Committee Terms of Reference and Delegated Functions.

3. Background

- 3.1 The replacement of Castlebrae High School, to a more prominent location in Craigmillar Town Centre, has been completed with pupils occupying for the first time on 26 April 2022.
- 3.2 The old school is located to the south of Craigmillar, adjacent to the green belt. Built in the late 1960s/early 1970s, it is of typical construction from that time.
- 3.3 Following relocation of the pupils, other Council services remained in occupation with the intention that they would be relocated as part of the disposal strategy for the wider site at a later date. The intention was that the building would remain operational but with large parts of the structure remaining unoccupied.

4. Main report

- 4.1 Over the first weekend, the building suffered from unforeseen and sustained vandalism attacks with the Police and Council security called out several times. Security was immediately enhanced, but due to the size of the building and the location next to the green belt, the effectiveness was continually compromised.

- 4.2 As the continuing threat escalated, the health and safety risks rose exponentially particularly in areas of potential physical injury and to disturbing asbestos. In parallel with the Council's own concerns in this regard, the Police Service also sought that the Council acted urgently to address these unforeseen issues as a priority.
- 4.3 As the risks had escalated to unacceptable levels, the remaining Council services were relocated forthwith, with the recognition there was an immediate need to secure demolition of the structure as soon as reasonably practicable.
- 4.4 In order to progress this at pace, a decision was taken to appoint one of the Council's existing demolition contractors on the Housing Capital Works Framework. Utilising an existing supplier would offer the comfort that governance background checks and evaluation such as those relating to quality, financial standing of the supplier etc had already been undertaken.
- 4.5 The service appointed the number one ranked supplier on the appropriate Lot of the Framework (Dem Master Demolition) thus ensuring, that despite the urgency, best value would continue to be a focus. Due to the value of this Direct Award, it was necessary to secure these services via a waiver of CSOs.
- 4.6 It is noted that the supplier was approached to fulfil the brief of taking over responsibility for the site including its security and thus related liability being transferred from the Council to the contractor.
- 4.7 This appointment has significantly reduced the risks identified above and intrusive demolition asbestos surveys have now commenced.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The demolition will commence once all asbestos has been removed from the building under controlled conditions.
- 5.2 Costs will continue to be closely scrutinised and monitored to ensure this continues to offer Best Value.

6. Financial impact

- 6.1 The value of the contract has been approved at up to £750,000 and is funded from the future capital receipt to be obtained through disposal of the site.

7. Stakeholder/Community Impact

- 7.1 None.

8. Background reading/external references

8.1 None.

9. Appendices

9.1 None.