



MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING OF THE POLICY AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN ANTRIM CIVIC CENTRE ON TUESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2019 AT 6.30PM

In the Chair: Alderman P Barr

Members Present: Alderman – W DeCourcy
Councillors – J Bingham, P Dunlop, T Girvan, P Hamill,
D Hollis, M Magill, M Maguire, N McClelland, V McWilliam,
B Webb and R Wilson

Non-Committee Members Present: Aldermen - T Burns and J Smyth

In Attendance: Catherine Burke – Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Gillian Bingham – Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Tom Sullivan – Chartered Society of Physiotherapy
Siobhan McCauley – Chartered Society of Physiotherapy

Officers Present: Director of Finance & Governance – S Cole
Director of Organisation Development – A McCooke
Head of Governance - L Johnston
Head of Legal Services and Borough Lawyer – P Casey
Head of Finance – J Balmer
ICT Officer – J Higginson
Member Services Officer - S Boyd

CHAIRPERSON'S REMARKS

The Chairperson welcomed everyone to the February Meeting of the Policy and Governance Committee, and reminded all present of recording requirements.

1. APOLOGIES

Alderman Agnew

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

3. PRESENTATION

PRESENTATION CHARTERED SOCIETY OF PHYSIOTHERAPY, NORTHERN IRELAND BOARD

Members were given a presentation on behalf of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy Northern Ireland Board (CSP NIB), which provided an overview on what physiotherapy could offer the health of the Antrim and Newtownabbey population and how physiotherapists can link in with the Council and its plans for future community health.

Following discussion it was agreed that the Director of Organisation Development would consider how the Council could work in partnership with the CSP NIB, and in the meantime promote the services internally and externally.

ACTION BY: A McCooke, Director of Organisation Development

4. ITEMS FOR DECISION

4.1 CS/CTRM/020 FILMING POLICY

Background

Council receives requests on an ongoing basis from individuals and production companies to film on Council owned land and property.

Council recognises the positive contribution film production can make to the local area in terms of economic benefits and enhancing tourist interest in the Borough and as such aims to accommodate all suitable requests.

The purpose of this new policy (circulated) was to set out a framework for filming in the Borough and the charges that apply, where appropriate, for filming on land and property owned by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council. The policy introduces a framework within which applications will be reviewed and processed and provides guidance to film makers to enable them to submit an application.

The policy also clearly states the responsibilities of individuals and companies to provide sufficient notification of the intention to film in addition to submitting the required documentation.

Policy objectives

The Filming Policy aims to further the following objectives:

- Maximise inward investment in the economy from film and television production
- Promote the Borough in the best possible manner to encourage visitors and boost tourism
- Ensure the filming presents no reputational risk to either the Council or the Borough

- Ensure all filming is conducted in a safe manner and the public's health and safety is protected at all times
- Minimise any disruptive effect filming may have on others

Decision making process

All requests to film will be directed to the Communications Team who will ensure that the appropriate application form (circulated) has been submitted along with the required documentation.

Applications will be reviewed and assessed on the following two tiers:

Tier 1: General news broadcasts and requests that pose no concerns will be approved by the Head of Service.

Tier 2: High level requests that may have a major impact to the Borough, require additional council resources, involve a large production crew or pose a potential concern to Council will be assessed by the Corporate Leadership Team.

Members will be kept informed of all Tier 2 requests that have been granted.

Proposed by Councillor Webb

Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the Filming Policy be approved.

ACTION BY: Joanne Heasley, Media and Marketing Officer

4.2 G/BCEP/1 IMPLEMENTATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT RESILIENCE RESOURCING MODEL

Background

In June 2018, Council approved The Local Government Resilience Resourcing Model subject to commitment of funding and the development of a service level agreement between the employer council and the other 10 councils. The model provides assurance to Councils that adequate Multi-Agency arrangements are in place to complement existing arrangements within Councils.

This Service Level Agreement (SLA, circulated) has now been developed between the lead Council, Armagh, Banbridge and Craigavon, and the other 10 Councils. The SLA details the arrangements required to enable effective management of the new model by the lead Council, specifically the employment and governance arrangements including budget and dispute resolution.

Human Resource and legal expertise has been sought from Jones, Brett and Cassidy Solicitors and Belfast City Council confirming that the implementation of the new model can be progressed using a TUPE transfer as this work is deemed to fall under the Review of Public Administration and thus the staff

transfer and local circulars apply.

The implementation of this model will now be progressed following confirmation the funding has been agreed by Department for Communities until 2021 at £680,000 per annum.

Under the service level agreement, funding for all costs associated with the implementation of the model are covered under the remit of the Local Government Civil Contingencies funding.

The Borough Lawyer and Head of Legal Services has approved the SLA, however he asked Officers to seek clarification regarding the ability of Councils to terminate the SLA after 31st March 2021.

Potential Resource Implications

Financial: Section 10 of the Service Level Agreement states that should the Department withdraw from the agreement or in the event of a shortfall in funding, this shall be made up by the 11 Councils in equal amounts. Per annum this equates to £30,909. Council will therefore need to reserve this money in the event that it may be required. Section 5.6 also indicates where there is a shortfall in funding for any future redundancy costs of civil contingencies, this will be paid in equal parts by the 11 councils.

Other: All councils may be required to accommodate an officer from this model dependent on work requirements.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Dunlop and agreed that

the Committee approves the terms set out by this Service Level Agreement.

ACTION BY: Laura O'Boyle, Emergency Planning Officer

The undernoted supplementary item was taken at this point.

4.3 HR/HR/015 CONSULTATION ON RECTIFICATION OF COST CAP FLOOR BREACH IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

Members were advised that correspondence (circulated) had been received from the Department for Communities in relation to LGPS (NI) Consultation on the Cost Cap Floor Breach.

The consultation covered the proposal (circulated) to address the cost cap floor breach of 3.2% identified in the valuation results for the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) (LGPS NI) as at 31 March 2016.

The consultation document seeks views on the proposed amendments to the Local Government Pension (NI) by the 15th February, a draft response was circulated for Members approval.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

the draft response be approved. Following discussion Members asked if clarity could be sought from DfC as to whether any increase in employees' contributions to the scheme was anticipated.

ACTION BY: Sandra Cole, Director of Finance and Governance

5. ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 CE/OA/005 NORTHERN IRELAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION (NILGA)

Members were advised that correspondence had been received from the Northern Ireland Local Government Association in relation to 2019/20 Summary Product and Work Plan (circulated).

This plan supports a substantial forward prioritisation programme to ensure Councils are sustainable and resilient. Delivery will focus on regionally and sub regionally co-ordinated programmes which develop, promote and protect council equal.

The Work Plan includes the delivery of robust evidence-based representation on matters like devolution within Northern Ireland, and attracting new investment for the Council. It prioritises elected members development, new models of investment and best practice, the sharing very practical ideas and projects which deliver locality based planning, economic development, civic leadership, regulatory and compliance work. All of these materially assist Council's delivery of the Corporate Plan and support strategies like the Economic Development & Tourism Strategy.

Proposed by Councillor Bingham
Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.2 FI/FIN/9 PROMPT PAYMENT PERFORMANCE

Members were reminded the Department for Communities (DfC) issues revised guidance (Local Government Circular 19/2016) on prompt payments and the recording of invoice payments in November 2016. This guidance requested councils to record specific performance targets of 10 working days and 30 calendar days and continue a cycle of quarterly reporting on prompt payment performance by councils to the DfC and its publication on their website.

The Council's prompt payment performance for the period **1 October 2018 to 31 December 2018** is set out below:

The default target for paying invoices, where no other terms are agreed, is 30 days.

(N.B. 30 days target is 30 calendar days and 10 days is 10 working days).

During the above period, the Council paid 7,641 invoices totalling £11,393,126

The Council paid 5,673 invoices within the 30 day target. (74%)

The Council paid 4,427 invoices within the 10 day target. (58%)

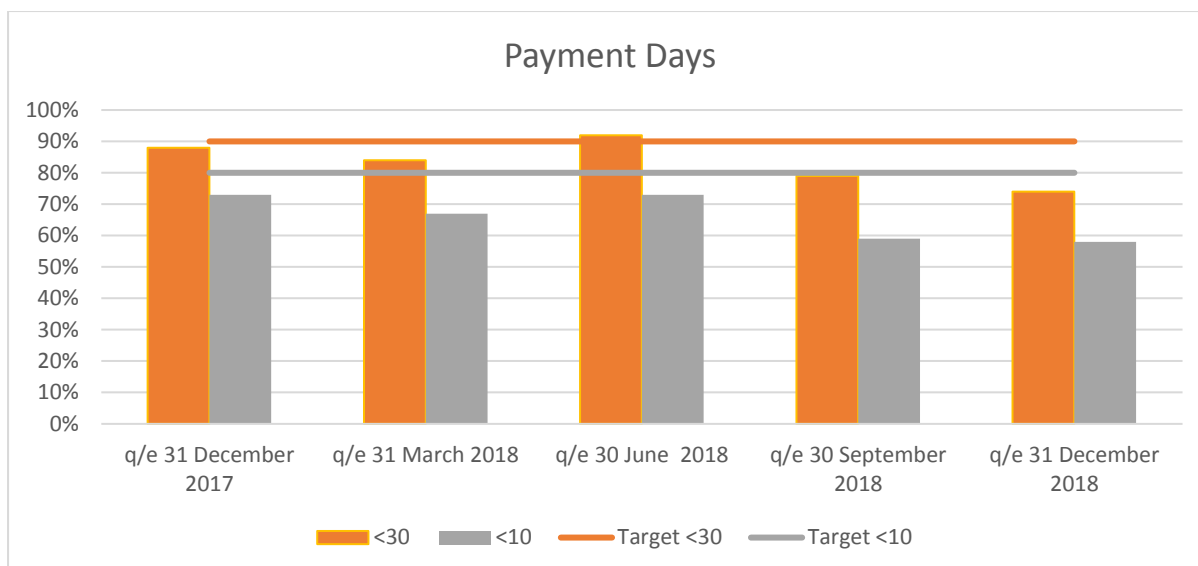
The Council 1,968 paid invoices outside of the 30 day target. (26%)

The Council has set a target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days and 80% within 10 days.

The results for the last two quarters of 2017/18 and the first three quarters of 2018/19 financial year are as follows:

Period	Total Number of Invoices Paid	% Paid Within 30 Days	% Paid Within 10 Days
Target		90%	80%
q/e 31 Dec 2017	6,367	88%	73%
q/e 31 March 2018	7,546	84%	67%
q/e 30 June 2018	6,143	92%	73%
q/e 30 Sept 2018	5,526	79%	59%
q/e 31 Dec 2018	7,641	74%	58%

The performance presented graphically highlights the performance metrics for the above quarters.



During the first quarter of 2018/19 the target of paying 90% of invoices within 30 days was met with performance for the 10 day target also improving.

During the second and third quarters of 2018/19 performance was down for both the 30 day and 10 day targets. This was mainly due to;

- prolonged staff absences within the Accounts processing section and problems with the financial system software during the quarter caused delays with the processing of purchase orders and the indexing of invoices.
- inexperience of temporary staff recruited at the end of September 18 which caused delays in the processing of invoices.

The section continues to experience long term absences, temporary staff are now fully trained and tasks have been reallocated within the section to minimise invoice processing delays.

No further data corruption issues have been experienced. A full software system audit has been completed. This contains several recommendations that would mitigate against future outages. A detailed plan and listings are currently being prepared by the Council's financial software provider.

A high volume of invoices were paid during this quarter (38.4% increase from quarter 2), including invoices registered from previous quarters. This resulted in a slight decrease in the performance metrics for this quarter.

We will continue to strive to achieve and sustain the 30 day target and further improve the 10 day performance whilst maintaining a high level of good governance and internal control in relation to supplier payments.

The prompt payment performance for Councils in Northern Ireland is published quarterly by the Department for Communities (DfC). The prompt payment performance for the quarter ended 30 September 2018 (circulated) the Council's performance ranked against the other Councils for the 4 quarters to 30 September 2018 is set out in the table below:-

Period	% Paid Within 30 Days - Ranking	% Paid Within 10 Days - Ranking
q/e 31 Dec 2017	4th	2nd
q/e 31 March 2018	7th	3rd
q/e 30 June 2018	Joint 2nd	3rd
q/e 30 September 2018	Joint 6th	5th

Disputed invoices

Members were reminded that at the Policy & Governance Committee on 6 November 2018 it was agreed that officers would look at ways of identifying the number of disputed invoices.

To identify the current disputed invoices a registered invoices (RI) report was generated from the finance system on 7 January 2019. This was emailed to the officers listed on the RI report. This report had 1,168 invoices recorded totalling £2.4m.

This report records those invoices registered on the finance system for payment but require officer intervention to trigger payment. The main reasons these invoices had not been paid were as follows;

- Purchase order needs status changed to delivered for goods/services received
- Purchase order number required - invoice from supplier has not quoted a valid purchase order and the invoice has been registered with no purchase order number
- Invoice is in Clearing (delivery on the purchase order does not match the net amount on the invoice), authoriser to add a note to approve the payment for Accounts to manually clear the invoice for payment
- Invoice received from supplier and goods/services not yet received or only partly received.
- Query on the invoice eg quantity invoiced does not match quantity delivered and credit note requested from supplier before invoice can be paid.
- Invoice is disputed with the supplier - there are issues with the quantity or quality of the goods or service delivered (this could include failure of suppliers to meet targets/agreements set in performance related or outcome based contracts).

Officers were requested to indicate on the RI report issued those invoices assigned to them that were disputed with the supplier. This information was returned to the finance section and the responses were manually collated. A total of 93 invoices were identified by officers as disputed. This represents 8% of the total invoices recorded on the RI report issued.

There are also an additional 26 invoices identified as disputed when processed - these are withheld from payment. A total therefore of 119 invoices were identified as disputed.

The guidance issued by the Department permits disputed invoices being excluded from the performance statistics issued as they recognise it will take longer to resolve these invoices and complete payment.

For illustration purposes, if the 119 disputed invoices identified were paid in quarter 3 and reported in the 'outside of the 30 day target' and excluded from the prompt payment performance, this % would improve by approximately 1% and the % paid within 10 days would also improve by 1%.

The Council's current financial software systems are unable to record disputed invoices either when received or when deemed to be disputed by the relevant officer. It is assumed that all invoices are valid when received. There is provision in the software to record notes against specific invoices as to the reasons for delay in payment but not to amend its status from (i) valid to invalid nor (ii) the payment period to be the period from when 'made valid' to date of payment. This would be further complicated by the stipulation within the guidance that there are only 7 days to declare an invoice as invalid. We will keep under review the impact that disputed invoices are having on our reported performance taking into account the resource implications required to obtain the information required on disputed invoices.

Members were assured that the measures put in place are having a positive impact on performance with early indications for quarter 4 showing continued improvement.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.3 FI/ICT/4 DIGITAL PROJECTS PROGRESS REPORT

Members were reminded that the Digital Strategy was approved in March 2017, with a previous update report issued in September 2018.

There had been progress achieved since the last report in September 2018, with 15 digital projects now completed and the remaining 15 on track for completion by March 2019.

There are several key projects and the progress was noted as follows:

TELEPHONY SOLUTION

A new Telephony solution had been successfully rolled out across all Council sites, replacing two disparate legacy systems.

The new solution provides Council with rich set of features that will ultimately enhance the service given to our Customers, backed up with meaningful management information.

CITIZENS' APP

Members recalled a demonstration of the Citizens' App at the Corporate Workshop in October 2018.

The App will not only deliver key news about Council and Council events, but will provide access to booking leisure services, request council services and provide personalised information about waste collection and local amenities.

It is anticipated that Members will be able to download a version of the app at the Policy & Governance Committee on 5th March 2019.

WEBSITE REDEVELOPMENT

Simply Zesty have been appointed as our Web partner and they are currently working with Council Officers to develop the new site.

The redevelopment is intended to bring a fresh new feel to the Council website, while making it easier to navigate and ensure content is more centred on what our customers require.

During 2017-18, the current website attracted over 1 million visits, while social media channels had a combined following of 17,000 users.

This project is on course to be delivered during January 2019.

The Digital Projects Progress Report (circulated) provided more detail on all the ongoing digital projects.

Proposed by Councillor Hamill
Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.4 FI/FIN/11 DRAFT RATES ESTIMATES UPDATE 2019/20

Members were reminded that an update on the estimates was reported to the Policy & Governance Committee in January 2019.

A copy of the draft rates calculation was circulated for Members' information. There had been no changes since the last meeting of the Committee.

As Members were aware, a Special Meeting of the Council shall be held on Monday 11 February to strike the district rates for the 2019/20 financial year.

Proposed by Councillor Webb
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.5 HR/HR/019 AGENCY STAFF UPDATE

Members were reminded that agency staff are used across the Council to provide temporary cover for absence such as:

- Maternity leave
- Secondments
- Sickness absence
- Vacant posts

The use of agency staff is subject to a rigorous approval process, which requires the approval of the Corporate Leadership Team.

There is budgetary provision for the majority of posts filled via departmental salary budgets, salary contingency and grant funding.

The table below provides an update for Members on the use of agency staff as at December 2018 as compared to December 2017.

Reason for Agency Worker	Dec 2018	Position Covered	Dec 2017	Comments
Additional Resource	6	2 x Waste Management Operative Community Development Officer Waste Management Driver 2 x On Call Recreation Assistant/Leisure Attendant, Sixmile	10	Reduction in additional resource requirement
Seasonal Work	9	9 x Seasonal Grounds Maintenance Operative	0	
Filling Funded Posts	3	2 x Affordable Warmth Project Officer Project Implementation Officer	5	Reduction in cover for funded posts
Covering Sickness/Leave/ Maternity Leave/ Shared Parental Leave	8	Graphic Designer 2 x Accounts Assistant Waste Management Assistant 3 x Household Recycling Attendant Heritage Gardener	5	
Covering vacancies until structures filled	19	Receptionist, Clotworthy Central Services Supervisor Waste Management Operative, CSD 2 x Waste Management Operatives, ESD 3 x Waste Management Op/Driver, ESD 2 x Driver Site Operatives, Recycling Good Relations Officer 2 x Conferencing Administrator Ranger Leisure Attendant, Crumlin Governance Support Officer	32	Reduction in requirement within this category. Ongoing cover due to categorisation

		Community Centre Coordinator Driver Site Operative, Recycling Clerical Officer, Waste		
Covering career breaks/ secondments	8	2 x Grounds Maintenance Operative Admin Assistant, Planning Senior Leisure Attendant PCSP Administration Officer 2 x Tackling Deprivation Officer (Job share) Tourism, Town Centre and Regeneration Officer	7	
TOTAL	53		59	

The table above excludes limited ad-hoc agency cover, which is necessary to provide operational cover, at short notice.

Appendix 1 (circulated) set out expenditure on agency workers in December 2018.

The cost of agency staff had reduced for the period of 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 at 6.49% of all staffing costs compared to 7.3% for the same period last year. The table below shows the continued percentage reduction in agency costs over the past financial year:

Month	2017/18	2018/19
April	6.66%	3.51%
May	6.94%	3.74%
June	7.09%	4.61%
July	6.12%	4.71%
August	6.96%	4.66%
September	7.76%	6.06%
October	8.00%	5.85%
November	7.63%	6.51%
December	7.30%	6.49%

Proposed by Councillor Magill
Seconded by Councillor Girvan and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.6 HR/GEN/019 MANAGING ATTENDANCE UPDATE

The purpose of this report was to update Members regarding absence targets for 2018/19.

Sickness absence at 31 December 2018 was 10.10 days per employee against a target of 9.76 days. For the period 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 this represents 0.34 days above target.

In 2017/18 the Council achieved an average absence per employee of 11.88 days against a target of 14.22, 2.3 days ahead of target. This was achieved by mainly completing a review of our process for managing long-term sickness, and training line managers in absence management.

Notably, in 2017/18 the Council had 11 long-term stress absences related to discipline and grievance cases up to 31 December 2017. For the same period in 2018/19 the number of long-term stress absences related to discipline and grievance cases increased by 100% to 22 cases adding a net increase on the previous year of 469 days which equates to 0.71 average days. This resulted in long-term absence peaking in October 2018 at 85%. These cases are being actively managed and long-term sickness absence has decreased from 85% in October 2018 to 82% in December 2018. Excluding the increased stress absences due to discipline and grievances up to 31 December 2018 we would have delivered a 9.05 day average absence per employee, 0.71 average days ahead of the corporate target of 9.76 days.

HR Partners continue to work with Heads of Service and Managers to monitor long-term cases with a view to doing everything possible to enable employees to return at the earliest possible date. This may include phased returns, amended duties, providing physiotherapy, counselling, wellness recovery action plans etc.

Full attendance has improved by 2% on the previous year with 67% of staff having 100% attendance at 31 December 2018 against 65% at December 2017. A report was circulated with a summary relating to absence.

Proposed by Councillor McWilliam
Seconded by Councillor Magill and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

5.7 HR/ HR/GEN/006 ASSIMILATION TO REVISED NATIONAL JOINT COUNCIL PAY SCALES

Upon the introduction of the Government's National Living Wage of £7.20 per hour for all workers aged 25 and over on 1 April 2016, it was apparent that a review of the National Joint Council (NJC) pay scales was necessary in order to meet the further requirement that all workers would receive a minimum hourly rate of £9 by 1 April 2019.

In 2017 a two-year deal was agreed between the National Employers and the NJC Trade Union Side on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2017 and 1 April 2018. This allowed time for a complete review of the pay scales to ensure that the bottom points would meet the Government's National Minimum Wage requirements by 2019 and that the differentials, going up the scales, were not lost. This work was completed and correspondence was received from the

NJC in April 2018 that provided revised payscales and new rates for allowances effective from 1 April 2018 and 1 April 2019 (circulated).

In June 2018 further correspondence was received from the NJC providing additional information about the revised payscales and giving guidance about their application. As NJC rates are incorporated into employee contracts the changes will take effect automatically and employees will be assimilated across onto the new pay scales at 1 April 2019.

An Action Plan is currently being implemented and includes meetings with Trade Union representatives to assimilate to the new NJC payscales at 1 April 2019.

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor Wilson and agreed that

the report be noted.

NO ACTION

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Girvan
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

the following Committee business be taken In Confidence.

6. ITEMS IN CONFIDENCE

6.1 IN CONFIDENCE FI/PRO/TEN/249 TENDER FOR THE PROVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICES 2019

CONTRACT PERIOD: 4 FEBRUARY 2019 TO 31 JANUARY 2020 (WITH AN OPTION BY THE COUNCIL TO EXTEND FOR A FURTHER PERIOD OF UP TO 2 X 12 MONTHS)

Three tenders for the provision of Occupational Health Services were opened via the eTendersNI Portal on 11 January 2019 and referred to the Evaluation Panel for assessment. The tenders were evaluated on a two stage basis as follows:

STAGE 1 – SELECTION STAGE

The tenders were evaluated on a pass/fail basis for mandatory exclusion, economic and financial standing, management systems and practices, General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), previous relevant experience and declarations and form of tender.

One tender did not meet the requirements of Stage 1 in full and therefore did not proceed to Stage 2 award stage. The remaining two tenders met the requirements of Stage 1 of the evaluation process and proceeded to Stage 2. The tenders were evaluated as follows:

STAGE 2 – AWARD STAGE

Sub-Stage 1 – Technical Assessment

The tenders were evaluated on a pass/fail basis for confirmation that they met the requirements of the Specification of Services. Both tenders met the requirements of this stage and proceeded to the next stage of evaluation.

Sub- Stage 2 – Quality/Commercial Assessment (40%/60%)

One of the two remaining tenders failed to meet the quality threshold in their quality response and therefore was eliminated from the competition. The remaining tender was evaluated on the basis of Quality (40%) and Cost (60%) and the recommendation is as follows:

Supplier	Quality Assessment (out of 40%)	Cost Assessment (out of 60%)	Total % Score	Modelled Cost For All Services (£) (Excl VAT)	Estimated Annual Cost of All Services (excl VAT)
Independent Occupational Health Limited	33%	60%	93%	£[REDACTED]	£[REDACTED]

Whilst there was only one compliant priced bid, the tendered rates were in line with expectation. The approximate annual value is £[REDACTED] (excl VAT) per year which includes the provision of the following services:

- Single Medical Appointments
- Screening Questionnaires
- Appointment with Occupational Health Assessors (non-medical)
- Nurse Led Clinics
- Health Education, Screening Sessions and Workplace Assessments

Proposed by Councillor McClelland
Seconded by Councillor Webb and agreed that

having achieved a high score of 93%, Independent Occupational Health Limited be appointed for the provision of Occupational Health Services at a modelled cost of £[REDACTED] (excl. VAT) for the period 4 February 2019 to 31 January 2020 (with an option by the Council to extend for a further period of up to 2 x 12 months).

ACTION BY: Sharon Logue, Procurement Manager

PROPOSAL TO PROCEED OUT OF 'IN CONFIDENCE'

Proposed by Councillor Magill
Seconded by Councillor McWilliam and agreed that

the remainder of Committee business be taken in Open Session.

The Chairperson advised that audio-recording would recommence at this point.

There being no further committee business the Chair thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting concluded at 7.47pm.

MAYOR

Council Minutes have been redacted in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018, the General Data Protection Regulation, and legal advice.