



Report to	Community Services committee
Subject	New Service Level Agreement tenders/quotes for 2023/24
Purpose	Decision
Classification	Unrestricted
Meeting date	5th December 2022
Item number	14
Written By	Cathy Whitaker CLERK

Summary: This report outlines the details of the required new SLA tenders and quotes for 2023/24 and gives recommendations for each area of the existing SLA.

1.	Introduction
a.	All areas of the Cemetery and Burial Management, CCTV Monitoring and Outside Services are currently with West Suffolk Council.
b.	This agreement expires on 31 st March 2023.
2.	Context
a.	Council must consider and decide how to proceed regarding the different sections of the SLA.
b.	There are some services which only WSC can do; others could be put out to tender.
3.	Proposal/Options
a.	<i>Cemetery and Burial Management and Administration for Newmarket Cemetery:</i> A quote to be requested from WSC Cemeteries Management
b.	<i>CCTV Monitoring and Maintenance:</i> A quote to be requested from WSC CCTV Monitoring
c.	<i>Grounds Maintenance – Cemetery, Closed Churchyards, Bin Emptying:</i> A quote to be requested from WSC Grounds Maintenance
d.	<i>Grounds Maintenance – Other Areas of Newmarket:</i> To request tenders from three providers, including from WSC
4.	Next Steps/Recommendations
a.	To approve the recommended quote/tendering process – to be issued early January 2023
b.	To approve delegated powers to the Mayor and the Town Clerk to take the process forward.

Management & Administration of Newmarket Cemetery: WEST SUFFOLK COUNCIL

The disposal of human remains is covered by a number of Acts of Parliament. The Provider will be deemed to have fully acquainted themselves with all current legal requirements. At all times the cemetery service shall operate totally within these comprehensive legal requirements and to the highest professional standards.

The Key components of the services to be provided are:

- Cemeteries administration including: Leasing of grave space, transfer of grave ownerships, recording of interments, recording of memorial installation and memorial permit scheme, issuing of digging orders and forwarding of the statutory declarations of disposal.
- Sexton's duties on site in the cemetery to ensure that interments are conducted correctly.

Service Requirements and Standards

Administration of Rights to Bury and memorial management

This Service Level Agreement (SLA) includes the administrative functions associated with being a Burial authority.

The cemetery covers a total area of 4.38 hectares the average number of full-bodied burials in Newmarket cemetery, per annum, is 39 and 10 interments of cremated remains (based on the average for financial years 2018/19, 2019/20, 2020/21).

Whilst working within the terms of this agreement the Provider shall observe the existing terms of, or future amendments of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977, the Institute Cemetery & Crematorium Management (ICCM) Code of safe Working Practice for Cemeteries and Health and safety statements in accordance with the Health and safety at Work Act 1974, and any new Acts or Regulations to be introduced and which apply to cemeteries, burials or other related work.

The Provider shall answer the telephone(s) and carry out the full range of services provided to the public and funeral directors and monumental masons at its office in West Suffolk House, Bury St Edmunds between the hours of 9-5 Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

The person answering the phones shall be computer literate and fully capable of operating the E epitaph software utilised in the office for taking funeral bookings and registering burials.

As Providers staff shall be required to meet members of the public and Funeral Directors from time to time, they shall have good interpersonal skills, be smartly dressed and well-groomed.

The Cemetery Manager shall be the most senior member of the Provider's staff who will liaise with the Town Council on an 'as needs' basis. The Cemetery Manager will therefore ensure that they take complete responsibility for the correct execution of all bookings and that clear instructions are given to the Grounds Maintenance staff for all grave digging and other grounds maintenance and cleaning services, described in these specifications.

With regards the removal of non-permitted goods and chattels on lawn grave areas, which obstruct grass-cutting operation: the Employer and Provider shall jointly agree timeframes and areas of the cemetery to monitor. The Provider shall send letters to those grave owners who fail to comply and if they fail to comply with a request the goods and chattels shall be removed by the Employers' staff and placed in boxes for collection from the Newmarket TC Office. The goods shall be retained there for six months and then disposed of.

1. Burial Law, Public Health Law, Cemetery Regulations

The Provider's attention is drawn to the need for the Town Council as a Burial Authority to comply in all respects with current legislation relating to the proper and safe management and operation of a Burial Service.

In particular the Contractor shall acquire a copy of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 and acquaint himself with its contents. The Contractor shall constantly ensure that the operations of the cemetery service within the

conditions of this agreement remain within the terms and requirements of the law. Through the Cemetery Manager the Provider shall ensure that any work carried out on behalf of the Town Council by other contracted or sub-contracted staff is at all times executed lawfully.

The Provider's attention is drawn to the Town Council's Cemetery Regulations (see Appendix A), which they shall enforce at all times. Any persistent serious offences shall be reported to the Town Council and or the Police immediately.

2. Operation of the Cemeteries as a Business

In addition to, and as an integral part of providing a high standard of service at the Provider shall take every opportunity to maximise the business potential of the cemetery service. It follows therefore that potential clients shall be provided with maximum information on the different services offered at the cemeteries, so that the maximum numbers of clients and funeral directors bring their business to the Towns cemetery. The Provider shall at all times adopt a positive attitude about the advantages of the Towns cemetery and by their caring, considerate and helpful suggestions seek to ensure that clients do not take their business elsewhere.

3. Pricing Policy

The Provider shall, in January each year, submit a list of services and advise on any revisions to the charges for all cemetery services to the Town Council seeking approval for any amendments. Normally approval for new prices, if forthcoming, will be given within 1 months of the submission for implementation by a date to be agreed by the Town Council, usually 1 April. After each change in services or pricing the Provider will prepare a new list and covering letter and mail out to all funeral directors (approx. 10).

4. Sexton's duties on site in the cemetery

During the summer months interments will normally take place between the hours of 09:30 hours and 15:30 hours Monday – Friday and during the winter months between the hours of 09:30 hours and 14:30 hours Monday – Friday.

The Provider shall check that graves have been excavated to the depth specified in the grave digging order. The grave digging order will specify the size of the coffin/casket and the grave is to be dug long & wide enough to allow sufficient clearance for the coffin to be freely lowered, without obstruction.

The graves are to be excavated and ready to receive a committal two hours prior to the funeral cortege arriving on site. Excavated graves are to be securely covered to prevent people inadvertently falling into them.

The Provider will arrange removal of any memorial in order to carry out the burial operation.

Should any special arrangements be necessary for small religious groups, The Provider will ensure that the burials are prepared in accordance with the clients wish.

No more than four newly dug graves will be kept excavated ready for burial in the cemetery at any one time.

The surrounds to the grave area, including the platform around the grave, any spoil heaps and the edge of the grave to a depth of 300mm are to be covered with clean, green grass matting and pegged down to achieve a safe but neat and tidy appearance.

The Provider shall check that the lowering webbing and putlogs (2 or 3 according to the needs) on the sides of the grave in such a manner as to facilitate the correct lowering of the coffin.

Unless otherwise requested the Provider shall instruct the grave diggers to backfill the grave once the cortege has left the cemetery or, if appropriate, until another nearby committal has been completed and the cortege has left the cemetery.

Once six months have passed and the subsidence of the grave has settled, recently excavated graves shall be turfed (in either April or November).

The burial service will not be provided at weekends or on bank holidays and the Provider will inform Funeral Directors, well in advance of the burial booking arrangements between Christmas and the New Year period.

The Provider shall refer all requests for cemetery memorial bench purchases to the Employer, whose staff will take on the decision and management of said benches – current and future.

Conduct

The works described within this specification relate to some delicate and sensitive matters affecting 'relatives' of the deceased and general members of the public. Accordingly, in carrying out such works the Provider, and any sub-contractor shall at all times exhibit a caring attitude, showing respect to all concerned. The Provider will ensure that all staff allocated to the works included in this agreement are polite, courteous and responsible and able to assist the general public as required.

Appendix A – Cemetery Regulations

CCTV – Part of the Yellow Brick Road, the Memorial Gardens and Birdcage Walk area: WEST SUFFOLK COUNCIL

Service Requirements and Standards

The maintenance and monitoring of the following CCTV cameras:-

- two CCTV cameras along part of the Yellow Brick Road
- two CCTV cameras in the Memorial Gardens
- two CCTV cameras at the Birdcage Walk area

To ensure compliance with GDPR and any other legislation associated with the proper managed of CCTV cameras.

This service covers the work associated with the proper management and operation of two deployable cameras located at agreed locations as above.

The cameras will be monitored in a secure control room at West Suffolk House 24/7 by licenced operators who will respond to any activations or police requests for CCTV reviews/downloads/statements/court appearances to assist in criminal prosecutions.

Due to the capabilities of the control room, any criminal activity witnessed by a CCTV Operator can be immediately reported to the police over police airwaves and live images can also be patched through to Police Headquarters to help apprehend offenders.

The service cost will also include overall GDPR compliancy which involves privacy impact assessments, self-assessments, DSAR requests, managing and adhering to the deployable code of practice and managing/reviewing each deployable camera on a 4-weekly basis for accountability of service.

Grounds Maintenance: WEST SUFFOLK COUNCIL

Cemeteries, Churchyards, Bin Emptying

The location of the grounds maintenance features to be maintained are indicated in the following maps:-

Map 1: St Mary's Closed Churchyard only

Map 1.1: St Mary's Separate Closed Graveyard

Map 3: All Saints' Closed Churchyard

Map 5: Cemetery only

Bin Emptying: - twice weekly (104 occasions)

- Memorial Hall Gardens 8 x litter bins
- St Mary's Closed Churchyard 2 x litter bins
- All Saints' Closed Churchyard 1 x litter bin
- The Severals 5 x litter bins / 4 x dog bins
- Bird Cage Walk Amenity Area 1 x litter bin
- Cemetery 8 x litter bins

Service Requirements and Standards

The maintenance requirements are summarised below.

1. Grass areas

The 'green' areas shall be cut on average 14 times per year.

There will be no set programme for any of these cutting cycles each year and cutting will take place as and when necessary, depending on growth and weather conditions. Timing of cuts will be agreed.

The provider shall allow for the removal of grass cuttings from all paths, roadways, property frontages, car parks or other such similar hard areas, on each and every cutting cycle. This operation may be performed by sweeping or blowing the clippings back onto the verges.

During periods when ground conditions are so wet as to prevent grass cutting occurring without causing damage to the surface of the ground the Contractor shall cease his grass cutting operations

2. Shrub beds

The provider shall visit each shrub beds marked pink on the Master Maps eleven times per year at monthly intervals excluding February. On each visit the provider shall clear the areas of all weeds, litter, and debris and also all arisings from his operations. Where shrub beds are abutted by grass areas the grass shall be edged to the existing line at each visit. Arisings to be removed from the site at the end of the operation. On each visit the provider shall spot treat all weeds of less than 25mm in height using pelargonic acid herbicide (or similar), taking great care not to spray any shrubs. All larger weeds shall be removed by hand weeding. Any shrubs damaged by herbicide shall be replaced at the provider's expense. Arisings to be removed from the site at the end of the operation.

During the November visit the provider shall re-cut edges to grass areas with half-moon edging spade or equivalent mechanical device. Arisings to be removed from the site at the end of the operation.

3. Flower beds

Flower beds are indicated on the master maps as Pink areas with black triangles.

The beds shall be planted up twice yearly with Spring & Summer displays, watered as necessary throughout the summer period and kept weed free at all times. The Employer (Town Council) shall purchase the plants and inform the Provider of the delivery arrangements.

The 29 cast iron square planters, located along the high street, are approximately 1.2m by 1.2m square.

The supplier will be expected to:

- o Plant up the cast iron planters twice a year with seasonal bedding (spring & Summer bedding).
- o Maintain the planters in a weed and litter free manner throughout the year.
- o Maintenance will also include watering, feeding, dead-heading trimming of the topiary and restocking as required to keep the planters looking good throughout the growing season.

4. Hedges

Indicated on the master maps as Brown lines.

The provider shall carry out hedge cutting operations in order to maintain hedges in a neat and tidy appearance. Hedges shall be cut twice per year, once in July and once in October.

The top of the hedge will be cut level and at an even height unless the current requirement of the Council's Representative demands otherwise. Where undulations exist in the hedge top these shall be allowed to fill in with new growth over the course of several cutting cycles.

Sides shall be cut vertically or tapering slightly inwards to the top and all faces shall be cut to a true and even plane. The Contractor shall ensure that growth on the hedge does not present a hazard or obstruction to pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Weed growth, for example elder bushes, brambles, ash or sycamore, shall be pruned out at ground level and the stumps treated to prevent re-growth.

5. Hard Surface

Indicated on the master maps as Yellow areas.

All roads and paths are to be swept at frequent intervals to ensure that they remain weed and detritus free.

Conduct

The works described within this specification relate to some delicate and sensitive matters affecting 'relatives' of the deceased and general members of the public. Accordingly, in carrying out such works the provider, and any sub-contractor shall at all times exhibit a caring attitude, showing respect to all concerned. The Provider will ensure that all staff allocated to the works included in this agreement are polite, courteous and responsible and able to assist the general public as required.

Maps 1, 1.1, 3, 5

Grounds Maintenance: GENERAL TENDER

Open Space Areas, Flower Beds, High Street Planters & Hanging Baskets

The location of the grounds maintenance features to be maintained are indicated in the following maps:

Map 1 – Memorial Hall Grounds only

Map 2 – The Severals & the War Memorial Garden area (two separate areas)

Map 4 – Three Sponsored Roundabouts

Map 5 – Birdcage Walk Amenity area

Map 6 – Flower beds Fred Archer Way / Exeter Road

Map 7 – Bill Tutte Memorial Area

Map 8 – Clock Tower Roundabout Area

Service Requirements and Standards

The maintenance requirements are summarised below.

1. Grass areas

The 'green' areas shall be cut on average 14 times per year.

There will be no set programme for any of these cutting cycles each year and cutting will take place as and when necessary, depending on growth and weather conditions. Timing of cuts will be agreed.

The provider shall allow for the removal of grass cuttings from all paths, roadways, property frontages, car parks or other such similar hard areas, on each and every cutting cycle. This operation may be performed by sweeping or blowing the clippings back onto the verges.

During periods when ground conditions are so wet as to prevent grass cutting occurring without causing damage to the surface of the ground the Contractor shall cease his grass cutting operations

2. Shrub beds

The provider shall visit each shrub beds marked pink on the Master Maps eleven times per year at monthly intervals excluding February. On each visit the provider shall clear the areas of all weeds, litter, and debris and also all arisings from his operations. Where shrub beds are abutted by grass areas the grass shall be edged to the existing line at each visit. Arisings to be removed from the site at the end of the operation. On each visit the provider shall spot treat all weeds of less than 25mm in height using pelargonic acid herbicide (or similar), taking great care not to spray any shrubs. All larger weeds shall be removed by hand weeding. Any shrubs damaged by herbicide shall be replaced at the provider's expense. Arisings to be removed from the site at the end of the operation.

During the November visit the provider shall re-cut edges to grass areas with half-moon edging spade or equivalent mechanical device. Arisings to be removed from the site at the end of the operation.

3. Flower beds and planters

Flower beds are indicated on the master maps as Pink areas with black triangles.

The beds shall be planted up twice yearly with Spring & Summer displays, watered as necessary throughout the summer period and kept weed free at all times. The Employer (Town Council) shall purchase the plants and inform the Provider of the delivery arrangements.

The 29 cast iron square planters, located along the high street, are approximately 1.2m by 1.2m square.

The supplier will be expected to:

- o Plant up the cast iron planters twice a year with seasonal bedding (spring & Summer bedding).
- o Maintain the planters in a weed and litter free manner throughout the year.
- o Maintenance will also include watering, feeding, dead-heading trimming of the topiary and restocking as required to keep the planters looking good throughout the growing season.

4. Hedges

Indicated on the master maps as Brown lines.

The provider shall carry out hedge cutting operations in order to maintain hedges in a neat and tidy appearance. Hedges shall be cut twice per year, once in July and once in October.

The top of the hedge will be cut level and at an even height unless the current requirement of the Council's Representative demands otherwise. Where undulations exist in the hedge top these shall be allowed to fill in with new growth over the course of several cutting cycles.

Sides shall be cut vertically or tapering slightly inwards to the top and all faces shall be cut to a true and even plane. The Contractor shall ensure that growth on the hedge does not present a hazard or obstruction to pedestrian or vehicular traffic. Weed growth, for example elder bushes, brambles, ash or sycamore, shall be pruned out at ground level and the stumps treated to prevent re-growth.

5. Hard Surface

Indicated on the master maps as Yellow areas

All roads and paths are to be swept at frequent intervals to ensure that they remain weed and detritus free.

6. Hanging Baskets

The 175 baskets are located in and around the town centre of Newmarket. A layout map of their locations is to be provided by the Town Council.

The baskets shall be maintained in accordance with good horticultural practices. To produce a visually attractive display in, an environment which promotes healthy vigorous plants of uniform shape and colour, which are true to type and produce the maximum potential for each variety of plant.

The provider will be expected to provide the growing media and plants, install and maintain all baskets to a high standard from the first week of June until the end of October. The provider shall also be responsible for removal of baskets at the end of the season.

It should be noted that some of the baskets will be high on buildings/lamp posts so working at heights and in public places will need to be taken into account.

Maintenance will include ensuring that all baskets are watered, fed, and dead-headed and plants replaced as required throughout the growing season.

The contractor's price for maintaining the above-mentioned features should include the cost of designing the planting regime, which is to be agreed by the client in advance of ordering the plants, supplying and planting the agreed plants.

The above-mentioned features shall be maintained in accordance with the predetermined frequencies set by the Town Council.

Conduct

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Maps 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

Hanging Basket Location Map