

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**Date: 5 November 2010**

### **Newbury Town Council gets closer to awarding its Grounds Maintenance Contract**



Newbury Town Council looks after more than forty areas of public open space within Newbury, including recreations grounds with three football pitches and fifteen playground areas. Most of the maintenance work is contracted out under a Grounds Maintenance Contract, which is a significant part of the Town Council's budget. The work of the current contractor is often praised, particularly with regard to litter clearance and the floral displays. The contract is now due for renewal and a re-tendering process is underway.

Expressions of interest were requested earlier in the year, to which there were 41 responses. Each company was given the opportunity to respond to a Pre-qualification Questionnaire and there were 21 of these returned. Using objective criteria, Officers worked with Councillors in order to rank the responses and identify the top six. That recommended short list of six was ratified at the Community Services Committee meeting in September.

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The detailed tender documents went through a rigorous review process and this time there are optional extensions to cover Shaw Cemetery, Newtown Road Cemetery and the six allotment sites. Decisions as to whether to actually extend the contract will depend on prices tendered and best value considerations.

Tenders are due to be returned by mid-November and a recommendation will be made for a preferred and reserved supplier at the Council meeting in December. Final negotiations will then take place in early 2011 to enable the new contract to start from April 2011, for a period of up to 5 years.

Councillor Ifor Sheldon, Leader of the Council, said, "This is a major piece of work for Newbury Town Council. It is critical for the town's civic pride that we do all we can to make Newbury look its best, but we also have to bear cost and best value in mind. We are hoping that costs don't increase, but if they do we will have no choice but to increase the precept to reflect the costs of the right supplier for Newbury".

Councillor Julian Swift-Hook added "This is the third tendering of the contract, and the process has got a little smoother each time. But it's still complex. The tenderers were given a tour of Newbury in October, so that they can ensure accurate as possible quotations for the work required".

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**END**

For further details, contact:

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