

HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 APRIL 2015

BRIEFING NOTE ON IN-HOUSE SCAFFOLDING SERVICES

Officers have been asked to investigate the feasibility of providing an in-house scaffolding service. The Housing Property Services section has undertaken initial research and indicative costs are set out below.

It is estimated that an in-house scaffolding service would cost £1.6 million to set up and run in the first year £1.1 million thereafter. This cost is based on four gangs working on approximately four scaffolds a day each. The current cost to the Council of providing the same number of scaffolds would be £414,000.

An in-house service was previously provided by the London Borough of Camden; however this has now been outsourced. It is understood that Camden made this decision for the following reasons:

1. **Difficulty in recruiting** – The team was relatively small so vacancies had an impact on the service being provided. There were difficulties in recruitment which affected the efficiency of the team, so work was already being subcontracted.
2. **Space** – The scaffold equipment was stored at a location that was being considered for regeneration. Re-locating the scaffold bay was therefore likely and alternatives were limited.
3. **Equipment** – Investment was required to renew equipment (tubing, fittings, boards, etc.) and the vehicles were also near the end of their useful life. It was arguable whether there was a good business case to support the investment required.

These issues combined with a the considerable health and safety assurances required by such a service resulted in a decision to outsource the service.

At present officers do not know of any other local authorities that provide an in-house scaffolding service.