



DECISION OF COUNCILLOR ELFAN AP REES

THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR STRATEGIC PLANNING, HIGHWAYS, ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AND HOUSING.

WITH ADVICE FROM
THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

DECISION NO 16/17 DE 167

SUBJECT: Somerset Highways and Transport Consultancy Services

Background:

North Somerset Council currently accesses design and professional services from CH2MHill through a joint framework with Bristol City Council acting as the lead authority on behalf of the West of England authorities. While this arrangement works well, they are not always in a position to supply the necessary staff to fulfil all North Somerset Council's requirements. In addition, for some pieces of work it is also helpful to have access to alternative suppliers as it allows further opportunities to test the market. Finally, the expanding workload also means that the Council needs to put in place additional arrangements to access qualified engineering staff due to the nationwide difficulties in recruiting engineers and the need to broaden the potential resource pool available to the Council.

Somerset County Council have a Highways and Transport Consultancy Service which is available for access by all South West Local Authorities and given their proximity and relative ease to access these arrangements it is proposed that North Somerset Council sign up to the additional arrangements to increase the robustness of its delivery and staffing arrangements.

DECISION:

That the Council enters a collaboration agreement with Somerset County Council and Parsons Brinckerhoff to enable the Council to access Somerset's Highways and Transport Consultancy Service contract.

That the council uses the Highways and Transport Consultancy Service agreement as required.

Reasons:

- Ensure that North Somerset Council has an expanded range of options to access both staffing expertise and professional services
- To allow further testing of value for money where this is deemed appropriate
- To ensure that the Council has access to sufficient professional services to meet peaks in work load
- The contract is already in place and can be accessed as required until July 2023.

Other Alternatives Considered:

- To maintain sole use of CH2MHill
- To use Agency Staff

Risk Assessment:

There are limited risks to the authority in putting this additional arrangement in place however the existing relationship with CH2MHill will need to be carefully managed, particularly as they have developed a very good understanding of the authority and its requirements over a number of years.

Financial Implications:

There is an access charge levied by Somerset County Council, to recover their initial set up and ongoing monitoring costs of the contract, set at £5,000 per year that the framework is used plus a 2½% fee on each order.

The total value of work placed through the contract could be up to £1m. Access to the contract will only be undertaken where there are delivery or financial advantages in doing so. The use of the contract should help reduce overall design costs on specific schemes.

Design fee costs are built into individual scheme costings and there are no increased budget considerations as a direct result of the decision to use the Highways and Transport Consultancy Service contract.

Implications for Future Years:

None.

Signed.....Executive Member for Environment

Dated.....

Confirmation of Advice Given

Signed.....Director of Development & Environment

Dated.....