

North Somerset Council Decision

Decision Of: EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS



With Advice From: ASSISTANT DIRECTOR NEIGHBOURHOODS AND TRANSPORT AND HEAD OF STRATEGIC PROCUREMENT

DECISION NO: 22/23 DP 444

SUBJECT: PROCUREMENT PLAN FOR BUS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN (BSIP) – CREATION OF A FRAMEWORK FOR BUS SHELTERS AND BUS STOP INFRASTRUCTURE

KEY DECISION: No

REASON: The Commissioning Plan, which was a key decision, approved the project. The Procurement Plan sets out the way in which the approved commission will be delivered.

BACKGROUND:

On 4 May 2022 the DfT awarded North Somerset Council an indicative grant of £47.8million in capital funding, to spend entirely on bus priority schemes within North Somerset over the next 3 years. This award will enable the council to rapidly transform the efficiency and effectiveness of bus services across the North Somerset area, by delivering;

- Bus traffic signal priority along all the key bus routes or delay hotspots;
- 18 bus priority schemes;
- 3 new interchanges and one upgraded bus interchange in our key towns;
- Investment in circa 500 new modern bus shelters;
- Rapid charging facilities; and
- Integration of cycling facilities at key bus stops.

The indicative funding was subject to a final DfT outline review of the proposed schemes which concluded in June 2022 and resulted in the confirmation of funding in November 2022.

DECISION: It is requested that the Procurement Plan be approved to proceed.

REASONS:

Introduction

The BSIP capital schemes are focused on providing bus priority schemes on three key corridors in North Somerset – A38, A369 and A370 – as well as schemes in Weston-super-Mare and Clevedon. In addition, the BSIP programme will replace the ageing infrastructure by installing up to 500 bus shelters and upgrading a further 300-400 bus stops.

The procurement of a framework to deliver the above requirements for bus shelters and other bus stop infrastructure will be delivered in collaboration with the West of England Combined Authority (WECA) and the neighbouring local authorities of Bristol City Council, South Gloucestershire Council and Bath and North East Somerset Council. NSC will lead on the procurement. Therefore, in addition to the volumes indicated above, WECA and the other local authorities will also be able to use the framework for their requirements. This includes WECA's programme to upgrade 300 bus stops and shelters as part of the City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS).

WECA are currently producing a set of regional bus stop standards that will apply across the West of England, including North Somerset. This will set out the design standards for bus stops, including the specifications for different types of stops and shelters, depending on their location to give a consistent look, feel and standard to all stops and shelters in the region. This work is due to be completed in March 2023, with the new standards and design work available to NSC to include in any tender documentation.

The BSIP improvements to bus stops and shelters will be rolled out over the next 2-3 years, with the detailed requirements at each location not known in advance. It is proposed that a framework is established to enable this phased roll out and to also provide the project team with the ability to purchase further shelters and bus stop infrastructure in the future. It is proposed that the framework is split into two lots:

- Lot 1: Bus Shelters
- Lot 2: Bus Stop Infrastructure, including bus stop poles, flags, timetable cases etc.

Establishing a framework means that what is required for each location or phase can be ordered by calling off from the framework as and when required. A framework can be in place for up to 4 years so, once established, NSC can use the framework to call off additional requirements up to the end of 4 years, beyond the end of the BSIP programme.

There are no known existing frameworks that NSC could access.

Commissioning Plan

The Commissioning Plan was approved at the Full Council meeting on 12 July 2022.

Requirement

As part of the BSIP programme, there will be a requirement to install up to 500 new bus shelters and upgrade a further 300-400 bus stops. Due to the nature of the project, with bus shelters and bus stop infrastructure to be installed in stages and the detailed requirements of each location not known in advance, flexibility is required.

NSC does not currently have an existing contract or framework for the supply of the necessary infrastructure and research indicates that no suitable frameworks are available. Hampshire County Council have a framework that would meet the requirements of the BSIP project, but unfortunately NSC is not named on the framework so is unable to access it.

The proposal is therefore for NSC to establish a framework to give the BSIP project team the flexibility to order exactly what is required for each BSIP scheme or location without needing to specify this in advance at tender stage. This may be a framework contract with a single

supplier or a framework agreement with multiple suppliers. A single supplier would ensure a consistent look and feel to the infrastructure, but the BSIP programme is ambitious and therefore it may not be possible for the requirements to be delivered by a single supplier. Engagement with the market will try to establish suppliers' capacity to deliver the BSIP programme and a final decision will then be made on whether this will be a single or multi supplier framework.

The framework will have two lots, with the potential for both lots to be delivered by the same supplier or for separate suppliers to deliver the requirements of each lot. There is also the potential to include options for maintenance and cleaning of bus stops. In the case of multiple suppliers on each lot of the framework, a mechanism will be required to determine how each call off will be awarded.

In addition to the requirements for the BSIP programme, an NSC framework would allow for additional bus shelters and other infrastructure to be purchased on an ad hoc basis as required for the life of the framework.

WECA and the three local authorities, Bristol City Council, Bath and North East Somerset Council and South Gloucestershire Council, will be named parties on the framework. This will enable the other authorities to also call off from the framework as required.

Route to market

In order to establish the framework, an open procedure will be used. The opportunity will therefore be advertised on the Supplying the South West procurement portal, Contracts Finder and the Find a Tender Service. It is not anticipated that the market is such that a restricted procedure will be necessary to reduce the number of bidders being invited to tender.

The estimated contract value for NSC is £5.1million. The total contract value for the framework is £9.8million, which includes an estimate of the value from WECA and the other local authorities based on their indicative volumes. Sufficient headroom will be allowed for in the contract advert.

The proposed duration of the framework is 4 years.

Indicative Timescales

An indicative timetable of the procurement process for the Bus Shelters and Infrastructure Framework:

Activity	Timings
Procurement Plan approved by Executive Member	February / March 2023
Publish PIN	February / March 2023
WECA/NSC Bus Stop Standards Published	March 2023
Finalise Tender Documents	April 2023
Publish Tender	May 2023
Tender Deadline	July 2023
Evaluation/Moderation	July / August 2023
Internal Approvals	August 2023

Contract Award / Standstill	September 2023
Framework Start Date	October 2023

Governance

This Procurement Plan is subject to approval by the Executive Member for Transport and Highways, with advice from the Director of Place (delegated) and Head of Strategic Procurement, before the procurement is undertaken.

Previously a Commissioning Plan was approved by Full Council on 12 July 2022.

The Contract Award will need to be approved by the Director of Place, advised by the Section 151 Officer and Head of Strategic Procurement, in accordance with Contract Standing Orders for capital projects.

The Contract Award will be a Key Decision and will therefore be advertised on the council's Forward Plan and be subject to call-in periods.

The BSIP Project Board will steer, direct, co-ordinate and oversee the delivery of the programme in line with the Council's approved BSIP delivery team structure and delivery framework. The Project Board membership will include the following:

- Head of Transport
- Head of BSIP Infrastructure
- BSIP Infrastructure Delivery Managers
- Head of Passenger Transport
- Public Transport Manager
- Transport Commissioning Manager
- Head of Transport Planning
- Finance
- Employer's Agent
- WECA Pivot Programme Officer and other WECA officers as necessary

Attendance from specialist officers and technical leads on an ad-hoc basis as required will also be arranged, including:

- Highway and Parking Operations
- Highway Technical Services
- Major Schemes
- Procurement and HR representatives

Market / Suppliers

A number of suppliers are already known to the project team. To establish other suppliers in the market, it is proposed that a Prior Information Notice (PIN) is published on the council's procurement portal and the Find a Tender Service website. This will also enable the team to establish capacity to deliver the required number of bus shelters etc. to meet the BSIP programme. The PIN will also request information about potential lead times, supply chain issues, batch sizes and suppliers' approach to the climate emergency. The feedback from the

PIN will enable the project team to determine if their requirements can be delivered by a single supplier, otherwise a multiple supplier framework agreement may be more appropriate.

In addition to the PIN, consultants appointed by WECA will be undertaking separate engagement with suppliers when producing the regional bus stops standards.

Social Value

In accordance with the Council's Social Value Policy, 10% of the overall weighting will be for bidders to propose their tangible social value commitments.

During the tender process, bidders will be asked to enter their social value commitments on the Social Value Portal using a unique registration link included in the tender documents. Social Value Portal utilises the National Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) to calculate social value contributions, which enables NSC to gain a greater understanding of the value of bidders' commitments and to evaluate social value tender responses quantitatively as well as qualitatively. The Main/Full list of TOMs will be used for this commission.

The project team are proposing the use Social Value Portal to undertake both the evaluation of the social value responses and ongoing contract management of the social value commitments provided by the appointed supplier. This service will cost 0.20% of the contract value (capped at £7,500 per year) and will be paid by the winning bidder(s) direct to the Social Value Portal.

Evaluation

Bids will be evaluated on the basis of 40% Price, 50% Quality and 10% Social Value.

It is very important that the appointed supplier(s) have the ability to deliver to the BSIP programme, which has very tight timescales linked to grant funding. The quality questions will therefore reflect the necessity to meet the programme including availability of materials and labour. A higher weighting has therefore been assigned to the quality questions.

Price Evaluation:

Price will have a weighted score of 40% and will be based on the submission of a schedule of rates incorporating maintenance activities, surveys, ground works and the supply and installation of different types and sizes of bus shelters and other bus stop infrastructure. Each item will be given an indicative volume to calculate the total price for evaluation purposes.

The lowest total price will receive the maximum score of 100% and the prices of all other tenders will be expressed as a percentage of the maximum score.

Quality Evaluation:

Quality will have a weighted score of 50%.

Bidders will be required to answer five quality questions, which will be scored. The assessment will cover the following topics:

Quality Sub-Criteria	Weighting
Delivery Approach and Method Statement	30%
Programme and Phasing	25%
Previous Experience / Track Record	15%
Supply Chain Management	15%
Sustainability and Carbon Reduction	15%
	100%

The scoring matrix that will be used is shown below:

Score	Classification	Award Criteria
5	Excellent	A response that inspires confidence; specification is fully met and is robustly and clearly demonstrated and evidenced. Full evidence as to how the contract will be fulfilled either by demonstrating past experience or through a clear process of implementation.
4	Good	A response supported by good evidence/examples of the Bidders' relevant ability and/or gives the Council a good level of confidence in the Bidders' ability. All requirements are met and evidence is provided to support the answers demonstrating sufficiency, compliance and either actual experience or a process of implementation.
3	Satisfactory	A response that is acceptable and meets the minimum requirement but remains limited and could have been expanded upon.
2	Weak	A response only partially satisfying the requirement with deficiencies apparent. Not supported by sufficient breadth or sufficient quality of evidence/examples and provides the Council a limited level of confidence in the Bidders' ability to deliver the specification.
1	Inadequate	A response that has material omissions not supported by sufficient breadth and sufficient quality of evidence/examples. Overall the response provides the Council with a very low level of confidence in the Bidders' ability to deliver the specification.
0	Unsatisfactory	No response or response does not provide any relevant information and does not answer the question.

A minimum required score will be used to ensure the quality is acceptable, and to enable the panel to sift out unacceptable bids, particularly in the event that an open tender process produces greater interest than anticipated.

Evaluation Panel

The evaluation panel will likely consist of:

- Head of Infrastructure (BSIP)
- Head of Passenger Transport
- Infrastructure Delivery Manager (BSIP)
- Public Transport Manager
- Climate Emergency Project Manager (or delegate)

The Strategic Procurement Service will moderate the evaluation.

The evaluation panel may wish to hold clarification interviews if it assists in their decision making.

Contract Management

The programme of bus shelter delivery will be managed by the Head of Infrastructure and Head of Passenger Transport, to ensure that it integrates with the wider BSIP programme delivery including BSIP bus priority schemes and bus interchanges in key towns.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be used as a tool to measure the performance of the supplier and their contribution towards the successful deliver of the framework. Monthly reports will be produced by the supplier to monitor their progress against the key criteria.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED:

The following routes to market were considered:

1. **Contract for fixed quantity** – Due to the nature of the project, with bus shelters and bus stop infrastructure to be installed in stages and the detailed requirements of each location not known in advance, this option was discounted. Awarding a single contract to deliver the BSIP bus shelters/stops would not give the project team enough flexibility to change the quantities or requirements at each location as they are determined.
2. **Existing Framework** – Use of an existing framework for the supply and installation of bus shelters and bus stop infrastructure would have been preferred as it would have been more time-efficient. However, research has confirmed that no suitable frameworks are available.
3. **Establish New Framework** – This would give the project team the most flexibility to order exactly what is required for each BSIP scheme or location without needing to specify this in advance. It also provides the opportunity to order more shelters and/or infrastructure for the life of the framework if these are required outside of the BSIP project. Market engagement will be undertaken to determine whether this will be a single or multi supplier framework. The Hampshire Framework would be a useful model to follow with 2 lots for both bus shelters and bus stop infrastructure, with the option of including maintenance and cleaning of bus stops.

Option 3 is therefore the recommended option.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Capital Costs:

Estimated costs to NSC are shown below:

Requirement	Estimated Value
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NSC BSIP Bus Shelters	£4.5million
NSC BSIP Bus Stop Infrastructure	£500,000
Ad Hoc (not BSIP)	£100,000
NSC Total	£5.1million
<i>WECA/UAs (based on indicative volumes)</i>	<i>£4.7million</i>
Framework Total	£9.8million

Funding:

On 12 July 2022, Full Council approved an increase to the Capital Programme of £47,983,473 in recognition of the outline DfT funding award. Funding was confirmed in November 2022.

LEGAL POWERS AND IMPLICATIONS:

A compliant process will be used in accordance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

The terms and conditions will be compiled and checked by Legal Services.

The procurement process will be compliant with the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 by ensuring it seeks additional social value during the tender process.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS:

1. Pre-Qualification

Within the Invitation to Tender, suppliers will be required to complete a Climate Emergency Questionnaire.

2. Specification

The BSIP bus priority schemes will contribute to the reliability and attractiveness of the public transport network, with the aim of reducing car journeys within North Somerset and beyond. The improvement of bus stop facilities will be a key component to delivering these outcomes.

The specification will reflect the new regional bus stop standards to be published by WECA, which will include options for solar panels at bus stops and green roofs for bus shelters. The specification will include the requirement for an assessment of climate change resilience where impacts, mitigation and management with opportunities for enhancement and biodiversity net gain are clearly identified.

3. Tender Evaluation

A quality question covering sustainability and carbon reduction will form part of the quality evaluation, which will have a total quality weighting of 15% to reflect the importance of these aspects. Bidders will be invited to present their ideas for innovation, such as the re-use of

materials, use of recyclable materials and/or components, solar panels and green roofs. Suppliers will also be asked about their supply chain, manufacturing locations and processes.

Bidders will be asked to understand the total emissions in delivery and maintenance and to identify carbon emissions will be mitigated and monitored.

The procurement process will also challenge the suppliers on their carbon footprint and how infrastructure can be delivered in the most sustainable way including project specific requirements around communications, meetings and also at an organisational level with their corporate approach and initiatives to sustainability, including the use of energy, transport, purchasing and staff. It is proposed to appoint a carbon advocate to help the project team realise its carbon reduction ambition and provide a framework for future projects.

4. Social Value

A Social Value question will form part of the evaluation. This question will be worth 10% of the overall evaluation score, which is in line with the council's Social Value policy. Suppliers will be encouraged to provide social value commitments relating to the outcome of reducing negative and promoting positive environmental impacts. This will be evaluated by Social Value Portal using the TOMS approach.

5. Contract Management

The contract will be managed by the Head of Infrastructure and Head of Passenger Transport, who will ensure adherence with the Specification, including carbon management, sustainability and mitigation of environment impacts. Social Value Portal will monitor the supplier's progress on their Social Value commitments.

CONSULTATION:

Stakeholders who have been consulted to date include:

- Leader of the Council
- Executive Member for Transport and Highways
- Place Director and Directorate senior colleagues
- Internal Place Directorate teams
- WECA / neighbouring local authorities

There has also been ongoing engagement with Department for Transport to determine the requirements of the schemes and funding.

A Prior Information Notice (PIN) will be advertised on the Supplying the South West portal and the Find a Tender Service website to ascertain suppliers' capacity and appetite to bid for this contract.

A consultant appointed by WECA will also be conducting regular engagement with suppliers to test affordability, constructability and material availability of the technical specifications and drawings produced during the development of the regional bus stop standards.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

Risk	Mitigation
Lack of supplier interest in the opportunity	Early market engagement to stimulate interest
Delay to the regional bus shelter standards being produced by WECA affecting ability to publish tender on time	Liaise with WECA to ensure any delays are managed
Lack of capacity in the market to provide regional volumes required	Early market engagement to determine delivery timescales and capacity
Supply issue with materials / installation	Early market engagement to establish lead times
Lack of clarity on volumes required from named authorities	To be named on the framework, other authorities need to sign up to the regional bus stop standards and provide indicative volumes

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

Have you undertaken an Equality Impact Assessment? Yes

An initial Equality Impact Assessment for the BSIP Programme has been completed. A full Equality Impact Assessment will be completed in due course.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

The provision of key enabling infrastructure and improvements to the transport network widely supports the Corporate Plan objectives and priorities, most specifically within the priority of a Thriving and Sustainable Place. The wider BSIP programme supports the following Core Strategies:

- To be a carbon neutral council and area by 2030
- A transport network which promotes active, accessible, and low carbon travel

APPENDICES:

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

- Commissioning Plan for BSIP Project: [09 Bus Service Improvement Plan Enhanced Partnership adoption Executive.pdf \(modern.gov.co.uk\)](#)
- West of England Bus Service Improvement Plan
- DfT Confirmation of funding for North Somerset and WECA
- Executive Council Decisions

Signatories:

Decision Maker(s):



Signed:

Executive Member for Transport and Highways

Date: 8 March 2023

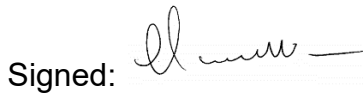
With Advice From:



Signed:

Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and Transport.

Date: 8 March 2023



Signed:

Head of Strategic Procurement

Date: 8 March 2023