

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Peter Osborne, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

DECISION NO:

25/00089

For publication

Key decision: YES

Subject Matter / Title of Decision: Procurement and award of contract/s for Highway Emergency Tree Works Contract

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Highways & Transport, I agree to give:

1. **APPROVAL** to **procure** and **award** a new Emergency Tree Works contract for up to five years with an opportunity to extend this for up to three further years,
2. **DELEGATE** authority to the Director of Highways and Transport to take relevant actions to facilitate the required procurement activity,
3. **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Economy and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport to take relevant actions including but not limited to awarding, finalising the terms of and entering into the relevant contracts or other legal agreements, as necessary, to implement the decision and
4. **DELEGATE** authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Economy and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to award extensions of the contract in accordance with the relevant clauses within the contract.

Reason(s) for decision:

The Council has a legal duty to keep roads and pavements clear of vegetation for safe passage of highway users.

The Highway Emergency Tree Works Contract is currently delivered by two Contractors, one serving the West of the County and the second the East. These Contracts expire on 31st March 2026. There are no further extension options, and a new contract is therefore required to be in place for 1st April 2026.

Background (brief)

The current contract is an 18-month extension, running from November 2024 to 31 March 2026. The contract is split into two lots (East and West), which has provided resilience, especially during major storm events.

The Council is legally required to keep roads and pavements clear of vegetation for the safety of highway users. The service mainly focuses on clearing felled trees, particularly after adverse weather, and must be re-commissioned to meet these obligations.

The service requires specialist tree surgery teams available 24/7, 365 days a year, with response times of 2 hours and 24 hours. It supports both operational staff and the highways out-of-hours emergency response. There is no scheduled work; volumes depend on weather and emergency situations, which vary year to year.

Financial Implications

The budget for this work is contained within the highway's emergency budget with major named storm events being funded through one off corporate reserve. Until such time as tender prices are returned it is unknown if there will be any pressure on budgets which will also be demand led due to weather incidents. The current average spend for this work is £544k/pa.

Legal Implications

The Council has a legal duty to keep roads and pavements clear of vegetation for safe passage of highway users.

Equalities implications

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out and no implications have been identified at this early stage.

Data Protection Impact Assessment

No personal data is collected for this commission.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

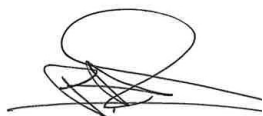
The proposed decision was endorsed by Members of the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 4 November.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

1. **Split the contract into three lots** (West, Mid and East) – higher risk of best value not being achieved.
2. **Countywide delivery** - discounted due to the high-risk nature of this model.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

None



21/11/2025

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signed

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date