

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport

DECISION NUMBER:

26/00046

Executive Decision – key**26/00046 – Procurement of Specialist Highway Support Services Framework**

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, I agree to:

APPROVE the procurement and **AWARD** of a Specialist Highway Support Services Framework to provide independent cost consultancy, specialist utility support and programme review services to support the delivery of highway and transportation schemes across Kent.

DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to take relevant actions necessary to implement the decision, including but not limited to undertaking the procurement process, awarding the framework agreements, finalising the terms of, and entering into the relevant contracts and any associated legal agreements

DELEGATE authority to the Corporate Director of Growth, Environment and Transport, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, to exercise any extension option(s) provided for within the framework agreement.

Reasons for decision:

The existing Independent Cost Consultancy contract will expire in March 2027, and a replacement arrangement is required to ensure continuity of service.

The proposed framework will build upon the existing arrangements by expanding the scope of services available to support highway and transportation projects. The framework will provide access to specialist independent cost consultancy, utility support and programme review services, helping to improve cost certainty, strengthen programme assurance and support the effective delivery of infrastructure projects across Kent.

The proposed framework will also maintain the independence required to provide objective scrutiny of cost estimates and commercial matters associated with highway and transportation schemes.

Financial implications:

The framework will have a maximum value of £4,000,000 (excluding VAT) over the contractual period from 1 April 2027 to 1 April 2030, with the option to extend until 31 March 2031. This represents the maximum value available under the framework and does not constitute a commitment to spend.

There is no guaranteed level of spend under the framework and services will be commissioned on a call-off basis as required. Expenditure will be funded through approved capital project budgets and, where appropriate, revenue budgets.

Legal implications:

The procurement and award of contracts must be carried out in line with the requirements set out in the Procurement Act 2023.

Appropriate contractual arrangements will be established using the New Engineering Contract (NEC) suite of contracts.

Equalities implications:

An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been undertaken.

No adverse impacts on protected groups have been identified. As the procurement relates to specialist consultancy services, no direct impacts on service users are anticipated.

Data Protection implications:

A DPIA is not required as the framework does not involve the processing or sharing of personal data.

No significant data protection risks have currently been identified as the services relate primarily to technical and commercial consultancy activities.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The proposed decision will be considered by the Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee on 9th September 2026 prior to the decision being taken.

This version of the Proposed Record of Decision is included within the Cabinet Committee papers for consideration and comment.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

The use of the existing Professional Services Framework was considered but discounted as it was not designed for these specialist requirements and does not provide Specialist Utility Support or Programme Review services. In addition, it

would not maintain the necessary independence between design consultants and cost assurance functions.

Alternative national and local authority frameworks were also considered but were not considered to provide the most suitable contractual arrangements for KCC's requirements.

A do-nothing option was rejected as the existing arrangements will expire in March 2027, resulting in the loss of critical specialist support services used to deliver the capital programme.

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

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Signed

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Date