

	Officer Key Decision
	Report to the Corporate Director, Neighbourhoods and Regeneration
	Lead Cabinet Member for Public Realm and Enforcement – Cllr Krupa Sheth
Authority to award contract for a Highways Asset Management System	

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key Decision
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: <small>(If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)</small>	Open
No. of Appendices:	None
Background Papers¹:	None
Contact Officer(s): <small>(Name, Title, Contact Details)</small>	<p>Jonathan Westell Highways Contracts & Delivery Manager jonathan.Westell@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Tony Kennedy Head of Service, Highways Management tony.kennedy@brent.gov.uk</p> <p>Chris Whyte Director Environment & Leisure chris.whyte@brent.gov.uk</p>

1.0 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report concerns the procurement of a highways management software system. This report requests authority to award contracts as required by Contract Standing Order 88. This report summarises the process undertaken in procuring this contract and recommends to whom the contract should be awarded..

2.0 Recommendation(s)

That the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods & Regeneration:

- 2.1 Approves the pre-tender considerations set out in paragraph 3.11
- 2.2 Approves the award the contract for a highways management software system to Symology Limited for 3 years plus one additional year in the sum of £642,988 by way of a direct award from Lot 2 – Cloud Software of the G Cloud 14 framework agreement.

3.0 Detail

Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 3.1 The council requires the provision of a highways management software system. Council officers have undertaken a procurement exercise using the G Cloud 14 Framework and identified Symology Limited as the preferred contractor. The award of this Contract is in line with the Council's Borough Plan 2023 – 27 Priorities and Strategic context. In particular, the award of this Contract will contribute to:
 - Borough Plan Priority A Cleaner, Greener Future: contributing to the desired outcome of “Keeping Brent on the move” . The Streetworks functionality within the new Aurora software will help co-ordinate utility works effectively.
- 3.2 The award of this Contract also contributes to the Council's Digital Strategy 2022 – 26. Specifically, the award of the Contract supports the Digital Workplace Theme of the Digital Strategy - Ensuring staff have access to technology that will enable them to work efficiently and to have the digital skills to effectively use existing and new technology.

Background

- 3.3 The council requires the provision of Highways Asset Management System to manage its infrastructure, such as roads, street lighting, and drainage systems. Such a system helps streamline asset tracking, inspections, work orders, and maintenance processes, allowing for better decision-making, cost control, and compliance with regulations. For a local authority, it is beneficial because it increases efficiency, improves data accuracy, reduces operational costs, and enhances service delivery for the community.
- 3.4 Officers have considered whether the Highways Asset Management System can be provided by the council itself but have concluded that

Highways Asset Management System is best provided by a contractor, for the following reasons:

- **High Development Costs:** Building and maintaining a sophisticated system like Symology Aurora requires significant financial investment in software development, infrastructure, and ongoing updates. The Councils does not have the budget for this.
- **Specialized Expertise:** Creating or managing a HAMS requires specialized knowledge in both software development and asset management. Local authorities lack the internal expertise to develop, implement, and maintain such a complex system.
- **Time Constraints:** Developing a system in-house could take years, while a solution like Symology Aurora is ready to deploy, saving time and reducing risk.
- **Ongoing Maintenance:** A system requires continuous updates, bug fixes, and support, which would require dedicated resources. A third-party vendor typically offers this as part of the package.
- **Integration Complexity:** A HAMS like Symology Aurora is designed to integrate with other data systems (e.g., GIS, finance, and operations software). Building this in-house could be complex and resource-intensive.
- **Scalability and Flexibility:** Commercial systems are designed to scale and adapt to changing needs over time. Developing a system in-house might not offer the same flexibility or scalability.
- **Compliance and Best Practices:** Commercial solutions are often built to comply with national standards and regulations, ensuring that the system meets legal and operational requirements without the local authority needing to navigate these complexities on its own.

These factors make it more efficient and cost-effective for local authorities to rely on specialized vendors rather than building a HAMS from scratch.

- 3.5 Officers have reviewed a range of procurement options and have determined that the use of a framework is the most appropriate and cost effective means of procuring a contractor. Officers have reviewed a range of available frameworks but have concluded that Lot 2 – Cloud Software of the CCS G Cloud 14 framework agreement (the “Framework”) is the most appropriate framework to procure the Highways Asset Management System.

The Procurement Process

- 3.6 The Contract will be called off from the Framework, using the form of award and standard call off terms and conditions prescribed under the Framework with minor amendments. The Framework permits award by way of direct award.
- 3.7 In compliance with the Framework guidance, Officers have reviewed the framework information on the G Cloud 14 Lot 2 – Cloud Software Framework. Officers have carried out a selection exercise in accordance with the requirements of the Framework to identify all those organisations on the Framework capable of meeting the Council's requirements. Officers have identified Symology Limited as the only contractor which fulfilled all the Council's requirements for a highways asset management software system .
- 3.8 As Symology was the only contractor that fulfilled all of the criteria for selection, Officers recommend appointing Symology Limited as the most viable option to maintain service continuity. Symology Limited are the Council's incumbent provider and therefore it is considered that it will be able to provide a comprehensive highways asset management software system
- 3.9 The G-Cloud framework offers assurance on pricing through its standardized pricing model. All suppliers on the framework have agreed to transparent and competitive pricing, which is published on the G-Cloud Digital Marketplace. G-Cloud suppliers must comply with agreed pricing structures, which are subject to review, and the framework's competitive nature ensures that prices remain aligned with market standards. Officers have also examined pricing and consider that the pricing provided by Symology Limited is competitive for this type of product in this market.
- 3.10 The proposed Contract will commence following a decision to award and subject to there being no call-in of the decision. It is recommended that the Contract is for 3 years plus one in the sum of £642,988. Whilst this sum covers the Council's current requirements, there may be a need to increase the contract sum in the future due to factors like inflation, changes in scope, or the introduction of new requirements. The contract will outline the conditions under which these adjustments can be made, such as predefined pricing models or periodic reviews. Officers will seek further authority should variations to the contract be required.

Pre-tender Considerations

- 3.11 The pre-tender considerations relevant to the Contract are as follows:

Ref.	Requirement	Response	
(i)	The nature of the services / supplies / works.	As detailed above	
(ii)	The value.	£642,988.	
(iii)	The contract term.	3 years plus an option to extend the contract by one further year	
(iv)	The tender procedure to be adopted.	Direct Award from a Framework	
(v)	The procurement timetable.	Stage in Procurement	Indicative dates
		Invited Bid	17 th October 2025
		Checking Bid	25 th November 2025
		Contract start date	February 2025
(vi)	The evaluation criteria and process.	N/A – Direct Award	
(vii)	Any business risks associated with entering the contract.	No specific business risks are considered to be associated with entering into the Contract.	
(viii)	The Council's Best Value duties.	For the reasons set out in Section 3, it is considered that Direct Award will result in the Council achieving best value.	
(ix)	Consideration of Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012	Officers have had regard to the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.	
(x)	Any staffing implications, including TUPE and pensions.	There are no implications for Council staff arising from the procurement.	
(xi)	The relevant financial, legal and other considerations.	Financial – See Financial Considerations at Section 5.	
		Legal – See Legal Consideration at Section 6.	
		Other – N/A	
(xii)	Sustainability	Given the nature and value of the Contract, it is not possible to include specific sustainability requirements.	

Ref.	Requirement	Response
(xiii)	Key Performance Indicators / Outcomes	Given the nature of the Contract there are no KPIs which would be applicable to the provision of the Highways asset management software
(xiv)	London Living Wage	Given the nature of the Contract it is not appropriate to include provision requiring payment of the London Living Wage.
(xv)	Contract Management	The provision of the service provided by the contract will be administered by the Highways Contract & Delivery Manager within the Highways Management Service.

4.0 Stakeholder and ward member consultation and engagement

4.1 Given the nature of the contract, it has not been considered appropriate to consult with stakeholders and ward members.

5.0 Financial Considerations

5.1 Part 3 of the Council's Constitution states that the Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration has delegated authority to approve the award of contracts for services valued at less than £2 million. The estimated value of the Contract is under this threshold.

5.2 The cost of the Contract will be funded from existing Highways maintenance revenue budgets (B02197 Maintenance Management).

6.0 Legal Considerations

6.1 The value of the Contract over its lifetime is in excess of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (the "PCR 2015") threshold for Services and Supplies and the award of the Contract is therefore governed by the PCR 2015.

6.2 Officers recommend the use of a framework to procure the Contract. The PCR 2015 allow the use of framework agreements and prescribe rules and controls for their procurement. Contracts may then be called off under such framework agreements without the need for them to be separately advertised and procured through a full procurement process. Call offs under the framework agreement need to be carried out in accordance with the framework rules, to include using evaluation criteria specified in the framework agreement and utilising the terms and conditions set out in the framework agreement.

- 6.3 The Council's Contract Standing Orders state that no formal tendering procedures apply where contracts are called off under a framework agreement established by another contracting authority, where call off under the framework agreement is approved by the relevant Corporate Director or Director and provided that the Corporate Director, Governance has advised that participation in the framework is legally permissible. The Corporate Director, Governance has confirmed that participation in the Framework is legally permissible.
- 6.4 The award of the Contract is subject to the Council's own Standing Orders in respect of Medium Value Contracts. The Corporate Director has delegated power to award Medium Value Contracts in accordance with paragraph 9.5 of Part 3 of the Constitution.
- 6.5 The decision to award the contract will be subject to call-in as provided for in the Council's Constitution. As the procurement of the Contract is from a framework, there is no requirement for the Council to observe a 10 day standstill period under the PCR 2015. Subject to there being no call in and no challenge preventing award, Officers will seek to implement the decision to award.

7.0 Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 7.1 Pursuant to s149 Equality Act 2010 (the "Public Sector Equality Duty"), the Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited under the Act
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it,
- 7.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 7.3 Having due regard involves the need to enquire into whether and how a proposed decision disproportionately affects people with a protected characteristic and the need to consider taking steps to meet the needs of persons who share a protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it. This includes removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by persons who share a protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic.

7.4 There is no prescribed manner in which the council must exercise its public sector equality duty but having an adequate evidence base for its decision is necessary.

7.5 The proposals in this report have been subject to screening and officers believe that there are no adverse equality implications.

8.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

8.1 The proposals have an impact on the climate emergency strategy. A Highways Asset Management System (HAMS) can have several beneficial environmental implications. By optimizing the maintenance, repair, and upgrading of road infrastructure, HAMS can reduce unnecessary resource usage and emissions. Some key environmental benefits include:

- **Efficient Resource Use:** HAMS helps prioritize repairs and replacements, minimizing waste by using materials more efficiently.
- **Reduced Carbon Footprint:** Well-maintained roads reduce vehicle fuel consumption and emissions due to smoother driving conditions.
- **Lower Energy Use:** Optimized maintenance schedules and timely repairs prevent more extensive work later, which can be energy-intensive.
- **Less Disruption:** With better planning, roadworks can be minimized, reducing environmental disturbances (e.g., noise, air pollution) during construction.

Overall, it promotes sustainability by making infrastructure management more proactive and efficient.

9.0 Human Resources/Property Considerations (if appropriate)

9.1 This service is currently provided by an external contractor and there are no implications for Council staff arising from retendering the Contract

9.2 There are no property or accommodation implications arising from the procurement of the contract.

10.0 Communication Considerations

10.1 The proposals have no impact in relation to any of the Council required communication strategy or campaigns.

Report sign off:

CHRIS WHYTE
Director Public Realm