

Meeting of:	<b>Cabinet</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>Monday, 22 February 2021</b>
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Environment and Regeneration
Report Title:	Neighbourhood Services Asset Management and Mobile Working System
Purpose of Report:	To obtain approval to award a contract for the supply of a new asset management and mobile working system for Neighbourhood Services and Transport.
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport
Responsible Officer:	Director of Environment and Housing
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Business Support Manager - Environment and Housing Team Leader - Neighbourhood Services and Transport Neighbourhood Services Operational Manager - Waste Neighbourhood Services and Building - Accountant Committee Reports - Legal Business Improvement Procurement Neighbourhood Services Manager
Policy Framework:	This Report is a matter for Executive Decision by Cabinet
<p><b>Executive Summary:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neighbourhood Services currently has an existing mobile and asset management system in place for Highway Maintenance / Street Works and Street Lighting. The Council has been informed by the current supplier that this current version will be discontinued, and all customers would be expected to upgrade to the supplier's new platform. Upon being informed of this, a benchmarking exercise was undertaken to assess the current and future requirements of the service. Operating without such a system is not an option as it is the main method of evidencing our inspection and maintenance work to ensure that we comply with our legal duties under Highways and Health and Safety Legislation.</li> <li>• The benchmarking exercise has enabled consideration of the expansion of the asset management function to other areas, including parks and grounds and waste management.</li> <li>• As part of the redesigned Neighbourhood Services model, established under the Council's Reshaping Services programme, there was a requirement for a cloud-based asset management and mobile working platform. This would support an integrated way of working for the staff that inspect, service and maintain the Council's highways, waste management, parks and grounds assets and infrastructure. This is similar to the transition arrangements for Shared Regulatory</li> </ul>	

Services (SRS) where a number of services and separate databases and IT programmes from the partner Councils were brought onto one comprehensive mobile working platform.

- Officers undertook a benchmarking exercise to award the most appropriate call-off contract for an asset management system utilising the Crown Commercial Services G-Cloud 12 Framework (Ref.RM1557.12). This procurement exercise resulted in the selection of a preferred system that would meet all our requirements both now and for the future.
- The procurement of the asset management and mobile working system will provide the Council's Neighbourhood Services and Transport Division with direct access to service information required by frontline staff regardless of their location.
- This report provides the rationale behind the benchmarking exercise and award of contract and is for noting. For reasons of commercial sensitivity there is a further related report on this agenda at Part II, seeking the authority of Cabinet to enter into a contract for the procurement of a new system explained within this report.

## **Recommendation**

1. That Cabinet notes the requirements for a fit for purpose asset management and mobile working platform for Neighbourhood Services and Transport and the assessments of options undertaken, with a view to taking a decision on this matter later on this agenda under Part II.

## **Reason for Recommendation**

1. To apprise Cabinet of the need for a new system, its requirements and how the suggested new system was selected.

## **1. Background**

- 1.1 Neighbourhood Services currently has an existing mobile and asset management system in place for Highway Maintenance / Street Works and Street Lighting. The Council has been informed by the current supplier that this current version will be discontinued, and all customers would be expected to upgrade to the supplier's new platform (Alloy). Upon being informed of this, a bench marking exercise was undertaken to assess the current and future requirements of the service. Operating without such a system is not an option as it is the main method of evidencing our inspection and maintenance work to ensure that we comply with our duties under Highways and Health and Safety Legislation. Details of the costs and additional services are outlined under the Part II report, later on the Agenda.
- 1.2 The Council's Neighbourhood Services and Transport teams are responsible for the day to day inspection and maintenance of all assets within the limits of the adopted highways.
- 1.3 As part of the newly redesigned Neighbourhood Services model under the Council's Reshaping Services programme that was launched in April 2018, the Neighbourhood Services and Transport teams provide a range of key services via an integrated operational model that joins up the work of the frontline staff that inspect, service and maintain our highways, waste management and parks and grounds assets and infrastructure.
- 1.4 The Reshaping Services work required to enable the redesign of Neighbourhood and Transport highlighted a key number of deficiencies with the existing information technology infrastructure, particularly the inability of these systems to support an integrated way of working that enables key service request information to be pushed directly to the field workers.
- 1.5 Recent efforts to update the Council's Highways Maintenance system to a cloud-based system have improved the ability for highways-based workers to receive and review job requests (Mayrise). However, the majority of other services supported within the teams have little or no access to asset management

technology that enabled field workers to rapidly respond, review the suitability and then action requests to protect or maintain Neighbourhood Services assets.

## **2. Key Issues for Consideration**

- 2.1** In order to support the implementation of the new operating system, a cross department group was initiated to review the information technology requirements of the new teams. Led by the Neighbourhood Services Business Manager, the group included a range of Service Managers, Neighbourhood Services Front Line staff, ICT, Procurement and Business Improvement staff.
- 2.2** Focus was placed on improving business processes and then identifying the technology available via the marketplace that would enable the Council to improve the ability to deliver services and manage key assets within Neighbourhood Services. This in turn would increase protection against third party claims where the Council has previously lacked some accurate information regarding the maintenance history of assets. Greater use of technology will enable the ability for departments to have a seamless view of all Neighbourhood Services assets and related services requests. The technology will seek to improve the delivery of the Council's Highways Asset Management Plan, which is currently being finalised.
- 2.3** Certain deficiencies in current recording inspection and work recording arrangements, for example those for trees, means that there is a higher risk of incidents relating to damage caused by trees, resulting in the potential for successful claims against the Council. An introduction of such technology plus enhanced tree inspection regimes would ensure more appropriate matching of the cyclical inspections to the various risk characteristics of our highway and parks trees.
- 2.4** Several departments within Neighbourhood Services were found to historically rely upon the use of separate databases, and some of these are no longer supported. The systems in place are time consuming to update with asset management information and are often incapable of running comprehensive reports or assisting with warnings, work prioritisation and work scheduling. It was also noted that in some cases services are relying too heavily on the knowledge and expertise available from the service operators within the teams. None of the databases allowed key information regarding the safety of an asset to be easily shared between teams. The new systems will allow for sharing the information as well as being current and accurate and will assist in reducing third party risk and the efficient use of our limited resources.
- 2.5** Adopting a customer and risk led approach, the group fed their findings in to both the Council's Digital Strategy working group and Strategic Board with a key recommendation to procure the Council's asset management system as a cloud-based arrangement that would enable all Neighbourhood Services Teams access

to asset and service delivery information in a manner that supports the intended working practices of the new Neighbourhood Services operating model.

- 2.6** The benefits of the proposed system are several-fold. It is anticipated that access to a multi-disciplinary asset management and mobile working system will allow a more streamlined, accountable and connected approach that would reduce the needs for staff to start and return to Council Offices at various times of the day to access service information. The implementation of an effective mobile working solution that enables the direct sending of work packages to front line staff (including multi skilled inspectors), would also provide resilience for staff as well as enabling the reporting, assessment and clearance of highways, trees and drainage obstructions via a single solution.
- 2.7** The development of automatic scheduling software for certain working practices e.g. drainage gulleys, would assist with both the proactive and reactive issues relating to drainage that impact upon residents. This would also include the automation and scheduling of key Health and Safety risk assessment processes. This development of geofencing/GIS tagging of all Vale of Glamorgan Council assets to enable accurate calculations and prioritisation regarding service schedules and work programme (e.g. grass cutting and all horticultural / ground maintenance / cleaning schedules), will also be of significant benefit. This would bring enhanced levels of operational efficiency and productivity to areas that have previously suffered from underinvestment in terms of new technology. The new system would assist the areas that are identified across the service, as part of the scheduled inspection and reactive works, replacing the current method which risked key information not being captured. Better evidence capture will assist with future insurance claims as well as future work programming and the data extracted via the technology will also better inform the Highways Asset Management Plan.
- 2.8** Building upon the Council's Digital Strategy, a move to a full asset management and mobile working solution would also enable a move towards a paperless environment for staff and contracting agents alike. Contractors would be required as part of the procurement process to conduct all work administration via the software, reducing the flow of physical paper records in relation to invoices and key reports. Digitising the back office processes in an end-to-end manner also assists with the further development of our commercial waste service. Linked to this is the ability to sync information regarding environmental enforcement; duty of care arrangements, fly-tipping, littering and Highways Financial Penalty Notices (e.g. skips, scaffolding).
- 2.9** Based on the matching of the requirements with a review of the current market information available via the G-Cloud Marketplace, four companies matched the broad criteria. Each of the companies were invited to provide a presentation for a group of selected officers in order to assess the functionality of each platform. In addition, each presentation was supported by an additional request for information that allowed the team to assess whether the platform met key

functional and technical requirements. Submitted documentation included full costings of the proposals specific to the cost of implementing the solution based on the Council's specific requirements, staffing levels and customer base. References were also requested from the suppliers and followed up in order to qualify the claims made in the submissions.

- 2.10** Upon evaluation of the supplier's presentations and accompanying submissions, it was established that only 2 of the 4 suppliers met the requirements of the services, details are outlined in the Part II report, later on the Agenda.

### **3. How do proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working and contribute to our Well-being Objectives?**

- 3.1** The proposals evidence the Five Ways of Working via a continued emphasis on:

Long Term:

- 3.2** The protection of our assets for the future generations. In order to improve our ability to protect the assets managed by our Neighbourhood Services Teams, we require up-to-date, accurate information regarding their condition and status to ensure that our decisions are proportionate and are based on well informed estimations of risk.

Integration:

- 3.3** The system will allow for integration across the service areas and current system in place such as database in which the information can be transferred.

Involvement:

- 3.4** The Neighbourhood Services Asset Management and Mobile working solution group have involved various teams across the Council, as part of the process, these included front line staff, C1V, ICT, Highways, Parks and Ground, Waste, Corporate Procurement, Financial Services, as well and the Council's Digital Board. The process has taken a number of months due to the involvement and consultation which will form part of the implementation programme.

## **4. Resources and Legal Considerations**

### **Financial**

- 4.1** Full details are outlined in the Part II, later on the Agenda.

### **Employment**

- 4.2** As part of the Neighbourhood Services Reshaping Programme, resources were identified as part of the process. The asset management / mobile solution system will assist with staff resilience, productivity and monitoring for future workforce planning.

### **Legal (Including Equalities)**

- 4.3** Whenever the Council procures goods, works or services over certain financial thresholds, it must comply with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR 2015), unless an exemption is available.
- 4.4** This contract will be procured using Crown Commercial Services G-Cloud Framework (Ref.RM1557.12). Therefore, the Council's Contract Procedure Rules do not apply to this award of contract as Crown Commercial Services, who are a National contracting authority, has already undertaken a compliant procurement process in line with the relevant legislation (PCR 2015). However, the Council has to comply with the terms and conditions of the G-Cloud Framework and the 'call off' terms and conditions issued under it, in order to be compliant itself with the procurement legislation.
- 4.5** The procurement including the evaluation criteria has followed Crown Commercial Services guidance for use of this particular Framework. As stated above, the proposed award of contract is to a supplier who has been selected under G-Cloud Framework using MEAT (the Most Economically Advantageous Tender) as the evaluation criteria.
- 4.6** G-Cloud Framework permits a maximum length of contract of 24 months with the option to extend for two periods of 12 months. It is advised that the Council requirements be reviewed again in 18 months in order to determine whether an extension should be sought.

### **5. Background Papers**

None.