

Meeting of:	Cabinet
Date of Meeting:	Monday, 28 February 2022
Relevant Scrutiny Committee:	Environment and Regeneration
Report Title:	Purchase of Electronic Displays from 21st Century Passenger Systems Ltd Framework Agreement on Crown Commercial Services Procurement System
Purpose of Report:	To obtain Cabinet's approval to continue to purchase e-display units for bus stops and potentially other purposes connected with active travel
Report Owner:	Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport
Responsible Officer:	Miles Punter Director of Environment and Housing Services
Elected Member and Officer Consultation:	Accountant Environment and Housing Services Legal Services (Committee Reports) Procurement Officer
Policy Framework:	This matter is for Executive Decision by Cabinet
<p>Executive Summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This report seeks Cabinet approval for Council officers to continue to purchase electronic displays at any future time using appropriate budgets and departmental approvals. Future purchases would be direct from 21st Century Passenger Systems Ltd using the company's Crown Commercial framework agreement. Such future purchases would take the Council's total expenditure on displays over and above the £300,000 total procurement threshold. • The displays being purchased are primarily for transport information at bus stops but may also be purchased for active travel and other purposes. • Purchases of displays to date have been placed with Costain Integrated Technology Solutions Limited ('Costain') via the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) framework Agreement. This company have then sub-contracted maintenance to another company, namely 21st Century Passenger Systems Limited ('21st Century'). As 21st Century is now on the CCS Framework, it is proposed that future purchases will be made directly through that company (as opposed to ordering through a 'middleman' company and thereby reducing prices). • To date, purchase of existing displays has been undertaken with the approval of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport using delegated powers, as the total cost of purchases to date has been above £75,000, but below the £300,000 threshold. 	

- Any further purchases would take the total expenditure over £300,000. The purchase of a further two displays are currently being considered for this financial year (2021/22) at a total cost of £20,628. It is hoped however that further purchases will be made, when possible, should further grant funding be forthcoming.

Recommendations

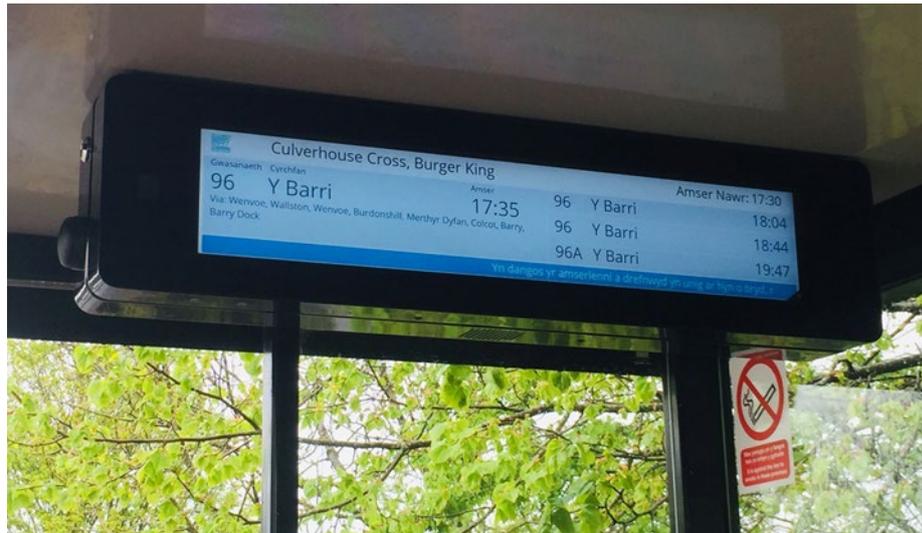
1. To approve the request for Council officers to purchase future electronic displays, associated equipment and technical services including maintenance agreements at any time using appropriate budgets direct from 21st Century Passenger Systems Ltd using its Crown Commercial Service framework agreement.
2. To give delegated authority to the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport and in consultation with the Section 151 Officer/ Head of Finance and the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport to approve all future purchases of electronic displays from 21st Century Passenger Systems Ltd that will take the overall cost of future purchases given that the £300,000 procurement threshold would be reached with the next proposed purchase.

Reasons for Recommendations

1. To ensure future purchases are in line with same system purchased to date.
2. To comply with the Council policy and financial standing orders.

1. Background

- 1.1** To date the Council has purchased its existing estate of 37 electronic bus stop information displays from Costain I.T.S. Ltd using its Crown Commercial Service framework agreement, which was approved by the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport and the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport using delegated powers as purchases to date have been above £75,000, but below £300,000. Appendix A refers.
- 1.2** Total expenditure for 2020/21 and 2021/2022 for the supply, installation and 5-year maintenance agreement equates to £286,750 via the Costain I.T.S. Ltd.'s Crown Commercial framework agreement.
- 1.3** Purchase of units to date has been made possible using a Welsh Government grant that was awarded to the Council for this purpose in 2021/22 via its Local Transport Fund (LTF), and in 2020/21 via its Local Transport Network Fund (LTNF)
- 1.4** The purchase of e-displays to date has been undertaken using a framework agreement on the Crown Commercial Service, which was set up by Powys County Council and used Swansea County Council's back office central management system (CMS). This enabled the Vale of Glamorgan Council to purchase and access a system that was tried, tested and actively being used by a number of other Welsh local authorities. In addition, purchasing via this framework agreement meant we could access the CMS used by Swansea County Council in order to update the displays and further save on the what would be an additional expense of approximately £30,000 if we needed to purchase our own CMS.
- 1.5** The sub-contracted and actual supplier to date (i.e. 21st Century Passenger Systems Ltd) has recently set up its own framework agreement on Crown Commercial Services, which now enables the Council to purchase direct from the actual supplier, as opposed to purchasing via the 'middleman' company Costain I.T.S. Ltd. In turn this will reduce the cost as the 'middleman' company's cost per unit has been removed.
- 1.6** Any further purchases however will take the overall total of purchases to date over the £300,000 threshold. I must therefore advise Cabinet and obtain its approval for officers to make additional future purchases at any time above this threshold amount using 21st Century Passenger Transport Services Ltd.'s Crown Commercial Service framework agreement.
- 1.7** The Council has to date purchased the following type of in-shelter displays (i.e. with either a grey or black case to suit the shelter individual units are being installed within).



- 1.8** As a trial, an additional purchase of two solar/battery powered bus stop information flags is now proposed as part of this year's LTF funding and will be erected at the non-sheltered bus stops adjacent to the Pier, Penarth Esplanade and Jenner Road, Barry.



2. Key Issues for Consideration

- 2.1** The installation of 37 electronic bus stop information displays throughout the Vale of Glamorgan, means these stops no longer require updated printed timetables as services change.
- 2.2** Previous to this these 37 stops would have been updated, as other stops are, on an ad-hoc basis with paper-based information in varying styles, as it is left to the service providers to update.
- 2.3** The scheme initially proposes to provide 'scheduled' service information via electronic display, as opposed to 'real-time', but future proofed to enable real-time information when financially viable to update the system. It is still envisaged that this scheme will significantly help improve the image of local bus

service provision within the Authority's area by targeting key bus stops where feasible to install these electronic information display units.

- 2.4** Continuing to procure electronic information displays, (primarily for bus stops and active travel purposes), direct from 21st Century Passenger Systems Ltd.'s using its own Crown Commercial Service framework agreement, will allow improve public transport infrastructure, which forms part of Welsh Government's Transport Strategy - https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/llwybr-newydd-wales-transport-strategy-2021-full-strategy_0.pdf
- 2.5** A Local Transport Fund grant application has been submitted to Welsh Government for the 2022/23 financial year. If the application for grant funding is approved for £500,000 we will be in a position to continue the bus shelter upgrades that are being undertaken throughout the Vale of Glamorgan. As part of the programme e-displays are installed in strategic and well used bus stops. Updates on this programme will be presented via the Council's Capital Programme quarterly monitoring reports which are considered by Cabinet and the relevant Scrutiny Committee. Further local members are consulted when works to infrastructure within their area is proposed to be undertaken.

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

- 3.1** Long-term: The supply of good quality public transport and active travel information will assist the Council's plans to locally address the Climate Change Emergency and realise a net-zero carbon future.
- 3.2** Integration: The provision of uniformed comprehensive local information for all transport services no matter what company supplies them will better inform users and potential users to access more sustainable transport options.
- 3.3** Involvement: The provision of electronic information displays is in line with many requests received to date for such information facilities within the Vale of Glamorgan area and will further enable the provision of 'real-time' information at a later date using the same displays.
- 3.4** Collaboration: The supply of reliable information on displays currently relies upon local service providers updating Traveline Cymru with their current schedules, but future real-time information may soon be realised with Welsh Government/Transport for Wales involvement in this area. The Council works with the local bus operators to ensure that bus infrastructure facilities encourages people to use bus services.
- 3.5** Prevention: Provision of electronic displays that provide up to date comprehensive service information addresses the issue of fractured supply of service information by the various local service suppliers that do not work together due to competition conflicts.

4. Resources and Legal Considerations

Financial

- 4.1** Procurement will be undertaken using appropriate available budgets (e.g. Welsh Government grants, Section 106 Sustainable Transport Contributions and existing service budgets). Also, the Council will work with the local bus operators.
- 4.2** Any future procurement will take the overall cost of purchases to date over and above the £300,000 procurement threshold ,with the current grant approval for bus stop improvements being £374k of which £141k has been spent to date (31/1/22).

Employment

- 4.3** There are no internal employment implications for the Council to consider.
- 4.4** Access to good public transport information will assist access to employment using sustainable transport options.

Legal (Including Equalities)

- 4.5** Any future procurement and subsequent negotiation/approval of agreement(s) will be concluded in consultation with Procurement Officers and Legal Services.
- 4.6** Public Transport Information displayed will be bilingual in both Welsh and English.

5. Background Papers

None.

DELEGATED POWERS FORM

Use of Delegated Authority: Proposed Procurement of Electronic Passenger Information Displays using Crown Commercial Services Framework Agreement with regard to LTF Grant Funding 2021-22 and other budgets available 2021-22 and beyond.

Background:

The Transport Services department was successful in securing a Local Transport Fund grant from the Welsh Government for £369,635 to further upgrade bus stops and provide electronic bus information displays within the Vale of Glamorgan. The Council has until 31st March 2022 to ensure its use for this purpose.

Last year the Council was successful in securing grant funding from the Local Transport Network Fund (2021-22) to provide a number of electronic bus stop displays within the Vale of Glamorgan and this was used to procure and supply 23 EPI units at key locations where feasible (i.e. with regard to existing electrical connections at bus stop shelters). This additional funding will initially enable the Council to further expand its estate by at least an additional 14 units at a cost of £108,500, possibly more depending on costs required for bus stop upgrades also being considered using this latest grant funding.

As previously advised and with the exception of the 23 bus stops upgraded last year with EPI units, the current situation with regard to the provision of bus service information at bus stops within the Vale of Glamorgan is ad-hoc paper-based information in varying styles, as it's left to the service providers to update. In turn this gives a poor image for local bus services and public transport in general.

The current scheme proposes to provide 'scheduled' service information via electronic displays, as opposed to 'real-time', but future proofed to enable real-time information when viable to update the system (i.e. when Welsh Government/TfW enables the system to be made available for use by all operators and LA's throughout Wales). I understand that WG/TfW are in the process of considering this matter. However, it this scheme will further help improve the image of local bus service provision within the Authority's area, as indeed last year's scheme has already done so following positive feedback on site where these displays are now located.

The reason for this request is to obtain delegated authority to purchase additional electronic passenger display units via a Crown Commercial Services framework for this purpose and is available for use by all Welsh local authorities to use. This request is to enable and cover purchases using the Crown Commercial Services framework using the LTF grant awarded this financial year (2021-22) and potential further purchases as and when funding becomes available via any other means (e.g. future grants, Section 106 planning contributions towards sustainable transport and available budgets).

This has key benefits for the Vale of Glamorgan Council as it will:

- save funds that may otherwise have to be used to purchase software licence(s) and enable additional units to be purchased;
- save the Vale of Glamorgan Council's officers time procuring the same via the Crown Commercial Framework that Powys Council has already undertaken; and
- ensure the same EPI units/system is procured to the existing system being used in the Vale of Glamorgan.

In addition:

- It should be noted that the existing Contract is with the Vale of Glamorgan Council, not Powys Council, which in turn ensures local in-house contract management with the supplier.
- The Council's Legal team has been instructed to include additional units purchased into the existing Maintenance Contract for any units procured using this framework agreement.
- The Powys Council Framework Agreement has already been used by this Authority and other Welsh Local Authorities (e.g. Caerphilly, Neath and Swansea Councils) and is seen as good practice by Welsh Government as a way to provide a standardised product throughout the region and indeed Wales as a whole;
- The use of the existing Crown Commercial Services Framework Agreement has been referred to Procurement and Legal with no objection to use received. However, advice was given to obtain internal authority using 'delegated powers' that this request covers.

A copy of the previous memorandum of delegated powers signed off by the Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport and the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport is also attached for information.

As the proposed expenditure is below the threshold of £300, 000 I would request use of your delegated power under Officer Delegation 1 (All Directors or Service Heads).

Additionally, as the proposed expenditure exceeds £75,000, I also request that Cabinet Member approval be given.

I should be grateful if you would confirm your agreement to this proposal pursuant to the said delegated power and authorise the proposals set out above and execution of the Maintenance Contract by signing the declaration below and returning one copy of this memorandum to me.

Approval

I hereby agree to the exercise of my delegated power (Officer Delegation 1) to enable execution of the above Contract to be concluded.

L L Reed

Head of Neighbourhood Services and Transport

Date: 21 July 2021

Approval of acceptance of procurement of electronic passenger information displays using Crown Commercial Services Framework Agreement

P. B. G.

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services and Transport

Date: 27th July 2021

Approval of acceptance of procurement of electronic passenger information displays using Crown Commercial Services Framework Agreement