



Committee Report

PURPOSE: Final Decision Report

KEY OR NON-KEY DECISION: Key decision affects 2 or more wards

COMMITTEE: Homes and Housing Delivery Committee

DATE: 14 February 2025

TITLE: Procurement of new Fire Risk Assessment contract

Ward(s): All Wards are impacted

Officer presenting the report: Claire Matthews **Job title:** Programme Lead (Residential Building Safety)

Committee Chair: Cllr Barry Parsons

Executive Director lead: John Smith: Executive Director for Growth & Regeneration

Proposal origin: BCC Staff

Purpose of Report:

1. This paper seeks approval to procure a new fire risk assessment contract, this will be undertaken in line with the guidance from the procurement and contract management service.

Evidence Base / Options to consider:

1. The current contract to deliver fire risk assessments is due to expire on 31 March 2025. Under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, the Council are required to undertake fire risk assessments on all residential buildings which contain two or more dwellings.
2. There is an option to extend for a further year, however owing to the number of assessments that are required, the council wishes to pursue additional providers to increase the rate at which assessments are completed, in addition to ensuring the highest competency and quality of assessment is completed for a high-profile area.
3. New fire safety and building safety legislation brought out by the Government over the course of the last few years requires an increased amount of demonstratable competence by those carrying out the risk assessments, particular in high rise/high risk premises.
4. It is proposed we procure a new contractor to deliver the fire risk assessment service for the Council, and by doing so, we can look to request the companies tendering for the contract are BAFE accredited, BAFE Fire Safety Register is an independent fire safety registration body, but also that

their risk assessors are directly employed and are members of the Tiered Fire Risk Assessors Register (TFRAR).

5. The TFRAR was set up by the Institute of Fire Safety Managers to help people locate registered competent professionals – this places a “Tier” of competency on those who have registered. The register ranges from entry level assessors just starting out in their career (Tier 1) through to nationally accredited, highly experienced professionals (Tier 3).
6. The Procurement for Housing (PfH) framework where the current FRA contractor was sourced from have a limited number of contractors available, therefore the proposal is to utilise an alternative route, as will be guided by the Procurement & Contract Management Service, that maximises the exposure of this procurement to a number of qualified contractors.
7. The Building Safety Team will work with the Procurement & Contract Management Service to ensure that any procurement process complies with both the Councils procurement rules and the relevant procurement legislation. The proposal is to contract with 2 providers to mitigate risk of one provider being short on capacity, and to maximise the number of assessments that can be undertaken. The contract will include suitable KPIs to ensure adequate delivery of services, and break clauses are to address any persistent non-performance.
8. It is proposed the Council procures a 2-year contract, with an option to extend for a further 2 years if contractor performance is acceptable.

Officer Recommendations: -

That the Committee for Homes and Housing Delivery approves:

1. Authorisation for the Executive Director of Growth and Regeneration in consultation with Chair of the Homes and Housing Delivery Committee to procure and award the Fire Risk Assessment contract, and any subsequent extensions or variations, in-line with the procurement routes and maximum budget envelopes outlined in this report.
2. Authorisation for the Executive Director of Growth and Regeneration in consultation with Chair of the Homes and Housing Delivery Committee to extend the existing contract by up to 6 months.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

1. Procurement of a new fire risk assessment contract falls under Theme 7 of the Corporate Strategy: Effective Development Organisation.
2. Procuring a new contract enables us to continue to be ‘data driven’ and improve the service and outcome we provide to residents.
3. The new procurement, and ultimately a new contract, will enable us to show good governance. The procurement exercise will consist of a mini-competition between available contractors, and allow the Council to evaluate the winning supplier based on cost and quality.

City Benefits:

1. Procurement of a new contract, and not simply entering an extension with the current supplier, means the quality of the service delivered to residents/citizens of Bristol will improve, in addition to the costs of the service supplied being checked and evaluated.
2. Being able to demonstrate value for money is key in the current climate, and residents and citizens of Bristol will want to know their money is being spent appropriately.
3. Social Value will be met by undertaking a new procurement and award of a new contract. This will be achieved through a new supplier being chosen and working together to ensure fire risk assessment remedial actions are only raised, if necessary, therefore saving time and money for the Council, and allowing funds to be spent elsewhere highlighting improvements within other services.
4. There may also be opportunity to engage with a contractor who is local to the Bristol area, which keeps the skillset within the area and reduces impacts on the environment through travel.

Consultation Details:

1. The proposal will have been through the following meeting and approval routes before being presented to committee:
 - a. HSLT
 - b. EDM
 - c. PCCB

Background Documents:

1. Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety Order) 2005 – HM Government document ([The Regulatory Reform \(Fire Safety\) Order 2005](#))
2. Fire Safety Act 2021 – HM Government document ([Fire Safety Act 2021 - GOV.UK](#))

Revenue Cost	£305,000	Source of Revenue Funding	Housing Revenue Account
Capital Cost	£0.00	Source of Capital Funding	N/A
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/> Ongoing cost <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/> If yes - existing or new saving? N/A OR Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	

1. Finance Advice: The proposed procurement of a new Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) contract is projected to cost £305,000, funded entirely through the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). This aligns with the Council’s responsibilities under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and the Fire Safety Act 2021 to ensure residential buildings are assessed for fire safety. The approach to pursue additional providers to speed up the rate at which assessments are done, in addition to ensuring the highest competency and quality of assessment is completed for a high-profile area. Competitive tendering is expected to enhance value for money by improving service quality while keeping costs competitive. Additionally, implementing a robust Key Performance Indicator (KPI) framework and break clauses in the contract ensures performance accountability and safeguards financial expenditure.

Key Financial Considerations:

- **Revenue Implications:** The expenditure is ongoing and will be accounted for in the HRA budget. This aligns with the purpose of the HRA to fund services for council-owned residential properties.
- **Cost Control:** By using a competitive procurement process, the Council can benchmark costs and ensure that the selected contractors deliver cost-efficient and high-quality services.
- **Long-Term Budgetary Impact:** A 2-year initial contract, with the option to extend for an additional 2 years, allows for flexibility and cost predictability over a medium-term period. Future extensions should be contingent on demonstrated performance and financial compliance.
- **Social Value Considerations:** The opportunity to work with local contractors aligns with the Council's objectives to reduce environmental impact and retain financial benefits within the local economy, further justifying the allocation of HRA funds.
- **Procurement Route:** Using an alternative procurement framework to maximize contractor participation may involve higher upfront administrative costs; however, this is offset by the anticipated improvement in quality and competition.

The two year budget requirement of £305k is in line with current budget provision. However, given the financial pressures currently facing the HRA, should the returned tender be in excess of current provision, then the scope of works may need to be revised, in order to bring the contract cost back to affordable levels.

Finance Business Partner: Martin Johnson – Interim Finance Manager 29 November 2024

2. Legal Advice: The procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations/Procurement Act 2023 and the Councils own procurement rules. Legal services will advise and assist officers with regard to the conduct of the procurement process and the resulting contractual arrangements.

Legal Team Leader: Husinara Jones, Team Manager/Solicitor 26 November 2024

3. Implications on IT: I can see no implications on IT regarding this activity.

IT Team Leader: Alex Simpson – Lead Enterprise Architect, 27 November 2024

4. HR Advice: There are no HR implications evident

HR Partner: Celia Williams, HR Business Partner, 3 December 2024

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	NO
Appendix B – Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)	YES
Appendix C – Environmental Impact Assessment	YES

Appendix D – Decision Risk Assessment	NO
Appendix E – Exempt Information	NO
Appendix F – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix G – Options appraisal matrix	NO
Appendix H – Business case / financial analysis	NO