

Decision Pathway – Report



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 04 July 2023

TITLE	Procurement – Transport of Deceased on Behalf of HM Senior Coroner for Avon		
Ward(s)	All		
Author: John Pitchers	Job title: Service Manager: Mortuary and Coroner Support		
Cabinet lead: Cllr. Cheney	Executive Director lead: Stephen Peacock		
Proposal origin: BCC Staff			
Decision maker: Mayor			
Decision forum: Cabinet			
Purpose of Report:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To seek approval for the procurement and award of a contract for the transport of deceased on behalf of HM Senior Coroner for Avon, in accordance with The Public Contracts Regulations 2015. 			
Evidence Base:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Coroners have the responsibility to examine the cause when there is a sudden or unexplained death. Bristol City Council, as lead Avon authority, is responsible under s.15 of the Coroners and Justice Act 2009 for the transport of deceased under the HM Senior Coroner for Avon’s jurisdiction from their place of death to Flax Bourton Public and Forensic Mortuary. Currently, the contract is based on a single lot and the proposal is to procure the new contract on the same basis, via a competitive tender process. The proposed contract length is 3+1+1 years. The new contract will replace the current contract that commenced on 1st April 2019 and ends on 31st October 2023. The cost of the new contract will be determined by the bids received during the tender process; however, the incumbent contractor has indicated that the cost-per-transfer will need to rise to allow for inflationary pressures. A soft-market test (SMT) exercise in December 2022 generated two responses from funeral companies other than the incumbent contractor, so the estimated revenue costs below have been calculated based on these three submissions and the three different unit costs. The 2023/24 budget for transport costs is £222k. 			
Cabinet Member / Officer Recommendations:			
That Cabinet:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Authorise the Director: Legal and Democratic Services or Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member: City Economy, Finance and Performance, to take all steps required to procure and award the contract for the transport of deceased on behalf of HM Senior Coroner for Avon for 3+1+1 years, in-line with the procurement routes and maximum budgets as outlined in this report. Authorise the Director: Legal and Democratic Services or Chief Executive to invoke any subsequent extensions/variations specifically defined in the contract(s) being awarded, up to the maximum budget envelope. 			

Corporate Strategy alignment:

1. Corporate Strategy 2022–2027. Good Governance. Make sure that we are financially competent and resilient, offering good value for money. Take safe but proportionate approaches to risk, performance, project, and contract management. Enable effective democratic decision-making and scrutiny.

City Benefits:

1. The appointed contractor will be required to engage in socially beneficial activity, such as charity work, and will be required to use lower-emission vehicles. The transport of the deceased in a respectful and dignified manner, by a professional contractor who meets the relevant regulatory requirements is a key benefit to Bristol residents who have suffered a bereavement.

Consultation Details:

1. The proposal has been discussed with the Chief Finance Officers of each of the four local authorities who contribute towards the funding of the Avon Coroner’s Service.

Background Documents:

[Procurement of Contract for Avon and Somerset Coroners - Cabinet 22 Jan 2019](#)

Revenue Cost	See table in exempt Appendix I.	Source of Revenue Funding	Coroner Budget (funded by four authorities on a proportional basis: BaNES: 16.45% South Glos: 24.57 N. Somerset: 18.94% Bristol: 40.04%
Capital Cost	£Nil	Source of Capital Funding	N/A.

One off cost Ongoing cost
 Saving Proposal Income generation proposal

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:**1. Finance Advice:**

Paper seeks permission to procure and award a contract for the transport of deceased on a 3-year term with possible annual extension for 2 further years (3+1+1).

Bristol Council as lead Avon authority incurs this cost and recharges to other authorities with 16.45% charged to BaNES, 24.57% charged to South Gloucestershire, 18.94% charged to North Somerset and Bristol retaining 40.04% of the cost.

Early indication reflects possible increase in the contract price/cost of the service which isn’t currently provided for in the Budget. This cost increase would need to be mitigated through the procurement process with further mitigations and funding to be sorted before the contract is awarded.

The current Budget held for this Service doesn’t currently cover the indicative new costs. The annual cost and shortfall are shown in the table in Appendix I.

Finance Business Partner: Olubunmi Kupoluyi, Resources Finance Business Partner, 9th May 2023.

2. Legal Advice:

The procurement process must be conducted in line with the 2015 Procurement Regulations and the Council’s 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, 3rd May 2023.

3. Implications on IT:

I can see no implications on IT in regard to this activity.

IT Team Leader: Alex Simpson, Senior Solution Architect, 10th May 2023.

4. HR Advice:

There are no HR implications evident.

HR Partner: Bryn Williams, Resources HR Business Partner, 4th May 2023.

EDM Sign-off	Stephen Peacock, Chief Executive	10th May 2023
Cabinet Member sign-off	Cllr. Craig Cheney, Deputy Mayor - City Economy, Finance and Performance	15th May 2023
Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's office.	5 June 2023

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	NO
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment – Exempt Information	YES
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Exempt Information (I1 – costs & I2 Risk Assessment)	YES
Appendix J – HR advice	NO
Appendix K – ICT	NO
Appendix L – Procurement	NO