

EXECUTIVE DECISION

made by a Council Officer



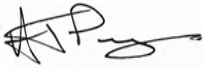
REPORT OF ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY BY AN INDIVIDUAL COUNCIL OFFICER

Executive Decision Reference Number – *COD25 21/22*

Decision	
1	Title of decision: Procurement authorisation for replacement of the six Torpoint Ferry chain gantries between 2023 and 2025
2	Decision maker (Council Officer name and job title): Anthony Payne, Strategic Director for Place
3	Report author and contact details: Adrian Trim, Adrian.trim@plymouth.gov.uk EXT 7729
4a	Decision to be taken: Authorisation for Cornwall Council to procure a design and build contract to replace the six Torpoint Ferry Gantries, term of contract 3 years, cost £.973 M.
4b	Reference number of original executive decision or date of original committee meeting where delegation was made: L50 21/22
5	Reasons for decision: The Tamar Bridge Act 1957 and subsequent revised Acts require the Joint Authorities to operate, maintain and improve the crossings. Following an approval at full Council in January 2022 of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Budget and Business Plan this procurement is required to deliver the business plan. An options study concluded that a phased replacement with gantries utilising the same suspended weight principal as the current gantries built to modern engineering and safety standards is the best solution.
6	Alternative options considered and rejected: Not to proceed with procurement and contract award – Rejected on the basis that the gantries are required to ensure that the ferries are able to operate and operate safely, maintenance and periodic replacement of these structures are an integral requirement of the ferry operation.
7	Financial implications and risks: Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry are funded on a ‘user pays’ basis, where the tolls are used for both operational and maintenance requirements. There are limited impacts on the Council MTFP regarding funding, other than financing Member and Officer involvement.

8	Is the decision a Key Decision? (please contact Democratic Support for further advice)		No	Per the Constitution, a key decision is one which:
			x	in the case of capital projects and contract awards, results in a new commitment to spend and/or save in excess of £3million in total
			x	in the case of revenue projects when the decision involves entering into new commitments and/or making new savings in excess of £1 million
	x	is significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the area of the local authority.		
8b	If yes, date of publication of the notice in the Forward Plan of Key Decisions			
9	Please specify how this decision is linked to the Council's corporate plan/Plymouth Plan and/or the policy framework and/or the revenue/capital budget:	As a regional centre, Plymouth plays a major role economically, culturally and industrially, providing a focus for the innovation, technology and for the quality of life that it offer. The Tamar Bridge crossing is a vital strategic and local link that plays a key role in the City's ambitions to become a world class City.		
10	Please specify any direct environmental implications of the decision (carbon impact)	No Direct Environmental Impact		
Urgent decisions				
11	Is the decision urgent and to be implemented immediately in the interests of the Council or the public?			(If yes, please contact Democratic Support for advice)
		No	x	(If no, go to section 13a)
12a	Reason for urgency:			
12b	Scrutiny Chair signature:		Date	
	Scrutiny Committee name:			
	Print Name:			
Consultation				

13a	Are any other Cabinet members' portfolios affected by the decision?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
				(If no go to section 14)
13b	Which other Cabinet member's portfolio is affected by the decision?	Councillor Jonathon Drean, Cabinet member for Transport		
13c	Date Cabinet member consulted	30/03/21		
14	Has any Cabinet member declared a conflict of interest in relation to the decision?			If yes, please discuss with the Monitoring Officer
		No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
15	Which Corporate Management Team member has been consulted?	Name	Anthony Payne	
		Job title	Strategic Director for Place	
		Date consulted	30/03/22	
Sign-off				
16	Sign off codes from the relevant departments consulted:	Democratic Support (mandatory)	DS138 21/22	
		Finance (mandatory)	LS/38427/AC/8422	
		Legal (mandatory)	djn.22.23.04	
		Human Resources (if applicable)	N/A	
		Corporate property (if applicable)	N/A	
		Procurement (if applicable)	N/A	
Appendices				
17	Ref.	Title of appendix		
	A	Briefing report for publication		
Confidential/exempt information				
18a	Do you need to include any confidential/exempt information?			If yes, prepare a second, confidential ('Part II') briefing report and indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box in 18b below.
		No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
		Exemption Paragraph Number		

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18b	Confidential/exempt briefing report title:							
Background Papers								
19	<p>Please list all unpublished, background papers relevant to the decision in the table below.</p> <p>Background papers are <u>unpublished</u> works, relied on to a material extent in preparing the report, which disclose facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the work is based. If some/all of the information is confidential, you must indicate why it is not for publication by virtue of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 by ticking the relevant box.</p>							
Title of background paper(s)		Exemption Paragraph Number						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Council Officer Signature								
20	<p>I agree the decision and confirm that it is not contrary to the Council's policy and budget framework, Corporate Plan or Budget. In taking this decision I have given due regard to the Council's duty to promote equality of opportunity, eliminate unlawful discrimination and promote good relations between people who share protected characteristics under the Equalities Act and those who do not. For further details please see the EIA attached.</p>							
Signature				Date of decision		08/04/2022		
Print Name	Anthony Payne							

Appendix A

Briefing Report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Torpoint Ferries Crossing forms part of a 'joint undertaking' with Tamar Bridge that is provided by Plymouth City Council and Cornwall Council, operating under statute since 1953.

1.2 The crossings are operated on a 'user pays' basis, with the tolls covering operational and maintenance costs, (hence no cost to the Council for this procurement) delivering public crossings at the Bridge 24/7 365.

1.3 The procurement of specialist services are a regular occurrence, as would be expected, as the both Ferry and Bridge are bespoke structures that provide key road links on the Devon / Cornwall border, crossing the river Tamar, with the A38 forming part of the Strategic Road Network (SRN) nationally.

1.4 The Torpoint Ferry service, joining the A374, consists of three chain ferries that form a vital link across the Tamar estuary between the town of Torpoint in Cornwall and the city of Plymouth in Devon. The service is jointly owned by Cornwall Council and Plymouth City Council. And is important for the movement of both people and goods. The ferries came into service in 2004 and 2005 and their expected service life is over 25 years

1.5 The service operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, with service provision varying from a three ferry service at peak times to a single ferry overnight. Current 2-way traffic volume is approximately 2.4 million vehicles and 800k pedestrians and cyclists per annum. This is a mix of routine commuter traffic and recreational users, commercial vehicles, and all 'blue light' emergency service vehicles that provide cover to the Rame Peninsula.

1.6 With no means of steering each of the three chain ferries are guided across the Tamar Estuary between slipways sited at Torpoint and Devonport by a pair of 650m long parallel chains positioned 20 metres apart attached at either end to the slipways. Each ferry is propelled by two electrically driven chainwheels that draw chain into and through the vessel, the ferry being pulled through the water by the tension created in the chains.

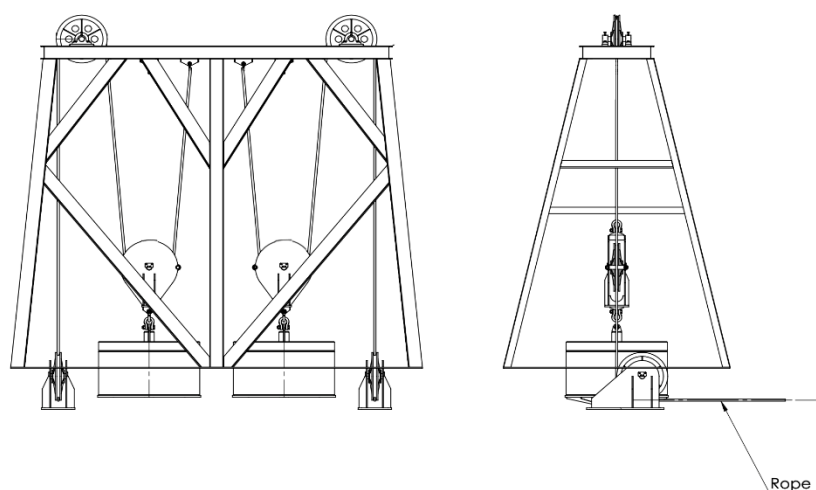
1.7 As a ferry approaches the berthing position on a slipway the speed of the chainwheels is gradually reduced to zero and the vessel uses its own momentum to safely coast at low speed into position on the slipway. Under these conditions with the transfer of chain through the vessel stopped and the ferry still moving forward under its own momentum, the chain at the front of the vessel becomes slack and the tension to pull and guide the vessel into position is reduced.

1.8 Under these conditions a vessel cannot be allowed to drift, it must be pulled and guided into position at right angles to the slipway into a relatively constrained berth. The reduction in chain tension to guide, pull in and hold a ferry in position becomes critical in ensuring that a ferry can berth safely.

1.9 To compensate for the reduced tension a suspended weight of approximately 12 tonnes is attached to the end of each chain by a wire rope through a moving pulley block and sheave system. If the tension in a chain falls below the 6 tonnes produced by the suspended weight at any time the weight moves downwards to take up slack in the chain and restore the tension.

1.10 The tension produced by the suspended weights is sufficient to keep the chains tight enough to both pull and guide a ferry on to the slipway under all tidal and weather conditions. The equal tension in each chain also acts to pull a ferry squarely onto a slipway without the vessel slewing around to enable safe loading and unloading of vehicles. In addition, the tension acts as to anchor a ferry to the slipway during loading and unloading of vehicles, this is critical especially under adverse wind and tidal conditions. If this system was not in place and the ends of the chains were simply secured to the slipway there would be the risk that under certain tide and wind conditions a vessel would slew around and not be able to safely berth square onto the slipway for loading and unloading of vehicles, and once berthed not be held tight against the slipway.

1.11 The two suspended weights and associated pulley block and sheave systems associated with the end of each pair of parallel chains are attached to a steel framework. The framework, weights, sheaves and pulley systems are collectively known as a gantry. In total there are six gantries, three sited at Devonport and three at Torpoint. Of the six, four were constructed in the 1920s and the remaining two in the 1970s. An illustrative drawing of a gantry is shown below.



1.12 In guiding and anchoring the ferries the six gantries are essential to the safe operation of the ferry service and without the function they provide only a limited ferry service would be possible. The service would have to be suspended under certain tidal and adverse wind conditions when it became unsafe to bring a ferry on to a slipway. Based on observation that

the additional tension provided by the gantries is required for berthing in the top quarter of the slipway when the tidal level is over 4.5m, it is estimated that the ferry service would have to be suspended for 30% of the current 24 hour 365 day a year service. The timing and length of each of the out of service periods varying to follow the tidal cycle. This would impose a significant operating constraint and put the viability of the ferry service in doubt.

2.0 Improving resilience and efficiency in procurement and Contract Award

2.1 Currently the process to procure and award a contract is the responsibility of both Councils, however the policy and process of both Councils differ, giving rise to anomalies and additional administration regarding timing, procurement decisions, application and contract award. Work is currently underway to simplify the procurement and contract award process in respect of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry.