

BRIEFING NOTE

Contract Award Report – Part I

Real Time Passenger Information and Ongoing Support



1. INTRODUCTION

This briefing note has been prepared to inform the Service Director for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure and Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Transport of the outcome of the recent tender for an upgraded Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system. The tender was undertaken because the current contract for the provision of RTPI in Plymouth ends in March 2026, with no opportunity for extension, with the approval to tender taking place with the Portfolio Holder on 24 April 2025.

This project involves the replacement and enhancement of the city's Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system, incorporating Traffic Light Priority (TLP) functionality. It forms a critical component of the Authority's commitment to improving public transport infrastructure and enhancing the passenger experience, as set out in the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and is an integral element of the 2025/26 BSIP delivery programme.

The appointed Supplier will be responsible for the supply, installation, and commissioning of a fully integrated system capable of delivering accurate, real-time passenger information across the city. This includes the replacement of 122 existing displays with new units, installation of one pole-mounted display, migration of six existing displays, and decommissioning of seven displays. This also encompasses improved accessibility through Push Button functionality for audio RTPI announcements at all bus stops where RTPI is installed. The solution must interface with the Authority's Urban Transport Management Control (UTMC) system to enable TLP at designated junctions, with rollout planned during the contract term.

The contract also encompasses ongoing support and maintenance for both hardware and software, provision of all necessary data feeds, and a web-based back-office system for performance monitoring and content management, including manual override capabilities.

A comprehensive reporting package is required to support monitoring of the Plymouth Bus Service Improvement Plan. The system must also be scalable and adaptable to accommodate evolving technological, policy, expansion and user requirements throughout the duration of the contract.

2. CURRENT SITUATION

Since 2017 the Council's RTPI provider has been Journeo. This contract ends in March 2026 and many of the displays are coming to the end of their useful life with the units beginning to fail. This aligns with best practice which suggests that the life of a RTPI display is eight years.

Displays are currently installed at 112 bus stops within Plymouth, as well as at other key locations such as the Plymouth Railway Station's foyer, Drake Gate, and the Land Registry.

We propose that the new system is installed on a like-for-like basis, with the exception of pre-agreed changes at a small number of bus stops and additional displays being installed in the extra bus shelters that will be introduced as part of the Royal Parade improvement works. This was approved at a Portfolio Holder meeting on 19 June 2025.

3. PROCUREMENT PROCESS

A Tender Notice ref: 2025/S 000-045096 was published on the 01 August 2025 within the Find a Tender Service (FTS).

The Invitation to Tender was published electronically via, The Supplying the South West Portal – the Council's chosen procurement portal on 01 August 2025 with an initial Tender submission date of 1200hrs, 26 September 2025.

The Tender opportunity received a good level of initial responses, with 41 organisations registering an interest, of which two submitted Tenders. The received Tender submissions were evaluated in accordance with the overall evaluation strategy set out below and were independently evaluated by Council Officers and an external consultant, all of whom had the appropriate skills and experience, ensuring transparency and robustness in the process.

The time frame for the full procurement process is detailed below:

Activity	Date/Target Date
Prior Information Notice Published	21 February 2025
Tender Notice and Tender Documents Published	01 August 2025
Deadline for Supplier ITT Clarifications	12 September 2025
Deadline for the Authority's Responses to Clarifications	19 September 2025
Tender Submission Deadline	12:00 Noon on 26 September 2025
Tender Assessment completed	October 2025
Issue of Assessment Summaries & Contract Award Notice Published	November 2025
Standstill Period (8 working days)	December 2025
Contract Award Confirmation	December 2025
Execution of Contract	December 2025
Contract Details Notice Published	December 2025
Contract & KPIs Published	December 2025
Commencement of Contract & Mobilisation_	05 January 2026

4. TENDER EVALUATION CRITERIA

To ensure fairness of the process, the evaluation Quality, Social Value and Price were split, with Price information being held back from the Quality evaluators.

Overview of Process

The tenders were evaluated as per the criteria set out below and in accordance with the overall evaluation strategy.

The high-level award criteria for the project were as follows:

EVALUATION CRITERIA	WEIGHTING
Method Statements	50%
Total Tender Sum	40%
Social Value	10%

Conditions of Participation

The first stage of the evaluation covered Conditions of Participation. This section assesses a Supplier's legal standing, financial stability, and technical capability to successfully deliver the contract. These criteria are established to ensure that Suppliers are fully equipped to meet the contract's requirements and are aligned with the provisions set out in the Procurement Act 2023. This information was acquired through a range of information only questions and pass/fail questions. Full details of the questions and outcomes are detailed in the Part II Procurement Decision Record.

Quality

A number of method statement questions were asked as part of the tender. These were a range of information only, pass/fail and scored questions, with the scored questions making up the full 50% quality criteria. The scored method statements and their weightings are set out below.

Method Statements		Weighting
Quality		50%
MS3	Initial Provision & Installation Phase	10%
MS4	Data Management Risk Mitigation	9%
MS5	Fault Rectification Process	12%
MS6	Maximising Revenue Opportunities	5%
MS7	Migration of Existing Assets	9%
MS8	Climate Impact – Materials & Waste	5%

Each method statement was scored on a scale of 0 to 5 points, in accordance with the scoring system detailed below.

Suppliers scores for each method statement were multiplied by the relevant weighting to result in a 'weighted score' for that method statement. The weighted scores were then totalled, with the total expressed as an overall score out of 50.

Scored questions were evaluated using the scoring systems below:

Response	Score	Definition
Excellent	5	Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. The response is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrates a thorough

		understanding of the requirement/outcomes and provides details of how the requirement/outcomes will be met in full.
Very good	4	Response is particularly relevant. The response is precisely detailed to demonstrate a very good understanding of the requirements and provides details on how these will be fulfilled.
Good	3	Response is relevant and good. The response is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements/outcomes will be fulfilled.
Satisfactory	2	Response is relevant and acceptable. The response addresses a broad understanding of the requirements/outcomes but lacks details on how the requirement/outcomes will be fulfilled in certain areas.
Poor	1	Response is partially relevant and poor. The response addresses some elements of the requirements/outcomes but contains insufficient/limited detail and explanation to demonstrate how the requirements/outcomes will be fulfilled.
Unacceptable	0	No or inadequate response. Fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement/deliver the required outcomes.

Suppliers were required to achieve a score of 2 or more for each scored item. Any scored criteria item receiving less than 2 would have resulted in the Tender being rejected and Suppliers being disqualified from the process.

Full details of the information only and pass/fail questions are set out in the Part II Procurement Decision Record.

Price

Upon completion of the quality criteria evaluation, we were able to evaluate the price which represented 40% of the overall score. This was conducted through a comparative assessment of the submitted pricing schedules.

Each Supplier's score for the total sum (excluding VAT) in each section was calculated relative to the lowest sum submitted. Scores were awarded based on the competitiveness of each Supplier's pricing, using the scoring methodology detailed below (excluding VAT).

$\left(\frac{\text{Lowest Total Tender Sum}}{\text{Supplier's Total Tender Sum}} \right) \times \text{Weighting} = \text{Weighted score}$
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Prices were also sought for a range of optional extra equipment to enhance the system further, and these costs were also included in the pricing evaluation.

Social Value

The final aspect of the evaluation covered social value, which represented 10% of the overall score.

Social value commitments were assessed based on a combination of quantitative and qualitative assessment.

SVI - Total Social Value Commitment (£) – 5.00%

The Supplier's Total Social Value Commitment were evaluated using the quantitative scoring system below:

$$\left(\frac{\text{Supplier's Total Social Value Commitment (£)}}{\text{Highest Total Social Value Commitment (£)}} \right) \times \text{Weighting} = \text{Weighted score}$$

SV2 – Social Value Method Statements – 5.00%

The method statements submitted in support of the social value commitments made in SVI were allocated a single score for all method statements and the appropriate weighting was then applied.

The qualitative responses were then evaluated in accordance with the scoring table detailed above.

Weightings for individual sub-criteria contained under each of the above are detailed in the return document.

A Tender would not have been accepted if the Supplier had significantly failed to satisfy any specific criterion, even if it scored relatively well against all other criteria.

In the event that evaluating officers, acting reasonably, considered that a Tender was fundamentally unacceptable on any issue, then regardless of the Tender's other merits or its overall score, and regardless of the weighting scheme, that Tender would have been rejected.

Total Evaluation Methodology (100% of weighting)

To determine the overall total score and corresponding ranking for each Supplier, it was necessary to add the total weighted Price points score with the total weighted Quality points, and total weighted Social Value points.

Moderation

The Authority decided to take a consensus scoring evaluation approach to this procurement. This meant that, following the independent evaluation of submissions, where there was a difference in individual evaluator scoring for one or more individual questions, a moderation session took place to arrive at an agreed, consensus score. In the event that the evaluators could not agree on a final score, the score awarded by the majority became the consensus score.

5. SUMMARY OF EVALUATION

The resulting quality, social value and financial scores are contained in the confidential Part II Procurement Decision Record.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Plymouth City Council were awarded £4.5 million from the Department for Transport's (DfT) 2025-26 Bus Grant (previously referred to as the Bus Service Improvement Plan Phase 4 funding (2025/26), of which £3,196,800 is capital.

The 2025-26 Bus Grant funding needs to be contractually committed by March 2026 and spent in full by March 2027, in order to comply with the terms and conditions of the grant.

The 2025/26 Bus Service Improvement Plan Delivery Programme, which is the delivery plan for the Bus Grant ([Decision - L43 24/25 - 2025-26 Bus Grant for Plymouth City Council - Modern Council](#)) includes the upgrading of Plymouth RTPI system. Therefore the upgrade of the RTPI system places no additional financial demands on the Council. This is because all capital aspects of the contract are 100% funded from the Department for Transport grant and the Software Maintenance (years 2 – 7 of the contract) will be met from the Council's existing Real Time Passenger Information Budget at a cost of £6,000 per annum.

Details of the contractual pricing are contained in the confidential Part II Procurement Decision Record. All capital costs for the contract will be paid during the delivery phase of the project to ensure all funds are spent by March 2027 in accordance with DfT requirements for the Bus Grant.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that a contract be awarded to the highest scoring Tenderer for the Real Time Passenger Information System Upgrade and Ongoing Support contract to include provision of all items set out in Section I, together with all associated project management and delivery.

Details of the successful Tenderer have been set out in the confidential Part II Procurement Decision Record subject to receipt of the required satisfactory self-certification documents.

This award is also subject to the outcome of any challenge made during the mandatory standstill period.