

COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT CONTRACT

Procurement Report

2 December 2021

Please note that the following recommendation is subject to consideration and determination by the Board before taking effect.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

- (a) The Board approve the extension of the current Communications and Public Relations contract with Coast Communications and Marketing Ltd for a period of up to 2 years.

1. Background

A competitive tendering exercise was conducted in autumn 2020 to secure a communications and public relations partner for Peninsula Transport. Plymouth City Council led the tender, as the Communications and Engagement Lead Authority for the STB, with support from Devon County Council. Following the tender, Coast Communications were appointed as the Communications and Public Relations Provider for the Peninsula Transport Sub-national Transport Body (STB) and the Peninsula Rail Task Force (PRTF).

The current contract with Coast is for the period January 2021 – March 2022 (15 months).

As the Communications and Public Relations provider Coast Communications are tasked with supporting the STB to:-

- Build awareness with stakeholders of Peninsula Transport (including PRTF) and its purpose
- Ensure key stakeholders are fully briefed on the work of Peninsula Transport (including PRTF)
- Maximise funding opportunities
- Define a clear set of offers and asks to Government for Peninsula Transport (including PRTF) and brief key stakeholders on how they can help deliver
- Engage stakeholders around the emerging sub regional transport plan.

The duties undertaken as part of the contract include: account management; brand management; public affairs; stakeholder communication; management of communication channels; producing and updating the communications toolkit; strategic planning and programme development; and evaluation.

The current contract with Coast includes the ability to extend the contract by up to 24 months by serving written notice on the Supplier no later than 3 months (January 2022) before the expiry of the Contract.

It is recommended that the Board approve the extension of the current contract with Coast Communications and Marketing Ltd.

2. Financial Considerations

Coast Communications and Marketing Ltd have completed all work to date within the financial envelope agreed for communications activities. This is expected to continue to be the case, were the contract to be extended.

3. Environmental Impact Considerations

There are no environmental impact considerations associated with this paper.

4. Equality Considerations

There are no specific equality considerations associated with this paper. The communications strategy which Coast are delivering, on behalf of Peninsula Transport, has been developed mindful of the need for the work of the STB to be accessible to all and this would continue were the contract to be extended.

5. Legal Considerations

The current Communications and Public Relations Contract includes the provision to extend the contract, by up to 24 months, by serving written notice on the Supplier no later than 3 months before the expiry of the Contract. The recommendation set out within this paper is compliant with this provision.

6. Risk Management Considerations

The risks associated with extending the current Contract are considered low. Coast Communications and Marketing Ltd have completed all work under the Contract, to date, to a high standard and within the agreed financial envelope for communications activities.

The risk of challenge to the extension is also considered low; the Contract includes an extension clause and participation in the tender in autumn 2020 was limited, with only three responses received.

7. Public Health Impact

There are no public health impacts associated with this paper.

8. Summary

Coast were appointed as the Communications and Public Relations partner to Peninsula Transport following a competitive tender in autumn 2020. The current Communications and Public Relations Contract is due to expire in March 2022.

The current Contract includes the ability to extend the Contract by up to 24 months (March 2024), by serving written notice on the Supplier no later than three months (January 2022) before the expiry of the Contract.

Coast have completed all work, since the start of the Contract, to agreed standards and costs. It is therefore recommended that the current contract with Coast is extended.