

North West Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme Pre- Procurement Report – Ecological Mapping

Date of Issue:	6 December 2024
Date of Decision:	16 December 2024
Report to:	Cabinet Member - Public Health & Wellbeing
Report of:	Assistant Director - Operational In-House Services
Portfolio:	Public Health & Wellbeing
Wards affected:	All
Is this a key decision:	No
Included in Forward Plan:	No
Exempt/confidential report:	No

Summary:

To seek approval for the procurement process through the National Network of Regional Coastal Monitoring Programmes' Framework for Terrestrial Ecological Mapping.

Recommendation(s):

- (1) To approve the tender process to procure Terrestrial Ecological Mapping. Services for 2025 for the north west coast via the national network of coastal monitoring programme's framework.

- (2) The Head of Operational In-House Services be delegated responsibility to award the contract to the preferred bidder.

1. The Rationale and Evidence for the Recommendations

In compliance with Sefton Council’s Contract Procedure Rule 1.10.1, a Pre-Procurement Report is required to be submitted in order to secure approval to commence a procurement exercise.

Sefton Council has been the lead authority for the North West Regional Coastal Monitoring Programme (NWRCMP) since 2007, collecting and analysing data to inform decisions relating to coastal erosion and flood risk management issues and support the delivery of the Shoreline Management Plan.

The programme is 100% grant funded by the Environment Agency and aligns with their funding programme.

In 2011 the national network of coastal monitoring programmes was established with all the regional programmes around England agreeing to work together. This national network has coordinated bids for the programme.

Grant Allocation

The northwest programme has been allocated a 6-year funding stream and Sefton Council receive annual confirmation of budget values. The funding programme is detailed below.

	Year 2021/22 (£ k)	Year 2022/23 (£ k)	Year 2023/24 (£ k)	Year 2024/25 (£ k)	Year 2025/26 (£ k)	Year 2026/27 (£ k)
Topographic Surveys	207	171	187	182	187	193
Bathymetric Surveys	250	200	200	641	300	300
Aerial photography/photogrammetry	21	-	276	-	23	-
Hydrodynamics	105	105	105	105	105	105
Terrestrial Ecological Mapping	10	11	33	114	-	-
Assets	34	35	37	37	39	40
Project Management	52	53	55	57	59	60
Data Management (regional)	62	64	66	68	70	72
Data Analysis & Reporting	93	96	99	102	105	108
Total	834	735	1058	1306	888	878
<i>Contingency</i>	<i>95</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>96</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>929</i>	<i>831</i>	<i>1,154</i>	<i>1,402</i>	<i>984</i>	<i>974</i>

Whilst the Terrestrial Mapping shows a spend of £114k in 2024/25, the previous years spend have not been used and can be carried over to cover this cost. It is anticipated that the contingency will not be drawn upon due to the nature of the work.

Terrestrial Ecological Mapping.

Habitat mapping is undertaken to provide coastal and terrestrial habitat extent data for use by Local Authorities, the Environment Agency and Natural England to contribute to their reporting and monitoring requirements for designated nature conservation sites including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (as set out in the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2017¹), Local Nature Recovery Networks and Biodiversity Net Gain requirements (as set out in the Environment Act 2021²).

¹ [The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

² [Environment Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

The principal objectives are to:

- Map the extent of coastal and terrestrial habitats within the defined area
- Identify and quantify regional coastal habitat change
- Assess losses and gains for the Environment Agency's national plan
- Identify strategic coastal flood and erosion risks
- Provide evidence for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Schemes
- Provide contextual information to support Appropriate Assessments for Shoreline Management Plans, Flood and Coastal Defence Strategies, Flood and Coastal Defence Schemes and Coastal Change Management Areas.

Across the North West there are 9 Local Authority areas where data is frequently captured, primarily of topographic changes, whilst other datasets are recorded at longer, irregular intervals i.e. Bathymetry, Aerial Photography and Lidar.

The purpose of the Terrestrial Ecological Mapping contract is to examine the data collected via the vertical aerial photography captured in 2023 and 2024 to examine the underlying habitats and compare it to previous habitat mapping exercises to produce a report, on a local authority level, of change. Helping to build a better understanding of coastal change and providing this to local coastal managers.

The costs for contracted Terrestrial Ecological Mapping during the last programme, 2016-2021, totalled £124,000 and an uplift has been added to cover the ground truthing site surveys which were not part of the previous mapping exercise due to covid restrictions.

Procurement Process

Tendering process

1. The tendering process will follow Sefton Council's procurement requirements.
2. A National Coastal Monitoring Procurement framework has been set for these services and is managed by New Forest District Council. Sefton Council were involved in the establishment of the framework and ensured it adhered to all Sefton Council procurement policies.
3. There are 4 contractors on the Dynamic Purching framework for Terrestrial Ecology Mapping services.
4. The Tender will be advertised on the CHEST procurement portal for a 3-week period, each contractor will be informed of the opportunity.

Tender Assessment

5. The tender returns will be assessed on the quality of submission and the companies who achieve the sufficient score will move to the final stage involving an assessment on price.
6. The quality and price scores will be combined, and the contractor ranked first will be awarded the contract.

2. Financial Implications

(A) Revenue Costs

There are no revenue costs

(B) Capital Costs

The cost of the procurement and services are fully funded through grant in aid from the Environment Agency. An allocation of £5.669m has been made to cover the period of 2021-2027. The budget allocation for Ecological Mapping is £147,000 (£114,000 2024/25 allocation, plus £33,000 carried over from 2023/24). The programme has a contingency (£96,000) built-in that can be used should the tender costs exceed this value.

3. Legal Implications

There are no legal implications

4. Corporate Risk Implications

There are no corporate implications

5 Staffing HR Implications

There are no additional resource implications

6 Conclusion

The tender process, evaluation and award will be performed in line with council policies. There are no financial, legal or staffing implications on the council.

The procured work will benefit not only Sefton but all the Coast Protection Authorities and other statutory bodies in the North West.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

Habitat mapping could be procured individually and independently by each Coast Protection Authority through separated procurement processes. This would require additional officer time and resources for each procurement exercise and could lead to a lack of consistency between surveys and reports.

Equality Implications:
There are no equality implications.
Impact on Children and Young People:
There are no impacts on Children and Young People
Climate Emergency Implications:
The recommendations within this report will have a Neutral. The delivery of the project will have some short-term negative impacts, such as travelling to the North West to perform ground truthing exercises. However, the purpose of the programme is to better understand the changing coastal conditions to enable future sustainable management along the northwest coastline. The project actively

seeks to use new technologies that reduce the need for intensive site-based surveys, thus reducing carbon footprint.

On balance the project has a neutral impact.

What consultations have taken place on the proposals and when?

(A) Internal Consultations

The Executive Director Corporate Services & Commercial (FD 7840/24) has been consulted and notes the report indicates no direct financial implications for the Council. The Chief Legal and Democratic Officer (LD 5940/24) has been consulted and any comments have been incorporated into the report

(B) External Consultations

None

Implementation Date for the Decision:

Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Cabinet Member decision.

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Appendices:

There are no appendices to this report

Background Reports:

Extension to the North West Regional Monitoring Programme 2021-2027. Cabinet 24/06/2021, Council 15/07/2021