

## Procurement on Reletting the Cambridgeshire County Council Framework for Commercial Archaeological Fieldwork

To: Environment & Green Investment Committee

Meeting Date: 16 March 2023

From: Executive Director, Place & Sustainability

Electoral division(s): All

Key decision: Yes

Forward Plan ref: 2023/028

Outcome: The Committee is asked to consider the need for the re-procurement of the current Archaeological Services Framework, to enable the provision of archaeological work to support the Council's new developments in Cambridgeshire.

Recommendation: The Committee is asked to agree:

a) the re-procurement of the Archaeological Services Framework for a period of four years to 2027

b) that delegated authority be granted to the Executive Director (Place & Sustainability) to award the framework to the preferred bidders and execute the agreement in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee

### Officer contact:

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### Member contacts:

Names: Councillor Dupré & Councillor Gay

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## 1. Background

- 1.1 Cambridgeshire County Council is a major landowner and developer in its own right and has a forward programme of capital works. As a developer, the authority has to abide by the National Planning Policy Framework and associated guidance and undertake archaeological work in advance of, or as part of, the development process.
- 1.2 The need for and level of archaeological work required in these cases is guided by legislation and recommended by the Council's Historic Environment Team (HET), in consultation with the relevant council department, or its agents who commission the works directly.
- 1.3 Services delivered under the current framework include:
- Desk based assessments and documentary research:
  - Non-intrusive field surveys:
  - Trial trench excavations:
  - Archaeological excavations:
  - Archaeological monitoring and recording
  - Post excavation Analysis and Outcomes:
  - Historical building recording and appraisal:
  - Delivery of public archaeology programmes on development-led sites where required and where appropriate.
  - Other archaeological services where appropriate.
- 1.4 The Council has operated such a framework since 2008 and believes it is an efficient and cost-effective way to deliver archaeological services required by the Council as developers, that deliver the public benefit of such projects as intended by national policy.
- 1.5 The value of the framework is estimated at £2.5m - £3.5m in total, making this a key decision for the council.

## 2. Main Issues

- 2.1 The current Archaeological Services framework expires on 24 August 2023 and continuation of service is required. Over the proposed new contract period there is expected to be a continued requirement for Archaeological Services owing to increased growth, projects managed through the Greater Cambridge Partnership, and Combined Authority projects in development. It will run for three years with an option for a fourth.
- 2.2 The Archaeological Services framework re-procurement will be undertaken with the following estimated timescales:
- Invitation to Tender 10 April 2023
  - Deadline for Tender Returns 10 May 2023
  - Contract Award 26 June 2023
  - Contract Start 25 August 2023
- 2.3 Unlike previous awards, it is proposed to restrict the use of the framework to public bodies within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This is to avoid the possibility of other non-

council users exhausting the value of the framework before its expiry.

2.4 All work under this framework shall be awarded via one of 2 routes:

EITHER by approaching the provider who finishes in 1st place in the initial framework evaluation, and then if they are unable to service the requirement approaching the 2nd placed bidder and so on, or

OR running a further competition where all providers shall be invited to submit a project specific proposal for a discrete piece of work. In the event such further competitions take place, the responses shall be evaluated 60% on the quality element and 40% on price.

2.5 Cambridgeshire County Council is committed to maintaining standards of archaeological fieldwork and expect all archaeologists operating in the county to demonstrate their commitments to high professional standards.

2.6 As such, successful organisations appointed to the new framework will be required to be Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA) Registered Organisations to ensure competence.

2.7 The framework will continue to ensure all work commissioned by the council shall be conducted in accordance to best professional standards, including:

- CIFA Code of Conduct and Standards & Guidance
- Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England and Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE).
- The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide. Historic England 2015.
- Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England (East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper No 24, 2011).

2.8 The Council's HET supports the national programme: "Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations" project and requires archaeological contractors working in Cambridgeshire to support this initiative. All fieldwork undertaken in Cambridgeshire must comply with this requirement.

2.9 Unlike on previous occasions, bidders will be assessed on their commitment to delivering a 'Net Zero' Cambridgeshire and also on the social value of their proposals. We shall be asking a weighted method statement question on Social Value to establish the framework, and state we reserve the right to use the Social Value Portal or further project-specific social value questions when awarding work under call-offs

### 3. Alignment with corporate priorities

#### 3.1 Environment and Sustainability

The archaeological sector is increasingly aware of the carbon footprint of commercial fieldwork. The framework will require all bidders to submit details of their commitment to delivering net zero by scrutinising and adapting their operational practices.

### 3.2 Health and Care

There are no significant implications for this priority.

### 3.3 Places and Communities

Archaeology and the historic environment are increasingly being seen as a source of local identity and for placemaking, especially in major developments. By ensuring that the council's fieldwork projects are carried out to high standards, ensures that maximum public benefit can be delivered.

### 3.4 Children and Young People

There are no significant implications for this priority.

### 3.5 Transport

There are no significant implications for this priority.

## 4. Significant Implications

### 4.1 Resource Implications

The estimated contract value is around £2.5m to £3.5m in total over four years, based on anticipated new capital projects from the Council and the Greater Cambridge Partnership. This is covered by project budgets so there is no revenue cost to the Council.

### 4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

Officers are working closely with colleagues in Procurement to determine the best route to market to meet our objectives, follow all procedures and to ensure we deliver best value for money.

### 4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

Pathfinder Legal Services will be engaged in the development of robust terms and conditions documentation for the re-procurement.

The completion of sometimes complex archaeological programmes of work is usually a pre-commencement requirement for planning permission, so failure to deliver a suitable programme can delay capital projects. This Framework ensures the Council continues to access only the highest quality providers at the best value price.

### 4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category. However, archaeological fieldwork can provide opportunities for engagement with local communities and others, including those with protected characteristics. Previous projects have included volunteers from Operation Nightingale for example.

The Council's Historic Environment Team always looks for opportunities for inclusion in archaeological projects, whilst recognising that the practicalities of a site may restrict or prohibit this. Where possible however, archaeological contractors working on behalf of the council should be expected to seek opportunities for volunteer involvement.

#### 4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

#### 4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

#### 4.7 Public Health Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

#### 4.8 Environment and Climate Change Implications on Priority Areas:

##### 4.8.1 Implication 1: Energy efficient, low carbon buildings.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: Archaeological fieldwork itself does not promote these buildings but does facilitate the planning process required to construct them.

##### 4.8.2 Implication 2: Low carbon transport.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: Archaeological fieldwork requires significant use of plant and machinery, plus travel to and from sites. By requiring bidders to demonstrate their carbon reduction ambitions, this framework will encourage the use of low carbon methods however the market is not sufficiently developed in this area for this to form part of the framework specification.

##### 4.8.3 Implication 3: Green spaces, peatland, afforestation, habitats and land management.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Negative

Explanation: Archaeological fieldwork disturbs buried soils and landscapes which can release carbon, especially in peatlands. There is work underway within the heritage sector to understand this further. However, these sites would be disturbed regardless if developed.

##### 4.8.4 Implication 4: Waste Management and Tackling Plastic Pollution.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There is no impact on these areas.

##### 4.8.5 Implication 5: Water use, availability and management:

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There is no impact on these areas.

##### 4.8.6 Implication 6: Air Pollution.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: There is no impact on these areas apart from any benefits derived from reduction in transport emissions (paragraph 4.8.2).

4.8.7 Implication 7: Resilience of our services and infrastructure, and supporting vulnerable people to cope with climate change.

Positive/neutral/negative Status: Neutral

Explanation: Archaeological fieldwork itself does not promote these areas but does facilitate the planning processes required to deliver them.

Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance? Yes

Name of Financial Officer: Sarah Heywood

Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the Head of Procurement and Commercial? Yes

Name of Officer: Clare Ellis

Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or Pathfinder Legal? Yes

Name of Legal Officer: Linda Walker

Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your EqIA Super User?

Yes

Name of Officer: Emma Fitch

Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?

Yes

Name of Officer: Kathryn Rogerson

Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact? Yes

Name of Officer: Emma Fitch

Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health?

Yes

Name of Officer: Iain Green

If a Key decision, have any Climate Change and Environment implications been cleared by the Climate Change Officer?

Yes

Name of Officer: Emily Bolton

## 5. Source documents

### 5.1 Source documents

Files and other documentation used for the tendering and award of the previous framework in 2018.

### 5.2 Location

SAC1301 Sackville House  
Cambourne  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 6HL