Report to the Chief Executive

Cleansing & Waste Service Software (Route Optimisation)

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2 November 2026

Reason for Decision
This report is seeking approval to purchase software, via a framework direct award to an existing software supplier to the council. The purpose of this software will be to undertake regular route optimisation exercises for all waste, cleansing and litter bin operations across the borough, leading to more efficient operations and ultimately, delaying the need for further operational growth in the service to meet resident and business growth.

Recommendations
To implement Route Optimisation and a VoomAI route 'time and motion study' for Waste & Cleansing and the Business Waste Portal for Digital Waste Tracking and direct award the contract to the current provider (Bartec) for 18 months of software subscriptions and the one-off costs from the transformation funds.

Pre-decision Governance, Strategy & Resources Scrutiny meeting 22 October 2026
Leaders' consultative meeting 2 November 2026

Cleansing & Waste Service Software (Route Optimisation)

1 Background

1.1 The waste collection service covers domestic and business collections with customers across the borough, and this demand has steadily increased since the last time routes were configured in 2016. In the last decade, growth funding has been provided once, an additional £300K in 2024/25 for an additional round. The additional growth is now fully embedded, unfortunately there are collection cycle day's when service delivery is stretched and is expected to exceed current capacity in the next 3-6 months. When demand is reached, further resources will be required. There is an impact on current service provision/reliability due to imbalanced excessive service demand on specific days.

1.2 In addition to the above, due to regulatory change, more domestic (flats and difficult to access) properties need to start receiving all recycling collections (they have been left out due to it being too challenging) and all businesses need to receive four separate bin collections, irrespective of the amount of waste they produce, which means transitioning them to multiple different bin sizes and collection frequencies.

1.3 Furthermore, bulky waste collection being insourced will also need to be considered as part of the service delivery planning. As part of this optimisation exercise, the Service also wants to ensure smoother operational delivery by planning for fly-tip clearance and street litter bin emptying.

2 Current Position

2.1 Route Optimisation software, using hard, site-based data will be able to provide an accurate route programme that takes into account both the regulatory changes and the service demand as outlined about, both current and those on the horizon. In addition, a separate data collection exercise, supported by AI based software, will provide additional data to verify the current collection model and data baseline to maximise the accuracy of optimisation output.

2.2 Implementing Route Optimisation within both Waste and Cleansing as an overall holistic package will secure a more efficient and lean way of working in both areas, which will improve operational response and either delay or reduce the requirement for additional resources in the future. Moreover, the software will be able to redesign work and explore alternate working patterns across Waste and Cleansing, reducing the requirements for additional rounds (this includes additional vehicles and operatives).

2.3 A number of providers have been considered as part of this exercise. Having completed the review, the provider identified to provide the software is Bartec. This provider is currently used by the Service as part of the in-cab technology, assisting with round collection and data management. Extending the use of this software, subject to compliant procurement, will support easier implementation and integration.

3 Options/Alternatives

3.1 **Option 1 -** Approve the procurement of Route Optimisation Software and associated software for use across Waste and Cleansing for 18 months. To review and redesign work informed by the necessary data to explore working patterns with the aim to improve efficiency on a continuous basis. Along with a single cycle AI route data collection exercise to verify the current collection model baseline, to be used by the Route

Optimisation Software. The resultant output benefits will be reviewed, and a further report will be submitted after the 18-month period, as per the Recommendation.

3.2 **Option 2 -** Approve a one-off Route Optimisation consultancy exercise to redesign collection routes without ongoing software subscription costs.

This is the quickest way to deliver new routes; however, routes may become outdated before implementation due to service changes and property growth. The option also does not support dynamic routing for ad hoc work, such as bulky waste collections and fly-tipping, and offers limited flexibility for future service redesign.

4 Preferred Option

4.1 Option 1 - Approve the procurement of Route Optimisation Software and associated software for use across Waste and Cleansing for 18 months.

5 Consultation

5.1 N/A

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The financial implications of this report are outlined in the Part B report.

7 Legal Implications

7.1 I agree with this proposal which is lawful and compliant with the Council's constitution. The framework was let before the Procurement Act 2023 came into force, so the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 are applicable.

(Bryan Boese – solicitor)

8. Procurement Implications

8.1 Commercial Procurement recommends using the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) G-Cloud 14 Framework (RM1557.14), Lot 2 – Cloud Software to procure Route Optimisation Software for Bartec Municipal Services.

8.2 To ensure full compliance with CCS Buying Guidelines, CPU will initiate a project on the Digital Marketplace and will follow the six-step buying process throughout. The G-Cloud 14 Framework offers a compliant, efficient, and transparent route to market for cloud-based software solutions. It provides access to a wide range of pre-vetted suppliers, ensuring that the Council engages only with providers who have already met CCS' commercial, technical, and security standards. Using this framework removes the need for a full open tender, significantly reducing procurement timelines, administrative burden, and associated costs.

8.3 This framework is fully compliant with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 (PCR2015).

(Senga Henstock, ICT Senior Buyer)

9 Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People

9.1 No.

10 Key Decision

10.1 Yes

11 **Key Decision Reference**

11.1 KDD-26-21

12 **Appendices & Background Papers**

12.1 Appendix 1 – Breakdown of Costs – included in Part B

Approved by the Chief Executive following consultation with the political group leaders who were in attendance as follows:- Councillors: Maggie Hurley, Sam Al-Hamdani, Paul Taylor, Ioan Williams, Arooj Shah, Lisa Navesey, Beth Sharp, Max Woodvine, Brian Hobin, Elaine Taylor, Kamran Ghafoor and Aisha Kouser Decision made under the authorisation contained in Section 9C (5) Delegations of Specific Officers of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) and Section 3.6 of Part 4 (Executive Procedure Rules) of the Council Constitution for the Chief Executive to take emergency decisions in respect of the Council's executive functions.
Signed:  Shelley Kipling, Chief Executive Dated: 05/11/2026
Date of Group Leaders meeting: 02/11/2026
Summary of feedback from the political group leaders: Group Leaders discussed the proposed software solution and sought assurance regarding communication with residents, previous use of the software and evidence of its effectiveness. Officers confirmed positive feedback through APSE benchmarking. Questions were raised regarding future service demand, whether the system would help address missed bin collections, workforce recruitment challenges and references to SEND within the report. It was agreed that Waste Recovery issues would be considered at a future Leaders' Briefing session. The recommendations were approved.