Emergency Powers Decision Report

Cleansing & Waste Service Software (Route Optimisation)

Decision Maker: Chief Executive

Service Area: Waste & Street Cleansing
Directorate: Place Directorate
Report Author: Ben Parsons
Email: Ben.Parsons@oldham.gov.uk

Date of Decision: 2 November 2026

1. Power to make the decision

The decision is being taken under the authorisation contained in Section 9C – Delegations to Specific Officers of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council Constitution for the Chief Executive to take any emergency decisions in respect of the Council's executive functions which cannot be delayed until the next Cabinet meeting.

2. Decision Sought

Approval is sought to directly award a contract to Bartec Municipal Services, via the Crown Commercial Service G-Cloud 14 Framework, for the provision of Route Optimisation Software, associated software licences, AI route data assessment and Business Waste Portal functionality for an initial period of 18 months at a total cost of £219,490 plus VAT, funded from the Transformation Reserve. The software will support the review and redesign of Waste and Cleansing operations to improve efficiency, optimise collection routes and delay or reduce the future requirement for additional operational resources.

3. Reason for urgency

Waste collection demand has increased significantly since routes were last comprehensively redesigned in 2016 and current service capacity is expected to be exceeded within the next 3 to 6 months. In addition, forthcoming regulatory changes, the requirement to extend recycling collections to currently excluded properties, changes to business waste collection arrangements and the planned insourcing of bulky waste collections require service redesign to be undertaken urgently to maintain service performance, resilience and compliance. Early implementation of route optimisation software will enable the service to proactively manage growing demand and avoid the need for reactive growth expenditure.

4. Risk(s) of not taking the decision

Failure to approve the proposal may result in:

- Increased pressure on Waste and Cleansing operations as demand continues to grow beyond current capacity.
- Reduced service reliability and an increase in missed collections due to imbalanced workloads across collection rounds.
- Reduced ability to respond effectively to future regulatory changes affecting domestic and business waste collections.
- Missed opportunities to improve efficiency through data-driven service redesign and route optimisation.
- Inability to optimise ancillary functions such as bulky waste collections, fly-tip clearance and litter bin emptying.
- Increased risk that future growth in residents and businesses will require further service expansion without the benefit of identified efficiencies.

5. Financial impact if decision not taken forward

If the decision is not approved, the council may face increased operational costs through the need to provide additional collection rounds, vehicles and staffing to meet growing demand. The opportunity to identify efficiencies and delay future growth expenditure would be lost. There is also a risk that further investment will be required sooner to maintain service delivery standards and meet statutory and regulatory requirements. The proposed software is intended to identify efficiencies and help offset future service growth pressures; therefore, not proceeding may result in higher long-term costs to the council.

6. Statutory Officer clearances

a. Section 151 Officer

Name Lee Walsh
Date 13 October 2026
Comments

The report seeks approval to procure Route Optimisation Software and associated systems for Waste and Cleansing for an 18-month period at an estimated cost of £219,490. This expenditure will be funded from the Transformation Fund. The investment will support service redesign, route optimisation and review working practices to improve operational efficiency. The software is expected to deliver financial and operational benefits sufficient to offset ongoing subscription costs and may also provide opportunities for wider efficiencies across other Council services.

b. Monitoring Officer

Name: Alex Bougatef
Date: 13 October 2026
Comments:

The exercise of emergency powers should be undertaken in consultation with the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council. However, the Council has not yet appointed a Leader or Deputy Leader for the current municipal year so it is not possible to consult them. In addition, there is no certainty about when a Leader or Deputy Leader will be appointed as the Council has failed at successive meetings to do so. For the reasons given in the report an urgent decision relating to the report is required and it cannot await the appointment of a Leader and Deputy Leader at some undetermined future date.