

Scrutiny Report
Highways and Transportation
Consultancy Contract (Halcrow)
Response by the Cabinet Member with
Responsibility for the Environment

December 2007

**Response by the Cabinet Member with Responsibility to the
Report of the Highways and Transportation Consultancy Contract (Halcrow)
Scrutiny Task Group**

May I begin my response by thanking the members of the Scrutiny Task Group for their work in this Scrutiny. I appreciate that the design of road schemes is a difficult and complex area to explore especially the difficulty of drawing conclusions from apparent differences in professional opinion. I am pleased that the report presents a positive overview indicating that the Directorate, under the leadership of the Director of Environmental Services, is already moving forward to address the problems identified by the Task Group in this area of work.

Turning to the recommendations made in the report, I will deal with each in turn:

We recommend that the Directorate should carefully assess exactly which projects would be most suited to design and build contracts. (paragraph 28)

This recommendation is accepted and provided for in the following way.

Projects considered suitable for Design and Build will in the main, be those that are not over complicated to design. This will enable contractors to draw upon their own resources to produce the design rather than having to subcontract to another design consultancy.

The new Highway Improvements Framework Agreement currently being tendered provides for two types of design provision by the contractor. The consultation process will already have been completed in advance. Less complicated projects (for example pedestrian dropped kerbs, build-outs, raised bus stop platforms), can use "off the shelf" standard designs. This method, which is used successfully elsewhere and on the Term Maintenance Contract, makes use of the contractor's and the project owner's skills and experience to agree and mark up the design on site for the contractor to programme. This avoids both parties having to produce project documentation other than is absolutely necessary.

The second type of contractor design follows a tendering exercise and will require drawings and construction details to be produced by the successful contractor, using their own resources.

For other works, the contractors will be involved in developing the design (Early Contractor Involvement – ECI) and will be required to provide a Project Implementation Engineer to work with the project design team from the very earliest stages.

We recommend that the Directorate fully explore the possible benefits of the 3 Counties Alliance approach (a joint contract with other authorities) well in advance of the Halcrow contract expiry date, to ascertain whether Worcestershire could benefit from similar ways of collaborative working. The Collaborative Working Centre should be invited to help with such a review. (paragraph 34).

There is merit in this recommendation and it will be investigated further as the West Midland Alliance develops.

We recommend that the Responsibility, Accountability, Consultation and Information (RACI) process be carried out to clearly identify and define roles at the start of all schemes. There should also be clear procedures for dispute resolution and we recommend that the Director puts these in place and communicates them to all parties. (paragraphs 41 and 42).

All users of the Project Delivery Process have been specifically trained to use RACI in this context and the Project Initiation Meeting Stakeholder checklist will be amended to record the results for each project-specific RACI analysis.

A senior Halcrow manager is accommodated within Environmental Services at County Hall, whose particular role is to engage with project owners to ensure that project briefs are clearly defined from the outset. This includes a requirement to identify deliverables against key stage dates, and to resolve all problems that may arise during project delivery (e.g. resolving ownership and other stakeholders/problems as appropriate).

Changes to specifications by the Council are sometimes legitimate, for example after consultation, however we recommend that, to avoid unnecessary changes, a clear brief is agreed at the start of the project. (paragraph 48).

All new projects undertaken by Halcrow are now defined using the new Project Initiation Document (PID) in which a price is agreed for a defined piece of work. A copy of the PID is appended. This clearly identifies the parties in a project, their roles, the project deliverables, milestones and the fixed fee for completion of each milestone stage. This will ensure clarity is achieved for each stage of the project as it develops.

We recommend that there should be a single contact for the public to discuss issues with works and that a contact number is displayed on site during the course of the works. (paragraph 53)

Enquiries from the public and third parties are best received into the Highways Control Centre in the first instance. They will arrange for the relevant County Highway Liaison Engineer to deal with the problem. For emergencies, the contractor's out of hours number is already provided on the site information board. As soon as possible the WCC control centre number will be displayed prominently when work starts on contracts.

We recommend that for appropriate projects (those likely to significantly affect the life of a town or community):

- **all stakeholders be identified at the start of each project; and**
- **appropriate representatives are invited to join a community steering group, such as that formed for the Stourport Bridge scheme, to ensure full understanding of the reasons why and when work needs to be carried out, to assess views prior to work starting, and to act as a conduit for the community for problems which may arise. (paragraph 57).**

All stakeholders are identified via RACI (as described in the response to recommendation 3) and where appropriate, given the scale of disruption, community stakeholder groups will be established and invited to contribute.

We recommend that the Council find out the level of public satisfaction on issues such as consultation, information, quality of designs and workmanship and speed of scheme delivery. (paragraph 60).

Feedback is currently obtained about maintenance projects delivered by Ringway using residents reply cards. This will be extended to include improvement works. The return rate for Ringway maintenance sites is generally around 20% with current resident satisfaction levels over 85%.

**Derek Prodger MBE
Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environment**

Assumptions and exclusions

1	
2	
3	

Add lines if necessary

Project Risks (Refer to Key Risks reference document for guidance)

1	
2	
3	

Add lines if necessary

Fee Proposal and Milestones

Deliverables	Start Date	End Date	Fee	Milestone achieved	
				Halcrow signed	WCC signed
1					
2					
3					
4 etc *					
Stage 1 Milestone with agreed fee*			£1.00		
5					
6					
7					
8 etc *					
Stage 2 Milestone with initial estimated fee until agreed			£1.00		
9					
10					
11					
12 etc*					
Stage 3 Milestone with initial estimated fee until agreed			£1.00		
Target Completion Date and Total Fee			£3.00		

* Expand to fully describe the agreed deliverables at each Milestone Stage

Key Stake Holders Contact Details

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Information supplied/to be supplied by WCC Project Owner

WCC Budget Allocation	

Constraints

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Confidentiality

None

Agreed for Halcrow		Date	
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Agreed for WCC		Date	
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Estimated Value Generated

	1	Fee	£1.00	per month
	2	Out turn cost		
	3	Risk Transfer		
	4	Knowldege Transfer		
	5	Other		
	Total Transferred to value register		£1.00	
Explanation of value generated				

Contents Amendment Record

This Project Brief has been issued and amended as follows:

Issue	Revision	Description	Date	Signed - WCC	Signed - Halcrow

Project Review

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