

Report for: Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services

Item number:

Title: Award of contract to NHS Fleet Solutions for provision of employee funded salary sacrifice car leasing scheme.

Report authorised by: Dan Paul, Chief People Officer

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Ward(s) affected: N/A

**Report for Key/
Non-Key Decision:** Non-Key

1. Describe the issue under consideration

1.1 Approval is requested under CSO 2.01c where Cabinet can approve or award of contract over £500,000. This request is to introduce a salary sacrifice car leasing scheme at no cost to the Council, giving employees the option to lease hybrid and electric vehicles and cover the cost via monthly salary deductions.

2. Cabinet Member Introduction

2.1 Not required for Cabinet Member signings.

3. Recommendations

3.1 That the Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Services approves a direct call off contract from CCS Framework RM 6268 to NHS Fleet Solutions Ltd for an employee car leasing scheme via a salary sacrifice for the value of £2,188,800. This spend does not impact the Council's budget as all costs are paid for by employees via salary deduction. This amount is based on an estimated 2% workforce participation, which is equivalent to 73 vehicles over the contract term.

3.2 The contract term will be three years plus the option to extend for a further year under Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Framework, RM6268, lot 4 - Salary Sacrifice Cars.

3.3 Procurement Process

3.3.1 Procurement considered the most appropriate route to market was the government approved CCS framework RM 6268 - Vehicle Lease, Fleet

Management & Salary Sacrifice. This framework was tendered under PCR 2015 and expires in February 2027.

- 3.3.2 Lot 4 of RM6268 permits direct award, and following a review of framework pricing, service capability and alignment to the Council's requirements, NHS Fleet Solutions has been identified as the most advantageous provider. Strategic Procurement can confirm that this approach is compliant and meets the Council's standing orders.

4. Reasons for decision

- 4.1 To expand the Council's current employee benefits portfolio and help employees with the continued increase in cost of living at no cost to the Council.
- 4.2 Provide a cost effective way for employees to lease a new car via monthly deductions from their salary.
- 4.3 The introduction of this salary sacrifice scheme will result in employer savings from reduced national insurance and pensions contributions, the Council would not incur any additional expenditure costs. The fixed employer surplus savings are projected at circa £640 per car per year, which includes any savings from reduced employer national insurance and employer pension contributions where applicable.
- 4.4 The car leasing scheme will help support employee retention and recruitment as follows:
- An additional benefit that will differentiate the Council from other organisations, especially other Councils where salary ranges are similar.
 - Provides an affordable way for employees to access a car without upfront costs.
 - Offers monthly fixed payments covering insurance and maintenance, which will help ease the financial burden of car ownership.
 - Enables employees to benefit from tax and national insurance savings.
 - Providing lifestyle benefits like car leasing shows the organisation values employee well-being, which can increase loyalty and engagement.

5. Alternative options considered

- 5.1 Not to introduce this benefit. This was rejected as it is an additional benefit for employees at no cost of the Council.

6. Background information

- 6.1 The proposed car leasing salary sacrifice scheme aims to expand the Council's employee benefits offer and support employees with rising living costs at no extra cost to the Council. For the Council, the scheme will generate employer

savings through reduced national insurance and pension contributions, with projected surplus savings of approximately £640 per leased car per year.

6.2 The use of the Crown Commercial Service framework is recommended as it provides the most appropriate, flexible and value-for-money route to market for procuring car leasing services from NHS Fleet Solutions, while ensuring full compliance with procurement regulations and minimising delivery risk.

6.3 The direct call off to NHS Fleet Solutions is recommended for the following reasons:

- NHS Fleet Solutions is a public sector owned organisation with a strong track record of supporting NHS bodies and public authorities. A direct call off to them supports collaboration within the public sector and aligns with values of social value, transparency and reinvestment of surpluses back into public services.
- It is compliant with relevant procurement regulations internal contract procedure rules.
- It has an established focus on low emission and electric vehicle provision, which supports the Council's climate change objectives.

6.4 NHS Fleet Solutions, introduced in 2003, provides public sector employees with the opportunity to lease a new car through a salary sacrifice scheme. They offer a cost-effective way for employees to lease a new car, they currently work with 420 client organisations across the NHS, local authorities, the blue light sector, charities and social enterprises and have approximately 61,000 vehicles on the road.

6.5 The scheme is HMRC approved and can be reported as a benefit in kind. The Council will submit an 'Employer P11D' report declaring the Class 1A Employers' national insurance contributions due as a result of the full reduction in gross salary of the value of the benefit. NHS Fleet Solutions will submit P46's electronically to HMRC on the Council's behalf. This process is also undertaken by NHS Fleet Solutions at the end of an employee's contract, helping to reduce administration.

6.6 For a small additional cost to the employee, they can opt for long-term sickness cover and family cover (including maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave).

7. Contribution to the Corporate Delivery Plan 2022-2024 High level Strategic outcomes

7.1 As an additional employee benefit, the recommendations in this report contribute indirectly to all corporate delivery plan outcomes.

8. Carbon and Climate Change

8.1 The scheme is carbon neutral.

9. Statutory Officers comments (Director of Finance (procurement), Head of Legal and Governance, Equalities)

9.1 Finance

- 9.1.1 There are no additional costs to the Council from this three-year contract award for the value of £2,188,800 to NHS Fleet Solutions Ltd for an employee car leasing scheme via a salary sacrifice as all costs are paid for by employees via salary deduction.
- 9.1.2 The Council will make a direct saving in the region of £640 per car per year from lower employer national insurance and pension contributions as well as the possibility of indirect savings arising from improved recruitment and retention rates due to a reduced reliance on agency staff.

9.2 Procurement

- 9.2.1 The procurement of the employee car leasing salary sacrifice scheme was undertaken by Strategic Procurement using the Crown Commercial Service **(CCS) Framework RM6268 – Vehicle Lease, Fleet Management & Salary Sacrifice**. This framework was competitively and compliantly tendered under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, providing a legitimate and robust route to market, as well as improved value for money through aggregated public sector purchasing. Moreover, the use of a public sector framework is permitted under CSO 7.02.
- 9.2.2 The introduction of a salary sacrifice car leasing scheme presents no financial risk or burden to the Council, as all lease costs are met directly by employees through monthly salary deductions. The scheme can also deliver indirect benefits to the Council, including supporting recruitment and retention through enhanced employee benefits, and generating employer savings through reduced national insurance and pension contributions for participating staff.
- 9.2.3 In accordance with Contract Standing Orders (CSOs), 0.08 and 2.01(c), a Cabinet Member may award contracts valued at £500,000 or above with the Leader's agreement.

9.3 Head of Legal & Governance [Name and title of Officer completing these comments]

- 9.3.1 The Director of Legal and Governance has been consulted in the preparation of this report which is seeking approval for a direct award contract from CCS Framework RM 6268 to NHS Fleet Solutions Ltd for Lot 4 - an employee car leasing scheme via a salary sacrifice for the value of £2,188,800). The contract term will be three years plus the option to extend for a further year under Crown Commercial Service (CCS) Framework.
- 9.3.2 The decision would be pursuant to the Council's Contract Standing Orders 7.02, CSO 0.08 and 2.01(c), which states a Cabinet Member may award contracts valued at £500,000 or above with the Leader's agreement), and Regulation 33 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

9.3.3 The Cabinet Member is asked to approve the award of a contract with a value up to £500,000 and award a contract to NHS Fleet Solutions Ltd, for a period of 3 years from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2029 at a cost of £2,188,800.00, plus a provision for extension for one year.

9.3.4 The CCS Framework RM6268 – Vehicle Lease, Fleet Management & Salary Sacrifice, is a compliant framework agreement, which the Council is entitled to use following the completion of the required customer access form.

9.3.5 The Director for Legal and Governance is not aware of any legal reasons preventing the Cabinet Member from approving the recommendation in section 3 of the report.

9.4 Equality

9.4.1 There are no equality implications.

10. Use of Appendices

10.1 Not applicable.

11. Background papers

11.1 Not applicable.