

Title: Angel Network Creative Agency award
Portfolio: Transport
Responsible Director: Tobyn Hughes, Director of Transport
Report Author: Heather Jones, Head of Transport Customer Experience

Purpose of the report

This report seeks approval to award a contract for suppliers to develop a customer information and visual identity system underpinning the evolution of The Angel Network, including within this research with the public to inform the process.

Recommendations

The Director of Transport is recommended to approve the award of the contract with the value of £80,000 to Brand XYZ in partnership with Gardiner Richardson Ltd for the required services to develop a customer information and visual identity system for The Angel Network.

A. Context

1. Background

Cabinet approved the release of funding on 17 March 2026 to support the development of proposals and delegation to the Director of Transport to undertake procurement activity associated with the MSA's allocation.

The Angel Network is the name for the North East Mayor's long-term vision of a seamless, joined-up system where buses, Metro, rail, Ferry, walking, wheeling and cycling connect effortlessly, supported by smart, simple ticketing and real-time information.

Brand XYZ and Gardiner Richardson Ltd. will provide market research and a range of services to support the North East MSA with The Angel Network including market research, an audit of existing customer-facing public transport information and identities, and a strategy for the development and delivery of a unified customer information system based on a strong visual identity.

2. Overview of procurement

The North East MSA undertook an open competitive procurement activity for this piece of work, hosted on the North East Procurement Organisation (NEPO) Open portal. 13 suppliers submitted compliant bids which were scored against quality (80%) and price (20%). All bids were scored independently by 3 panel members before the procurement business partner moderated a consensus session. Brand XYZ and Gardiner Richardson Ltd. achieved a total weighted score of 97% which was the highest scoring bid.

B. Impact on North East Mayoral Strategic Authority Objectives

This project supports the progress towards a green integrated transport network that works for all by providing the brand that the integrated network sits below. This is a key priority of the Mayoral Strategic Authority.

C. Key risks

The key risk associated with this procurement is ensuring that the services can be complete in the tight timescales required to continue progress towards The Angel Network.

D. Corporate Implications

D1. Financial and other resources implications

At the meeting in March 2026, Cabinet approved the release of £900,000 of City Region Sustainable Transport Revenue funding to carry out this, and other works. The procurement activities covered by this delegated decision will utilise £80,000 of that approved amount.

D2. Legal implications

The comments of the representative of the Monitoring Officer are included in this report.

D3. Equalities implications

The North East MSA follows the [Public Sector Equality duty](#) and this report has due regard to the need to achieve the objectives set out under s149 of the Equality Act 2010.

D4. Consultation and engagement

The Transport portfolio holder for the North East MSA Cabinet has been briefed and provided sign-off for the appointment.

E. Appendices

None

F. Background papers

None

G. Contact officers

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