

North Yorkshire Council

Environment Directorate

14 November 2024

Public Rights of Way Seasonal Vegetation Management 2024 Framework Procurement

Report of the Head of Countryside Access Services

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To undertake a procurement exercise to renew the framework for seasonal vegetation management on public rights of way starting April 2025 and finishing March 2027 with an option to extend for an additional two years to March 2029.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 North Yorkshire Council requires a provider (or number of providers) to cut seasonal vegetation to maintain the public rights of way (PROW) across North Yorkshire. All specified routes are to be cut a minimum of once per annum with an additional second cut, if required. The framework will also include provision for spraying of obnoxious weeds.
- 2.2 The new framework agreement will commence from 1 April 2025.

3.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 3.1 The Protection and maintenance of PROWs, including the cutting back of seasonal vegetation, supports the Councils' priorities to maximise the potential of natural assets and environment within North Yorkshire to improve physical and mental health as well as promoting and encouraging active travel.

4.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The service does not have capacity to undertake this work in house and therefore we need to seek external providers who can undertake this work on our behalf.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The anticipated value of the framework is up to £300k over the life of contract. The framework will have no guarantee of spend each year and any spend will be funded through the Countryside Access Service revenue maintenance budget.

6.0 LEGAL & GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE

- 6.1 The procurement exercise will be undertaken by the Council's Procurement and Contract Management Service, with a Gateway report will be considered in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules.

7.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Seasonal Vegetation cutting of Public Rights of Way helps to maintain the surface of the routes as well as define routes which improves the accessibility to users. Please see EIA screening assessment in Appendix A. A full equalities impact assessment is not deemed to be necessary.

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The route cutting takes place on existing Public Rights of Way within the county and surrounding vegetation will be left untouched. Please see Climate Change screening assessment in Appendix B. A full climate change impact assessment is not deemed to be necessary.

9.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 Authorisation to undertake a procurement exercise to renew the PROW seasonal vegetation framework is recommended because:

- the existing framework is due to expire on 31 March 2025
- the framework contributes towards NYC's statutory duty to protect and maintain the Public Rights of Way network.

10.0 RECOMMENDATION(S)

10.1 The Corporate Director – Environment is recommended to approve the establishment of a framework for the provision of the Seasonal Vegetation Cutting Programme for Public Rights of Way.

16 October 2024

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Initial Equality Impact Assessment Screening Form

Appendix B – Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment Form

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: None

Ian Kelly
Head of Countryside Access
County Hall
Northallerton

Report Author – Rosie Sanderson, Senior Public Rights of Way Officer

Presenter of Report – Rosie Sanderson, Senior Public Rights of Way Officer

Initial equality impact assessment screening form				
Directorate	Environment			
Service area	Countryside Access Service			
Proposal being screened	Procurement of Seasonal Vegetation Framework			
Officer(s) carrying out screening	Rosie Sanderson			
What are you proposing to do?	To undertake a procurement exercise to renew the framework for seasonal vegetation management on Public Rights of Way starting April 2025 and finishing March 2027 with an option to extend for an additional two years to March 2029.			
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To have a framework in place to enable the countryside access service to award works to cut back seasonal undergrowth to maintain the surface of existing Public Rights of Way across North Yorkshire.			
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	No			
Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYC's additional agreed characteristics				
Protected characteristic	Potential for adverse impact		Don't know /No info available	
	Yes	No		
Age		X		
Disability		X		
Sex		X		
Race		X		
Sexual orientation		X		
Gender reassignment		X		
Religion or belief		X		
Pregnancy or maternity		X		
Marriage or civil partnership		X		
People in rural areas		X		
People on a low income		X		
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X		
Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts (e.g. disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	No			
Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate? (eg partners, funding criteria, etc.). Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics? Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	No			
Decision (Please tick one option)	EIA not relevant or proportionate	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continue to full EIA:	
Reason for decision	No adverse impact on any protected characteristics			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	Barrie Mason			
Date	23.10.2024			

Initial Climate Change Impact Assessment

Title of proposal	Re-procurement of Seasonal Vegetation Framework
Brief description of proposal	To undertake a procurement exercise to renew the framework for seasonal vegetation management on Public Rights of Way starting April 2025 and finishing March 2027 with an option to extend for an additional two years to March 2029. This will enable the countryside access service to award works to cut back seasonal undergrowth to maintain the surface of existing Public Rights of Way across North Yorkshire.
Directorate	Environment
Service area	Countryside Access Service
Lead officer	Rosie Sanderson
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	N/A

Environmental factor to consider	For the council	For the county	Overall
Greenhouse gas emissions	No effect on emissions	No Effect on emissions	No effect on emissions
Waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste	No effect on waste
Water use	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage	No effect on water usage
Pollution (air, land, water, noise, light)	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution	No effect on pollution
Resilience to adverse weather/climate events (flooding, drought etc)	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience	No effect on resilience
Ecological effects (biodiversity, loss of habitat etc)	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology	No effect on ecology
Heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape	No effect on heritage and landscape

Decision (Please tick one option)	Full CCIA not relevant or proportionate:	X	Continue to full CCIA:	
Reason for decision	The framework will help manage seasonal vegetation on existing public rights of way and replaces an existing framework. The nature of the works that already take place on the network will remain the same and vegetation clearance does not extend beyond the Public Rights of Way.			
Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)	Barrie Mason			
Date	23/10/2024			