

# North Yorkshire Council

## Environment Executive Members

24 January 2025

### Procurement of new contracts for Weather Station Bureau Service and Weather Forecasting Services

#### Report of the Assistant Director - Highways and Infrastructure

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 For the Corporate Director Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member Highways and Transportation, to authorise officers to procure a contract for the supply of Weather Station Bureau Services from 05/07/2025 to 04/07/2032 and procure a contract for the supply of Weather Forecasting services from 05/07/2025 to 04/07/2032.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As part of the delivery of highway services in North Yorkshire, the Council uses weather forecast and weather data to help plan highway service delivery and monitor conditions across the network. This is particularly prevalent during the winter season where this information is used to determine what maintenance activities should be carried out (gritting, ploughing etc). It is also used in the summer months, where information on rainfall and wind speed can help to mitigate the impacts of storms and flooding and also higher surface temperatures during periods of hot weather.
- 2.2 In order to carry out these functions, two separate contracts are in place to provide relevant information to the Council. These contracts are
- Weather Forecasting Contract
  - Weather Station Bureau Service contract
- 2.3 The existing contracts in place expire on 04 July 2025. As such there is a need to procure new contracts for these essential services.

#### 3.0 SUMMARY OF THE CONTRACTS

- 3.1 Weather Forecasting Services. This contract provides weather forecasting services to the Council. The data in these forecasts is used primarily to inform the Council's winter maintenance plan. The Council has a statutory duty under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the roads and the winter maintenance plan is a critical part of this. The winter maintenance plan is enacted between 01 October – 30 April. Therefore, it is important this service is in place.
- 3.2 The service provides weather forecasts across the 10 climatic domains within North Yorkshire. During the winter period this can be up to three forecasts per day to accurately show the changing weather patterns. This is critical to ensure the roads are salted at the correct times to help to prevent ice forming. The service also provides longer range forecasts to allow plans to be set out in advanced then amended if required by daily forecasts. There is a 24-hour advisory service available from the forecasting supplier.
- 3.3 Along with predicting ice on the roads, the service is also used to monitor rainfall to detect potential flooding events and notification of other weather warning such as high winds.

- 3.4 Although this service is primarily used in the winter months, it is available all year round. In the summer it is still used to monitor rain fall and wind speeds, but also to predict high temperatures, which can also have a detrimental effect on our roads and require maintenance to be carried out.
- 3.5 Weather Station Bureau This contract provides weather station bureau services to the Council. This service involves the maintenance of a range of weather stations placed across the county, the collection of the data and analysis of this data for use by our highways team and by our weather forecasting supplier. The contract also covers the purchase and installation of new weather stations, cameras or sensors where required.
- 3.6 The weather stations can provide the following data:
- Air temperature
  - Surface temperature
  - Level of salt on the road
  - Photo of the area
- 3.7 This information is updated every 10 minutes giving a real time view of the area where the stations are located. We have access to weather stations in surrounding areas, giving us weather data over a wider area. Also, the information is available to the public via the Council's website to help inform their travel arrangements. This is one of the most viewed pages on the Council's website.
- 3.8 Alongside the weather forecasting contract, the information is primarily used during the winter period (October – April) to plan the winter maintenance of the highways.
- 3.9 This service is linked to the weather forecasting contract with, as outlined in Section 3.1 to 3.4 of this report. Forecasting suppliers use the information collected from the weather stations to inform their forecasts for North Yorkshire. The data is also used to monitor how accurate the forecasts are and improve future forecasts. The weather forecasts from the forecasting supplier enable planned winter maintenance activities to be determined on a daily basis. The real time data from the weather bureau contract allows this plan to be more finely tuned to the situation on the ground.

#### **4.0 PROPOSED WAY FORWARD**

- 4.1 It is proposed to proceed with the procurement of two individual contracts
- Weather Forecasting Contract
  - Weather Station Bureau Service contract
- 4.2 These would be set up as initial three-year contracts with the option to extended for a further two and two years. Contract extensions are dependent on contractors meeting relevant performance criteria.

#### **5.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 Given the nature of the contract and its importance to the delivery of the highway service is essential that both contracts are re procured.
- 5.2 Utilising an existing procurement framework was considered, however it was felt that an open procurement exercise would be more suitable as it allows the specifications and terms of the contracts to be more aligned to the requirements of North Yorkshire. It also ensures that we can achieve best value and the relevant price / quality split for assessment meets the requirements of North Yorkshire.

## **6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The total anticipated expenditure per year will be in the region of £150,000. The total whole life costs for the contract are estimated to be in the region of £1.050M over the maximum seven-year duration of the contract. Costs for both contracts are fully accounted for within the existing winter service operational budget for the duration of the contract.

## **7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The proposed procurement process for a new contract will be carried out compliantly in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. Legal Services will draft documentation for the proposed new contract as needed.

## **8.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 An initial equality impact assessment screening has been completed Please see at Appendix A. This has identified that a full equalities impact assessment is not required as the proposal within this report do not negatively impact any individuals or groups with protected characteristics.

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 A climate change impact assessment has been complete, see at Appendix B. This has identified that the new contracts should be beneficial as they allow for continued better planning winter service activity and resources, which should help to reduce emissions through more effective fleet management and decision making.

## **10.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

10.1 The recommendations will enable a procurement exercise to be carried out to ensure that NYC has the required Weather Forecasting and Weather Station Bureau Service contracts in place to ensure that it is able to meet its requirements as part of the Highways Act.

## **11.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

11.1 It is recommended that, the Corporate Director Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member Highways and Transportation authorises the procurement of a contract for the supply of:

- i. Weather Station Bureau Services from 05/07/2025 to 04/07/2032;
- ii. Weather Forecasting services from 05/07/2025 to 04/07/2032.

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Initial equality impact assessment screening form

Appendix B – Climate change impact assessment

### **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: - N/A**

Barrie Mason  
Environment  
County Hall, Northallerton  
24 January 2025

Report Author – James Gilroy Team Leader Highways Asset Management  
Presenter of Report – James Gilroy, Team Leader Highways Asset Management

Initial equality impact assessment screening form			
<b>This form records the equality screening process to determine the relevance of equality to a proposal, and a decision whether a full EIA would be appropriate or proportionate.</b>			
Directorate	Environment		
Service area	Highways and Transportation		
Proposal being screened	Procurement of contracts for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter Service Bureau</li> <li>• Weather forecasting</li> </ul>		
Officer(s) carrying out screening	James Gilroy		
What are you proposing to do?	Procure new contracts from July 2025 until July 2032 for the delivery of services for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Winter Service Bureau</li> <li>• Weather forecasting</li> </ul>		
Why are you proposing this? What are the desired outcomes?	To ensure relevant services and systems are in place to enable the delivery of winter service operations and other highway council services that rely on accurate weather information and data.		
Does the proposal involve a significant commitment or removal of resources? Please give details.	The current proposal will not lead to a reduction in planned resources but will aim to gain more efficient processes.		
<b>Impact on people with any of the following protected characteristics as defined by the Equality Act 2010, or NYCC's additional agreed characteristics</b>			
As part of this assessment, please consider the following questions:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To what extent is this service used by groups of people with protected characteristics?</li> <li>• Does the proposal relate to functions that previous consultation has identified as important?</li> <li>• Do different groups have different needs or experiences in the area the proposal relates to?</li> </ul>			
<b>If for any characteristic it is considered that there is likely to be an adverse impact or you have ticked 'Don't know/no info available', then a full EIA should be carried out where this is proportionate. You are advised to speak to your <a href="#">Equality rep</a> for advice if you are in any doubt.</b>			
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	
<b>NYCC additional characteristics</b>			
People in rural areas		X	
People on a low income		X	
Carer (unpaid family or friend)		X	

<b>Does the proposal relate to an area where there are known inequalities/probable impacts</b> (e.g., disabled people's access to public transport)? Please give details.	N/A		
<b>Will the proposal have a significant effect on how other organisations operate?</b> (e.g. partners, funding criteria, etc.). <b>Do any of these organisations support people with protected characteristics?</b> Please explain why you have reached this conclusion.	N/A		
<b>Decision (Please tick one option)</b>	EIA not relevant or proportionate:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Continue to full EIA:
<b>Reason for decision</b>	The services provided through the relevant contracts help to enhance of service delivery in North Yorkshire and do not adversely impact any groups / individuals with protected characteristics		
<b>Signed (Assistant Director or equivalent)</b>	Barrie Mason		
<b>Date</b>	09/01/2025		

**Climate change impact assessment**

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email [climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk)

**Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:**  
 Planning Permission  
 Environmental Impact Assessment  
 Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact [climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk) for advice.

<b>Title of proposal</b>	<b>Highways Capital Programme</b>
<b>Brief description of proposal</b>	For the Corporate Director Environment, in consultation with the Executive Member Highways and Transportation to authorise officers;  To procure a contract for the supply of Weather Station Bureau Services from 05/07/2025 to 04/07/2032  To procure a contract for the supply of Weather Forecasting services from 05/07/2025 to 04/07/2032
<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Environment</b>
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Highways and Transportation</b>
<b>Lead officer</b>	<b>James Gilroy</b>
<b>Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment</b>	
<b>Date impact assessment started</b>	<b>23.12.2024</b>

**Options appraisal**  
 Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.

Utilising an existing procurement framework was considered, however it was felt that an open procurement exercise would be more suitable as it allows the specifications and terms of the contracts to be more aligned to the requirements of North Yorkshire. It also ensures that we can achieve best value and the relevant price / quality split for assessment meets the requirements of North Yorkshire

**What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?**

Please explain briefly why this will be the result, detailing estimated savings or costs where this is possible.

We anticipate that the contacts will be in line with existing contractual arrangements and as such will not involve a cost increase above inflation.

<p><b>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</b></p> <p><b>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</b></p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p><b>No impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p><b>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</b></p> <p><b>Where possible/relevant please include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes over and above business as usual</li> <li>• Evidence or measurement of effect</li> <li>• Figures for CO<sub>2</sub>e</li> <li>• Links to relevant documents</li> </ul>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</b></p>	<p><b>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</b></p>
<p>Minimise <b>greenhouse gas emissions</b> e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	<p>Emissions from travel</p>	<p>X</p>		<p>More efficient planning and coordination of gritting vehicles, will help to reduce emissions from the Council fleet.</p>		
	<p>Emissions from construction</p>	<p>X</p>				

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p><b>No impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes over and above business as usual</li> <li>• Evidence or measurement of effect</li> <li>• Figures for CO<sub>2</sub>e</li> <li>• Links to relevant documents</li> </ul>	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
	Emissions from running of buildings		x				
	Other		x				
<p>Minimise <b>waste</b>: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>		x					
<p>Reduce <b>water</b> consumption</p>		x					
<p>Minimise <b>pollution</b> (including air, land, water, light and noise)</p>	x			<p>More efficient planning and coordination of gritting operations , will help to reduce salt usage and any associated run off..</p>			
<p>Ensure <b>resilience</b> to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>	x			<p>Helps to plan NYC activity across the network. Not just related to winter maintenance but flooding and increased summer temperatures.</p>			
<p>Enhance <b>conservation</b> and wildlife</p>		x					



<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p><b>Positive impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p><b>No impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p><b>Negative impact</b> (Place a X in the box below where</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes over and above business as usual</li> <li>• Evidence or measurement of effect</li> <li>• Figures for CO<sub>2</sub>e</li> <li>• Links to relevant documents</li> </ul>	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of <b>North Yorkshire's landscape</b></p>		<p>x</p>				
<p>Other (please state below)</p>		<p>x</p>				

**Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal?** If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

N/A

**Summary** Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The procurement of these contracts will help maintain and improve existing level of service and will help to further enhance vehicle and resource planning which can help to reduce emissions and salt usage.

**Sign off section**

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

<b>Name</b>	<b>James Gilroy</b>
<b>Job title</b>	<b>Team Leader Highway Asset Management</b>
<b>Service area</b>	<b>Highways and Transport</b>
<b>Directorate</b>	<b>Environment</b>
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Completion date</b>	<b>23.12.2024</b>

**Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): Barrie Mason**

**Date: 09/01/2025**