

# North Yorkshire Council

09 March 2026

## Procurement of the Management of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites across North Yorkshire

### Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

This report contains confidential Appendices A, B and C which contain information of the type defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) as it contains information relating to the financial and business affairs of the Council and it is considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

#### 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the procurement of a single supplier contract for the management of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) sites across North Yorkshire. The contract will also include the provision of domestic abuse support services to residents.
- 1.2 The Director of Community Development, in consultation with the Assistant Director (Resources) and Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing to agree and enter into related contracts.

#### 2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The current delivery model is fragmented. Horton Housing manages four sites, and is supported by Property Services, while Tara Park is managed in-house by the Housing Team. Domestic abuse support is grant-funded and separately commissioned. This structure presents operational inefficiencies and inconsistent service standards. A unified contract will improve service continuity and oversight, support consistent standards and financial transparency, and address risks related to staffing, compliance, and contract fragmentation.
- 2.2 Market engagement confirmed that providers are interested in delivering a combined contract covering all sites. Respondents welcomed the opportunity to streamline delivery but raised concerns about the sufficiency of the proposed budget, particularly in relation to future maintenance and improvement works. Several providers also requested longer initial contract terms to ensure financial viability and allow for meaningful investment in service quality. These elements have been addressed through the new specification. Further details of the specification at Appendix A (confidential).
- 2.3 The proposed procurement will address these issues by establishing a single contract with clear KPIs, escalation procedures, and performance monitoring. It will unify service standards, embed social value, and introduce digital reporting tools to improve oversight and resilience. See Appendix B (confidential).
- 2.4 Market insights appraisal identified that a long-term contract is the only viable option due to the resources involved and importance of building strong relationships on each site with the travelling community. An initial contract term of three years with a further three options to extend for 2 years each would therefore be required.

### **3.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES**

- 3.1 A market insight exercise has been undertaken to assess current interest in a Traveller site management contract. This included engagement with potential providers and a review of delivery models used by other authorities. Consultation has also taken place with colleagues across Housing, Property Services, Community Safety, Procurement, and Legal Services, as well as with the Portfolio Holder for Housing.
- 3.2 All consultees expressed support for the proposed procurement approach, recognising its alignment with strategic priorities such as service integration, resilience, and social value. The proposal is also seen as addressing operational challenges including fragmented delivery, inconsistent standards, and limited oversight.

### **4.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES**

- 4.1 This procurement supports several Council Plan priorities. It contributes to Thriving Places by improving service quality and consistency across five GRT sites, ensuring safer and better-managed environments for vulnerable communities. It aligns with Living Well by embedding safeguarding and domestic abuse support into a unified delivery model. The introduction of digital reporting and performance monitoring supports Sustainable and Connected Communities, while the contract's focus on social value and streamlined oversight reflects the Council's commitment to Organisational Excellence. Social and Practical Reasons.
- 4.2 Many Gypsy and Traveller families need a permanent base to access healthcare, education, and other services, especially as travelling has become more difficult due to changes in work patterns and fewer places to stop.
- 4.3 Reduced unauthorised encampments: Lack of legal sites leads to unauthorised encampments, which can cause tension with local residents and result in increased enforcement action. Providing authorised sites helps reduce these issues.
- 4.4 Permanent sites allow Gypsies and Travellers to maintain their cultural traditions while having the option to travel when desired.

### **5.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 Maintaining the current model was deemed unsustainable due to fragmentation and lack of resilience. Framework procurement was rejected as no suitable framework exists. Separate procurements were also dismissed due to duplication, inefficiency, and risk of inconsistent standards.
- 5.2 Bringing the management of all sites in-house was ruled out due to the complexity of site operations and the significant resource implications this would entail.

### **6.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS**

- 6.1 The domestic abuse support element is grant-funded at £50,000 per annum, though this funding is not guaranteed, this is for an initial 12 months.
- 6.2 Costs relating to the assets on site will be managed by Property Services, whilst the management of tenancies, advise and contract monitoring will be provided by Housing Needs Service together with Property services for the technical support.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 The anticipated annual contract cost will be largely offset by site income, both from rents and utilities. The remaining cost will be met from existing council budgets both in Housing and Property Services, net of the aforementioned grant.

## **8.0 VALUE FOR MONEY**

8.1 The provision of gypsy and traveller sites is a council obligation and as part of the Local Plan procedure additional pitches may need to be found across North Yorkshire. It is imperative that we have a good provider working with us who may be able to assist with the challenges of providing these

8.2 Bringing the site management together under one organisation, will allow us to work with a partner to maximise occupancy across all sites and minimise expenditure, to reduce the shortfall between rental income and expenditure.

8.3 Full utilisation of sites will deliver better service provision, optimise public assets, and achieve greater social impact. Further capital investment opportunities will also be explored with the provider to enhance site conditions.

## **9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 The procurement will be conducted in accordance with the Procurement Act 2023, with Legal Services confirming compliance requirements, supporting with TUPE regulations, and drafting the contracts to include appropriate terms and conditions and will be entered into in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules.

9.2 Councils are also required by law to assess and meet the accommodation needs of all people in their area—including Gypsies and Travellers. This duty is set out in the Planning Act and reinforced by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites. Councils must:

- Assess local need: Conduct a Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment to determine how many pitches are needed.
- Allocate land: Identify and allocate sufficient, suitable land for Gypsy and Traveller sites in their Local Plan.
- Set targets: Establish targets for the number of sites and pitches required.
- Grant permissions: If councils cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable sites, they are expected to grant planning permission for suitable sites that come forward, unless there are overriding reasons (e.g., protected land).

9.3 This procurement will assist with the requirements of the planning policy framework and future local plan requirements by ensuring the continuation of sites across North Yorkshire. Councils that fail to provide sites may be in breach of planning guidance and could face legal action. See Appendix C (confidential).

## **10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment screening tool has been completed (see Appendix D). No significant impacts were identified.

10.2 The contract is designed to ensure fair and equitable access to site management and domestic abuse support services for all GRT residents, including those with protected characteristics. The provider will be required to demonstrate a commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion, and to comply with all relevant legislation.

## **11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 A Climate Change Impact Assessment screening has been completed (see Appendix E). While the procurement is not expected to have significant direct impacts, the contract will encourage the supplier to adopt environmentally sustainable practices, such as minimising travel emissions, promoting energy efficiency, and reducing waste.

## **12.0 PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 Key performance indicators (KPIs) will be embedded in the contract, including occupancy maximisation, effective rent collection, site condition, resident satisfaction, response times, and domestic abuse support outcomes. Automated reporting and escalation procedures will be included.

## **13.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 The procurement aligns with Council policies on social inclusion, equality, and value for money. It supports the Housing Strategy and the commitment to provide safe, well-managed accommodation for GRT communities. The contract will also reflect relevant safeguarding and domestic abuse policies.

## **14.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 Risks include TUPE implications, service continuity, loss of local knowledge, and funding uncertainty. Mitigation strategies are in place, including phased implementation, onboarding protocols, and contingency planning.

## **15.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

- 15.1 TUPE is likely to apply to the existing officer at Tara Park and potentially to Horton Housing staff. HR and Legal Services are engaged to assess implications and support consultation.

## **16.0 ICT IMPLICATIONS**

- 16.1 The contract will include requirements for digital reporting and secure data handling. No internal ICT burden is anticipated.

## **17.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

- 17.1 The unified contract will enhance community safety by ensuring consistent site management standards, effective incident reporting, and robust safeguarding procedures. The inclusion of domestic abuse support will strengthen the Council's response to vulnerable residents.

## **18.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 18.1 The procurement of a single supplier contract for GRT site management and domestic abuse support will address current service fragmentation, improve resilience, and deliver better outcomes for residents. The approach is sustainable, compliant, and aligned with Council priorities.

## **19.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 19.1 The proposed procurement offers a sustainable, resilient, and cost-effective solution to deliver consistent GRT site management and domestic abuse support. It aligns with council priorities and addresses operational risks.

## **20.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 20.1 Approve the procurement of a single supplier contract for GRT site management and domestic abuse support
- 20.2 Agree and enter into a contract, in accordance with the Council's Procurement and Contract Procedure Rules for Management of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites across North Yorkshire

### **CONFIDENTIAL APPENDICES:**

Appendix A – Service Specification  
Appendix B – Gateway 1  
Appendix C – Additional Planning Information

### **APPENDICES:**

Appendix D - EIA Screening  
Appendix E - CCIA Screening

Nic Harne  
Corporate Director – Community Development  
County Hall  
Northallerton

Report Authors:  
Kim Robertshaw (Head of Housing Needs)  
Lynn Williams (Head of Housing Renewal)

Presenter of Report – Andrew Rowe

Note: Members are invited to contact the author in advance of the meeting with any detailed queries or questions.