

Winter Gritter Hire Contract Award

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24 August 2026

Reason for Decision

To award the contract for the hire of winter gritters for 4 winter seasons (2026/27 – 2029/30)

Executive Summary

This report seeks approval to award the winter gritter hire contract to ensure winter maintenance of the highway network across the borough until 2029/30.

Recommendations

1. To approve the contract award for the hire of winter gritting vehicles for four winter seasons from 2026/27 - giving Oldham Council a fleet of vehicles to grit roads across the borough.

Winter Gritter Hire Contract Award

1 Background

- 1.1 Oldham Council has a statutory duty under S41(1A) of the Highways Act 1980, to ensure, so far as reasonably practicable, that safe passage along a highway is not endangered by snow or ice.
- 1.2 In order to meet this statutory duty, the Highways Department requires a fleet of winter gritting vehicles for each winter season. These vehicles are used to treat the borough's highways with grit salt to ensure that the Council can do what is reasonably practicable to keep roads clear of snow and ice over the winter period (26 weeks; October - April).
- 1.3 As a result of the need to comply with this statutory duty, this report seeks approval to award the contract for securing the necessary vehicles in preparation for the winter maintenance programme.

2 Current Position

- 2.1 Oldham Council's current contract expires in October 2026; therefore, there will be no contract in place for gritters for the forthcoming winter period until a new contract is awarded.
- 2.2 Oldham Council has carried out a competitive tender process to procure winter gritting vehicles hire for the next four winter periods (winter 2026/27 – winter 2029/30).
- 2.3 The two compliant submissions were scored for quality, social value and cost and these scores were aggregated to identify the preferred supplier, with the quality of submission weighted at 60% (including 10% social value) and cost weighted at 40%.
- 2.4 The preferred supplier was identified as Econ Engineering Ltd, which outscored the other compliant supplier in terms of both quality and cost.
- 2.5 Cost

Suppliers were asked to price for a 26-week rental period to cover the winter season; however, since the exact dates for the start and end of the winter season can fluctuate, prices were requested for any additional usage outside of the 6-month rental period.

Additional usage has been calculated according to the pricing schedule submitted by the suppliers and the Council's actual 2025 usage outside the 26-week rental period.

3 Options/Alternatives

- 3.1 Option 1. Approve the contract award to the preferred supplier for the hire of winter gritting vehicles for four winter seasons from 2026/27, giving Oldham Council a fleet of vehicles to grit roads across the borough
- 3.2 Option 2. Not to agree to award a contract for the provision of gritters. The Oldham Council will not be able to fulfil its statutory duty under S41(1A) of the Highways Act 1980. This option is not recommended.

4 Preferred Option

- 4.1 The preferred option is Option 1 – to award the contract to Econ Engineering Ltd, the preferred supplier identified through the competitive tender process.
- 4.2 Awarding the contract to the successful bidder will ensure that it is best value for taxpayers' money (Econ submitted the bid with highest quality and lowest cost) and ensure that the Council is able to ensure that the winter gritting service can be delivered and fulfill its statutory duty under Section 41(1A) of the Highways Act 1980.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 None

Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 41(1A) of the Highways Act 1980 to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to ensure that safe passage along the highway is not endangered by snow or ice. The Report confirms that a competitive procurement exercise has been undertaken through an established framework arrangement and that Econ Engineering Ltd achieved the highest overall score following evaluation of the compliant tenders.

Provided that the procurement process has been conducted in accordance with the requirements of the relevant framework agreement and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules the Council may proceed with the contract award to the recommended supplier. The associated contractual documentation should be completed and executed prior to commencement of the services.

Sukie Kaur - Solicitor

7. Procurement Implications

- 7.1 The Procurement Partnership has completed a PCR2015 tendering exercise to establish a vehicle rental framework. And this tender was issued as a mini competition under The Procurement Partnership Fleet Rental framework reference: TPPLCSKL03Fleet Rental – Lot 3 Hire of Medium, Heavy, and Specialist Commercial Vehicles up to 44t. The Invitation to Tender was issued on 1 May 2026 via the TPPL tendering portal. During the tendering period, nine clarification questions were raised by bidders, all of which were responded to through the portal.

By the tender closing deadline of 22 May 2026, three bidders had submitted tenders:

- Econ Engineering Limited
- Dawsongroup Environmental Municipal Civil Ltd
- Riverside Truck Rental Ltd.

Individual evaluations of the three bids were undertaken by each evaluator (three evaluators from the Service), followed by Procurement-chaired moderation session on 13 July 2026, during which the Quality (including Social Value) scores were moderated. The cost evaluation and due diligence checks were undertaken solely by the Procurement team.

Riverside Truck Rental Ltd did not meet the requirements of one of the Quality questions (Delivery and Handover) and therefore, its bid was deemed non-compliant.

The remaining two bidders were ranked based on their final moderated scores, with Econ Engineering Ltd achieving the highest overall score and being ranked first.

(Lena Bogossian, Commercial Procurement Unit).

8. **Equality Impact, including implications for Children and Young People**

8.1 No

9. **Key Decision**

9.1 Yes

Key Decision Reference

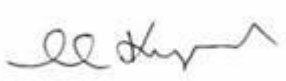
10.1 NEI-07-26

11 **Background Papers**

11.1 None

12 **Appendices**

12.1 None

Approved by the Chief Executive following consultation with the political group leaders. Decision made under the authorisation contained in Section 9C – Delegations to Specific Officers of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council Constitution for the Chief Executive to take any emergency decisions in respect of the Council's executive functions.	
Signed:  Shelley Kipling, Chief Executive	Dated: 25 August 2026
Date of Group Leaders meeting	24 August 2025