



Operational Officer Decision Record

Where the decision has a financial value of between £100k - £350k and does not have a **significant** impact on two or more wards

1. Subject and details of the matter (to include reasons for the decision and detail of any previous cabinet decision)

North East Lincolnshire Council has a statutory duty to maintain the highway network in a safe condition during periods of adverse winter weather. To fulfil its Winter Service obligations, the Council requires a secure and resilient supply of rock salt. The current contract with Compass Minerals UK Ltd expired in June 2026.

National Winter Service guidance recommends that Highway Authorities maintain a minimum pre-season stock capable of supporting 12 days of continuous operation, equivalent to 48 treatment runs. In North East Lincolnshire, this equates to approximately 1,700 tonnes of rock salt, providing the minimum level of operational resilience required to respond effectively to prolonged winter weather events.

Expenditure on rock salt during the 2025/26 winter season was £74,494. However, this reflected an exceptionally mild winter and is not representative of typical seasonal demand. Based on historical usage and anticipated operational requirements, future annual expenditure is expected to be approximately £80,000 - £90,000, although actual costs will vary depending on winter weather severity. The annual cost of rock salt is funded from the existing winter service budget of £210,700.

The UK market for highway-grade rock salt is limited, with only two suppliers capable of providing the required volumes, quality standards, delivery capabilities and resilience required by local authorities.

A recent procurement exercise undertaken by the Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) resulted in only one compliant tender being received, from Compass Minerals UK Ltd. Compass Minerals possesses established production facilities, quality assurance processes, distribution networks and stock management arrangements that provide assurance of supply during periods of severe winter weather.

Compass Minerals has successfully supplied the Council's with rock salt since 2013 and has demonstrated its ability to meet the Council's operational needs.

It is proposed that the Council makes a direct award to Compass Minerals UK Ltd through the YPO Framework Agreement for the supply of winter rock salt. The framework provides a fully compliant procurement route and delivers value for money through nationally negotiated terms and pricing.

An approved procurement exception (Case 00055589) supports this approach, removing the need for a separate open tender exercise whilst ensuring compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and procurement legislation.

2. Decision being taken

It is recommended that the Director for Economy, Environment and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Infrastructure and Transport, approves the direct award of a four-year contract to Compass Minerals UK Limited through the YPO Framework Agreement for the supply of winter rock salt.

3. Anticipated outcome(s)/benefits

The Yorkshire Purchasing Organisation (YPO) Framework is a nationally recognised and fully compliant procurement arrangement for the supply of winter rock salt, operating from 18 June 2026 to 17 June 2030.

The framework leverages the collective purchasing power of public sector organisations to secure competitive pricing and achieve economies of scale that would not ordinarily be available through individual procurement exercises. This

approach delivers demonstrable value for money whilst ensuring continuity and resilience of supply.

All suppliers appointed to the framework are subject to a comprehensive evaluation and due diligence process, including assessments of technical capability, financial standing, quality standards, customer service performance, social value commitments and sustainability credentials. This provides assurance that suppliers can meet the operational requirements of local authorities and maintain high levels of service throughout the contract period.

Utilising the YPO Framework provides the Council with a compliant and efficient procurement route, removes the need to undertake a separate tender exercise, reduces administrative burden and procurement timescales and represents the most economically advantageous solution for the procurement of winter rock salt.

4. Details of any alternative options considered and rejected by the officer when making the decision

Option 1 – Do not enter into a contract with a supplier for the supply of rock salt. This option is not considered viable and would compromise the Council's ability to deliver its statutory Winter Service responsibilities.

Option 2 - Award a one-year contract to Compass Minerals UK Limited using the YPO Direct Award Process. A short-term agreement will not attract any discounted rates for the supply of rock salt.

Option 3: Carry out an open procurement exercise. Given the limited UK market for highway-grade rock salt, it is unlikely that a further tender exercise would attract additional competition or secure better value than could be achieved through the YPO Framework. An approved procurement exception (Case 00055589) supports

5. Background documents considered (web link to be included or copies of documents for publishing)

Framework Agreement Winter Maintenance Products and Services Lot 1 – Brown Rock salt 6mm or 10mm (Contract award No 2026/S 000-051311)

Appendix B Pricing Schedule.

6. Does the taking of the decision include consideration of Exempt information? If yes, specify the relevant paragraph of Schedule 12A and the reasons

No

7. Details of any conflict of interest declared by any Cabinet Member who was consulted by the officer which relates to the decision (in respect of any declared conflict of interest, please provide a note of dispensation granted by the Council's Chief Executive)

There is no conflict of interest.

8. Monitoring Officer Comments (Monitoring Officer or nominee)

The YPO frameworks are fully compliant with UK procurement regulations. Suppliers undergo rigorous auditing for technical and financial stability ensuring high service standards. The procurement exercise undertaken by YPO complies with the Council's policy and legal obligations.

9. Section 151 Officer Comments (Deputy S151 Officer or nominee)

The contract will be funded from within the approved Winter Service revenue budget. The proposed direct award via the YPO Framework represents a compliant and proportionate approach in a market with limited competition and supports continuity of service delivery. No additional financial resources are required as a consequence of this decision.

10. Human Resource Comments (Head of People and Culture or nominee)

There are no direct HR implications arising from the contents of this report.

11. Risk Assessment (in accordance with the Report Writing Guide)

Failure to secure a contract for the supply of rock salt would create a significant risk to the Council's ability to deliver its statutory Winter Service obligations and maintain the highway network in a safe condition during periods of snow and ice. Without a guaranteed supply arrangement, the Council may be unable to maintain the minimum recommended resilience stock level of 1700 tonnes or replenish stocks during periods of sustained winter weather. This could result in untreated roads,

increased risk to highway users, disruption to transport networks and critical services, and potential reputational and financial consequences for the Council.

12. If the decision links to a previous one taken by Cabinet, has the Cabinet Tracker been updated?

Not applicable

13. Decision Maker(s):

Name: Carolina Borgstrom

Title: Director Economy, Environment
& Infrastructure

Signed: REDACTED

Dated: 17th September 2026

**14. Consultation carried out with
Portfolio Holder(s):**

Name: Cllr Paul Batson

Title: Portfolio Holder for Housing,
Infrastructure and Transport

Signed: REDACTED

Dated: 18th September 2026