Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Call-In Request Form

I/We request that the following matter be called-in for consideration by the Executive Scrutiny Committee for the reason(s) stated below.

I/We understand that a minimum of six Members of the Council excluding Cabinet Members, or two Education representatives with voting rights in respect of education matters, must submit this request before the call-in procedure is implemented.

Decision making body ie. Cabinet, Officer, or Joint Arrangement	Cabinet

Details of decision	Procurement Plan / Higher Value Contracts
Ref. number (if any)	
Date of decision	15th October 2026

We consider that the decision is not in accordance with the following principle(s) of Paragraph 1.35 of the Constitution for the reason stated -	
Principle(s) (overleaf)	**Reason(s)**
• proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome); • due consultation and the taking of professional advice from Officers; • respect for human rights and equality of opportunity; • a presumption in favour of openness; • clarity of aims and desired outcomes; and • an explanation of what options have been considered and giving the reasons for decisions • relevant matters have not been ignored • clarity and explanation of information provided	The report presented to Cabinet on the 15th of October 2026 focuses on the replacement of 8 winter gritting vehicles through leasing. The proposed procurement of the gritter vehicles raises several questions concerning contract valuation, financial transparency, procurement route, value for money, contract duration and the adequacy of the information provided to Cabinet. There are several points within the very brief report made available to the Cabinet that require clarification and explanation. The recommendations in the report are, that Cabinet *1. approves the contract listed in Annex 1;* *2. gives authority to the relevant Director or Assistant Director to make the specific contract award decision and any subsequent*

	contract variation, annual inflationary uplifts (where allowed in the contract terms and conditions) and extension decision in accordance with the delegations listed in Annex 1; But Annex 1 says the Council will: *"undertake a further competition under an appropriate Framework Agreement."* Clarity and an explanation are sought as to whether Cabinet is approving the award of the contract, as in recommendation 1, or merely authorising commencement of a procurement exercise and delegating authority for the eventual award, as in recommendation 2. The decision record shows that no alternative options were considered to demonstrate that a three-year lease with two possible extensions provides better value for money than outright purchase, alternative leasing arrangements or continuation of the existing arrangements. An explanation is sought as to why other options were not considered The contract value is not transparently stated. It provides an annual figure only. The maximum estimated value should be clarified, including the treatment of VAT and other contractual payments. The Procurement Act 2023 requires the estimated value to account for the maximum amount payable, including relevant extension options. The report appears to rely upon an annual figure for procurement governance. Is it following the guidance in relevant legislation when estimating a contract value. Clarification is sought. Paragraph 5 of the report states; *The report includes a higher value contracts to be awarded in the 2026/27 financial year. The expenditure committed as a result of these tenders/ quotes is planned and remains within the Council's approved budget/ MTFP/ Capital*

	Programme ***or is subject to a bid for external funding which will ensure that at the point of contract award, funds are available within the MTFP/ Capital Programme.*** The report references committed expenditure in the present financial year and is opaque and uncertain beyond that. Clarification is sought as to how the proposed leasing of the vehicles will be funded in the next 3/5 years. The report does not explain if the proposed £330,000 annual expenditure represents an increase, reduction or continuation of existing fleet expenditure, and what is the net financial impact over the five-year maximum term. Clarity is sought as to what information was provided to Cabinet for them to make an informed decision. The report proposes a three-year contract with two optional 12-month extensions, at an estimated annual cost of £330,000. This implies potential expenditure of £1.65 million over five years, yet the report does not provide a sufficiently detailed comparison of alternative approaches. The report (annex 1) refers to 'an appropriate framework agreement'. Clarity and information is sought as to what specific framework the council intend to use. Annex 1 states the existing gritters are approaching the end of their efficient and reliable service life. That is an assertion rather than demonstrated evidence. What evidence was made available to the Cabinet to demonstrate that all eight vehicles require replacement now, rather than replacement being phased or existing arrangements being extended? The potential five-year expenditure is substantial, yet the report does not clearly disclose the maximum contract value or sufficiently demonstrate the options considered, the whole-life costs, the evidence

	supporting replacement, or the assessment of key operational and financial risks.

We request that the following Cabinet Member(s)/Officer(s) to be required to attend the Executive Scrutiny Committee	
Council Leader, and Cabinet Member for resources and regeneration.	
Signed	**Print Name**
	TONY RICHARDS
	NIALL INNES.
L EOHall	LYNN HALL
Mohsin	SUFI MUBEEN
	STEPHEN DODDS.
	Shakeel Hussain

This form must be submitted to the Proper Officer (via Democratic Services) within four working days of the publication of the decision i.e. by 12 midnight on the fourth day.

Multiple forms (including faxed and e-mailed versions) may be submitted in respect of the same decision. If the form is e-mailed it must be subscribed to by one person only.

This form may be returned as follows:

By hand to any Democratic Services Officer

Email – 'DL Democratic Services'

Office use only	
Date received:	Initials:
Valid: Yes/No Reasons for invalidity:	

Reasons notified
Executive Scrutiny Committee date:

Extract from Constitution – Paragraph 1.35

Decisions of the Council will usually be made in accordance with the following principles:

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from Officers;
- respect for human rights and equality of opportunity;
- a presumption in favour of openness;
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes; and
- an explanation of what options have been considered and giving the reasons for decisions
- relevant matters have not been ignored
- clarity and explanation of information provided

Please also see the guidance contained with the Scrutiny Toolkit, and Constitution.