**Appendix 1**

**Specification**

**1. Background**

1.1 North Somerset Council has a statutory duty, under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, to make provision for the collection and kennelling of any stray dogs found within its area.

1.2 The duty to make provision for stray dogs to be received at a nominated reception point outside the council’s core working hours (8.30am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday) was placed upon the council under the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2007. The reception point is currently the Town Hall in Weston-super-Mare.

1.3 There are approximately 175 stray dogs collected in the district per year and can be kennelled for a varying number of days. There are also approximately 245 call outs received in the district outside of the council’s core working hours per year (not all call outs will result in a stray dog being received). However, the council cannot provide any assurances over the actual numbers of dogs that will require collection or kennelling.

1.4 There is no statutory definition of a stray dog. However, any dog found in a public place, or private place where it should not be, which appears to be without its owner and not under the control of its owner or a person representing them, may be seized by the council or their supplier and detained as a stray dog.

1.5 The contract covers the whole geographic area of North Somerset, and therefore suppliers should ensure that they are prepared to cover the service throughout the district at the rates they have provided.

1.6 The services provided must be conducted in a professional manner at all times and kennel facilities must provide high levels of animal care and welfare. Supplies must hold a dog boarding licence at all times.

**2. Specification**

2.1 During the council’s core working hours (8.30am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30am to 4.30pm on Friday), on receiving a report of a stray dog from a member of the public or the council, the supplier will attend and collect a stray dog and transfer the dog to the supplier’s kennels as quickly as practicable within 2 hours.

2.2 Outside the council’s core working hours, on receiving a report of a stray dog from a member of the public, the supplier will arrange to meet the person(s) who have collected a stray dog at the nominated reception point. This nominated reception point is currently at the Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1UJ. The supplier will respond within 30 minutes of receiving an out of hours service request.

2.3 The supplier is expected to respond to reports of stray dogs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including public holidays.

2.4 For out of hours service requests, suppliers can make use of the council’s two kennels at the Town Hall in Weston-super-Mare to hold stray dogs overnight. Transportation of stray dogs held in these temporary kennels to the supplier’s kennels must be arranged as soon as practicable the following day.

2.5 All staff shall identify themselves as acting for North Somerset Council.

2.6 All staff must be suitably trained and physically able to carry out their duties.

2.7 The supplier will hold any stray dog collected or detained in North Somerset in a licenced kennel until the dog is either reclaimed by the owner(s) or is rehomed.

2.8 The supplier will allocate a minimum of 5 kennels for the sole use of the council at any one time.

2.9 No more than one dog is to be held in each kennel unless directed by the council.

2.10 Subject to payment of additional fees, the supplier must make available to the council additional kennels within its premises for the kennelling of stray dogs, if required

2.11 The supplier must hold a current Animal Boarding Establishment Licence.

2.12 On arrival at the supplier’s kennels, all dogs should be scanned for a microchip. Suppliers must therefore be equipped to identify microchipped dogs and any scanners or readers used must be compatible with as wide a range of formats as possible. Suppliers should also be able to offer a microchipping service to owners for a nominal fee.

2.13 Any staff employed by the supplier who is microchipping dogs must do so in accordance with the requirements imposed under The Microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015.

2.14 The supplier will maintain accurate and up-to-date records of all dogs seized or brought to them and those dogs in the possession of finders. Details recorded should include:

* A brief description of the dog, including breed, colour and any distinctive characteristics or markings
* Any information contained on a collar, tag or microchip
* Date, time and place the dog was seized
* If notice is served on the owner, details or when and where
* Date and method of disposal
* If reclaimed, the owner’s name and address and the date of return

Details of newly detained dogs will be provided to the council within 1 working day so that the council can keep a register updated, as required by section 149 (8) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The supplier will assist the council in maintaining the register.

2.15 Where the supplier can identify the dog owner, the supplier will, on behalf of the council and under section 149 (4) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, serve notice on that person or persons whose address is given on the collar or microchip. Any such notice will state:

* That the dog has been seized
* Where the dog is being kept
* That the dog will be rehomed unless it is claimed within 7 calendar days after service of the notice and the full amount liable under section 149 (5) has been paid.

The supplier will use appropriate standard documents, as provided by the council.

2.16 In accordance with section 149 (5) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 the supplier will charge the dog’s owner all reasonable expenses incurred during its detention at the supplier’s premises. The supplier shall not release the dog before it has collected these expenses from the owner. The supplier is expected to collect the expenses and deduct the amount collected from the invoice sent to the council.

2.17 The council will detain any stray or other dog at the supplier’s premises until either the dog’s owner or registered keeper has paid the full amount of the expenses incurred. If the dog’s owner or its registered keeper do not produce acceptable identification or pay all the outstanding fees in full the dog shall not be released without the authorisation of the council. All disputes shall be referred to the Environmental Health Service Manager. The council will publicise any fees and charges on its website at: <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/about-fees-and-charges>.

2.18 The supplier will detain, on behalf of the council, any dogs seized and brought to them for 7 calendar days. The statutory 7 calendar day period commences on either the day of seizure or the day on which the notice was served on the owner, whichever is later. The supplier will notify the council of any dogs that have not been claimed after 7 calendar days.

2.19 If a dog is claimed by the dog’s owner or registered keeper, the supplier must release the dog to that person provided the dog’s owner/registered keeper can produce evidence of their name and address (such as driver’s licence or a recent utility bill or bank statement) and have paid in full any expenses due to the council.

2.20 The supplier shall ensure that any dog that is rehomed is microchipped and its details registered on an approved database before it leaves the premises. The council will meet the cost of microchipping. Any person rehoming a dog will be required to provide proof of their name and address (for example, driver’s license, utility bill or bank statement) and be registered as the keeper of the dog. No third party names will be accepted.

2.21 If the stray dog has not been collected by its owner or registered keeper after 7 calendar days, the supplier will employ all lawful means available and best endeavours to rehome the dog to a person or organisation that will care properly for the dog. This should include the use of social media and/or a website maintained by the supplier. The council must be satisfied of the suitability of the persons or organisations rehoming dogs. The supplier will assist the council in rehoming dogs.

2.22 Euthanasia will only be considered for dogs in ill health or due to the hostile nature of the dog and this must be done at the direction of the council, unless in an emergency situation (for example, outside of the council’s core working hours when a dog is in pain/suffering). No dog will be disposed of for the purposes of vivisection. When a dog has been euthanised as an emergency, the council must be informed the next working day.

2.23 The supplier will assist the police or RSPCA with any investigations into criminal activity.

2.24 The supplier will ensure the welfare of any dog placed in the supplier’s kennels, provide sufficient food and water and ensure that the dog is not subject to unnecessary suffering.

2.25 The supplier will maintain the condition and cleanliness of the kennels in accordance with its current Animal Boarding Establishments Licence and the general duty of care under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

2.26 The supplier shall ensure that some part of the dog’s sleep area is maintained at a temperature of at least 10oC at all times and ensure that clean, dry bedding material is provided.

2.27 Each of the kennels for council use must be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily by the supplier with the use of a proprietary Parvocide or equivalent. These costs shall not be passed on to the council.

2.28 The supplier shall carry out a visual examination of dogs held in the kennels a minimum of twice a day. The supplier will record details of any dog that is not fit, or is showing signs of ill health, and any actions taken regarding its welfare.

2.29 The supplier shall ensure that dogs exhibiting symptoms of worms are treated on arrival at the supplier’s premises and that dogs less than 6 months old are vaccinated against Canine Parvovirus on arrival at the supplier’s premises. These costs shall not be passed onto the council.

2.30 When, in the reasonable opinion of the supplier, the condition of a dog is such as to require the attention of a veterinary surgeon, they will arrange for such attendance and treatment as may be reasonably necessary. Approval from the council must be obtained prior to treatment commencing and the council will bear the veterinary costs should a dog require treatment. Should a dog require urgent veterinary attention outside the council’s core working hours, the supplier can authorise treatment up to the value of £100, with a veterinary surgeon approved by the council in advance, for immediate exploratory investigation and to make a dog comfortable to avoid any unnecessary suffering.

2.31 The supplier will allow the council to inspect the supplier’s premises at any reasonable time. The council will give prior notice of the visit.

2.32 The supplier shall ensure that their premises have appropriate planning consent, be licensed for at least 5 dog kennels and comply with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and the general duty of care under the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

2.33 The supplier is to immediately notify the council of any breaches of their boarding licence or an outbreak of disease at the kennels (such as canine parvo virus).

2.34 The supplier will ensure that all pedestrian routes on the supplier’s site are suitably maintained, kept free from obstruction, clean and well-lit to give safe unhindered access and egress for council staff, police officers and members of the public. The supplier shall ensure that all parking facilities are suitably close the supplier’s site and well lit.

2.35 The supplier will ensure that dogs boarded in the 5 council kennels are only those accepted or delivered in relation to the council’s statutory duties, powers and functions, unless permission has been granted by the council. The supplier must notify the council when the 5 kennels are at 60% capacity.

2.36 Within the first week of each calendar month, the supplier will provide a written report to the council with the following information relating to the preceding month:

* The number of dogs collected and kennelled at the supplier’s premises, the date and time of the collection and who reported the stray dog.
* The duration each dog is held in a kennel at the supplier’s premises.
* Basic information about each dog, such as breed of dog.
* Information about the disposal of each dog, e.g. returned to its owner or registered keeper, rehomed or euthanised.
* Actions taken in relation to microchipping including: number of dogs with incorrect owner information, number of owner’s information updated at the time of owner’s claim and number of dogs given a microchip for the first time by the supplier.
* All treatments given by a veterinary surgeon.
* The number of dogs reclaimed by their owner or registered keeper, including details of any fees or other costs reasonably incurred such as veterinary surgeon fees and charges payable.
* Any other information required by the council.

2.37 The supplier will provide and maintain at their own expense the necessary premises, vehicles, equipment and materials as necessary to provide the contract. This includes the provision of PPE if required.

2.38 The council will reimburse the supplier for the following third party fees, at the rates levied by the third party:

* Vet fees

The council will not accept any mark up on the fees. The supplier will be required to provide copies of invoices in support of their application for reimbursement for these fees.

2.39 All financial accounts linked to this contract to be made available to the council upon request.

2.40 The supplier will submit an invoice to the council by email to Accounts.Payable@n-somerset.gov.uk each month with any kennelling fees, as well as any third party fees. Any expenses charged to owners or registered keepers should be deducted from the invoice.

**3. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

3.1 In the delivery of this contract, the supplier will be subject to the following KPIs, which the council will use to monitor the performance of the contract:

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| **KPI** | **Target** |
| Response times | The supplier must respond to 90% of requests within 2 hours and 100% of requests within 4 hours. |
| Serving notice | Notice served to 100% of owners or registered keepers within 24 hours. |
| Register of stray dogs | 100% of the information required (as outlined in the specification) provided to the council within the first week of each calendar month |
| Inspection of records | 100% of records provided within 3 working days of request from the council |
| Resolution of complaints | 90% of complaints responded to within 10 working days |