

Report of : Head of Passenger Transport

Report to: Chief Officer, Civic Enterprise Leeds

Date: 5th August 2016

Subject: Passenger Transport – Approval to commence tender process to procure Taxi and Private hire contractors to supply home to school transport

Capital Scheme Number:

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. Passenger Transport is commissioned by Children’s services and Adult Social care to provide transport for children and young people with Special educational needs and disabilities, (SEND) and children who are in care of the authority requiring home to school transport, as well as older people and adults with learning difficulties in order that they can access day services.

It is a statutory responsibility of the council to provide home to school transport.

2. This is currently managed through a mix of our own in house fleet as well as the utilisation of a framework agreement for Taxi and Private hire contractors to support the service.
3. The current Framework agreement is due to expire in March 2017. Currently there are 25 contractors on the framework who are able to provide wheelchair accessible minibuses, standard minibuses and cars as well as passenger assistants who support the customers during their journey.
4. The annual current spends on Taxi and Private hire is £8.0m.
5. The demand for home to school transport is increasing and current trends show that this demand will continue, so the service is looking at different delivery models which will ensure the demand is met.

Consultation has already started with both Taxi and Private hire providers for their feedback and comments and meetings have been arranged with the Health service to look at possibilities of joint working and with Sheffield CC who have recently tendered for their taxi and private hire providers.

6. This report seeks approval to start the procurement process in order that contract arrangements be tendered and awarded from 1st April 2017.
7. It is intended that contracts will be for a maximum of four years.

Recommendations

The Chief Officer, Civic Enterprise Leeds, is requested to approve the request to commence the procurement process in order that new contract arrangements are awarded for the supply of Taxi and Private Hire providers from 1st April 2017.

The maximum length of a contract will be four years.

1.0 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To seek approval to start a procurement process in order that new contract arrangements are tendered and awarded for the supply of Taxi and Private Hire contractors from 1st April 2017. The contract will for 2 years with an option to extend for a further 24 months.
- 1.2 To seek authority to incur an estimated expenditure of up to £8.0m, dependent on demand.

2 Background information

- 2.1 It is a statutory responsibility of the council to provide home to school transport for children and young people with SEND; and Children's Services commission Passenger transport in order to undertake this duty.
- 2.2 Further to this Children's Services and Adult Social Care commission Passenger transport to provide home to school transport for children and young people who are looked after, as well as adults with learning difficulties in order that they can access day services.
- 2.3 The service is currently provided by a mix of our own in-house fleet as well as the utilisation of a framework agreement from which 25 taxi and private hire contractors are invited to bid for routes as and when required.
- 2.4 The current framework arrangement is due to expire 31st March 2017, therefore approval to commence a procurement process is required in order to tender and award new contract arrangements.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Passenger Transport is required to transport over 3200 customers each day. This is managed through our own in house fleet but also in partnership with Taxi and Private hire contractors, who through a current framework agreement, are able to support the service with the provision of wheelchair accessible minibuses, standard minibuses, cars, and also some companies are able to supply passenger assistants who support the young child or adult with learning difficulties throughout their journey.
- 3.2 Without the support from taxi and private hire contractors, children with SEND and children who are in care of the authority would not be able to attend school and adults with learning difficulties would be unable to access day services.
- 3.3 The demand for children's transport is under huge pressure as there is an increase in the number of children with SEND who qualify for transport as a result of their complex and challenging needs.
- 3.4 In order to meet this demand the inhouse service is also reviewing its capacity and over the next two years it will be investing in additional resources, but the demand for transport is such that support is also required from Taxi and Private hire providers.
- 3.5 As well as an overall increase in the amount of transport required, the specific transport requirements have changed since the last framework; there is a greater need for specialist transport for children with complex medical needs and there is

an increase in the demand for Passenger assistants; some of this demand will be resourced by the in-house service, but there will be added requirements from providers to support the service.

With this in mind meetings have been arranged with the Health service who are in the process of tendering for the supply of taxis and minibuses to support their needs. This may open up the opportunities for joint working.

- 3.6 Further, discussions are also planned with Sheffield CC who have recently undergone a tender process for the provision of Taxi and Private hire providers. Any feedback and good practice will hopefully be shared at these meetings for consideration in the new contracts.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 Consultation with both Children's services and Adult Social Care has already commenced in order that their requirements are considered and included in the contracts.
- 4.1.2 Consultation has also commenced with all taxi and private hire contractors, during which we've asked for feedback on the current arrangements and we also discussed the increase in demand and the added pressures this would be placing on the council as well as ideas on how best we can work together to meet this demand. The results of this feedback and the suggestions from the Taxi and Private Hire providers will be considered as part of the procurement process.
- 4.1.3 Further, consultation has been arranged with the Health Service who are working to a similar timeline in order to procure Taxi and Private Hire providers to support their demand, as well as consultation with Sheffield CC who have recently retendered for the supply of taxis and minibuses.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration screening report has been considered and a full Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, see appendix A.

A number of action points have been highlighted from the Equality Impact assessment, in particular the need to encourage more females to become drivers and more males to become Passenger assistants. These will be considered as part of the quality assessment for successful providers.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 The proposals within this report will contribute to the continued delivery of an effective Passenger Transport service for Leeds City Council.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The services will be procured through the standard procedure in accordance with the Council's Contracts Procedure Rules to assure value for money.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

4.5.1 This is a key decision and available for call in.

4.6 Risk Management

4.6.1 If Passenger transport did not have contract arrangements which support the service in the provision of transport, the council would not be able to meet its statutory obligation to provide home to school transport for children and young people with special educational needs.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Passenger Transport is commissioned to provide home to school transport for children and young people and transport for adults with learning difficulties in order they can access day services.

5.2 The demand for home to school transport is increasing, and whilst the in-house service is reviewing its own mix of resources the service will still depend on the support and partnership arrangements with Taxi and Private Hire providers.

Without such contract arrangements the council would fail in its statutory obligation to provide home to school transport for children with special educational needs.

5.3 Throughout the tender process a number of discussions will be had with existing providers as well as the Health service and with Sheffield CC, both of whom commission both minibuses and taxis to support their needs.

6 Recommendations

6.1 The Chief Officer, Civic Enterprise Leeds is requested to approve the request to commence the procurement process in order that new contract arrangements can be awarded for the supply of Taxi and Private hire providers from 1st April 2017.

The maximum length of a contract will be four years.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 Appendix A

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available for download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.