

**Report of: Chief Officer Civic Enterprise Leeds**

**Report to: Director Resources and Housing**

**Date: 21<sup>st</sup> July 2020**

**Subject: Passenger Transport – Authority to procure contracts for the supply of home to school transport.**

Are specific electoral wards affected? If yes, name(s) of ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Has consultation been carried out?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Will the decision be open for call-in?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" 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**

**1. Main issues**

- Passenger Transport currently has approved frameworks for the supply of taxi and private hire contractors (DN219654) and a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for both minibuses and wheelchair accessible minibuses (DN251076) which support the service with home to school transport. The current spend is projected at between £6m-£8m per annum.
- Contracts for the supply of Home to School transport will commence on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2020. The contracts will be to various school settings, with varying contract lengths, depending on the specific needs of the individual. The Authority has a statutory duty to provide home to school transport for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) including those who are eligible for assistance under the Authority’s Transport Policy.
- The purpose of this report is to seek approval to use the approved frameworks which consist of 10 providers who will be invited to tender bids for home to school routes.

**2. Best Council Plan Implications** (click [here](#) for the latest version of the Best Council Plan)

- Supports the Child Friendly City agenda, ensuring that young people have appropriate support to attend school, helps improve educational attainment, closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes.
- Supports the Safe Strong Communities agenda as our transport system ensures that we keep people safe from harm whilst under our care and protects the most vulnerable.
- Sustainable infrastructure – improving air quality, reducing noise and emissions.

### **3. Resource Implications**

- This procurement activity will take place during the summer school closure period starting on the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020 with results available from the 25<sup>th</sup> August 2020. In parallel the summer route review exercise will be repeated to ensure that routes are efficient and occupancy rates are as high as possible. The tender exercise will use the approved frameworks which will ensure value for money, flexibility and control. The majority of routes will be delivered in house but these need to be supplemented by the private hire market. It is anticipated that the tenders received will be within the overall budget provision of up to £8m.

### **Recommendations**

- a) The Director of Resources and Housing is requested to approve the commencement of this procurement activity for home to school and adult day centre transport from the approved frameworks.

#### **1. Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 The Director of Resources and Housing is requested to approve the commencement of this procurement activity through the approved frameworks of taxi, private hire and Hackney Carriage providers as well as minibus providers for the supply of home to school transport for children and young people with SEND and to adult day centres.
- 1.2 Based on a current demand it is estimated that spend will be between £6-£8m.

#### **2. Background information**

- 2.1 Passenger Transport is commissioned by both Children's and Families and Adult's and Health to provide home to school transport for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and children who are looked after, as well as adults with learning difficulties in order that they can access day services. This is a statutory responsibility for the Council to undertake this duty.
- 2.2 This procurement activity will be provided by a mix of our own in-house fleet as well as the use of approved frameworks from which a total of 10 taxi and private hire providers will be invited to bid for routes as and when required.
- 2.3 The current frameworks for the supply of taxi and private hire contractors (DN219654) and a DPS framework for both minibuses and wheelchair accessible

minibuses (DN251076) was established on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017, and was advertised in the Official Journal of the European Union. The frameworks are therefore subject to European Procurement regulations and comply with the requirements of the regulations.

- 2.4 Once the appropriate school setting has been agreed between the Authority and parents/carers, the families of children and young people are required to submit an application form for transport assistance. This is considered by a team of Travel assessors, who check eligibility against the Home to School Policy and in line with the current policy discuss any suitable alternatives; such as independent travel training or car mileage. Once these options have been explored and there is no alternative the young person's transport requirements are scheduled onto an appropriate vehicle and a contract let.

### 3. Main issues

- 3.1 Passenger Transport is required to transport over 3,000 customers each day. This is managed through both our own in house fleet but also in partnership with taxi and private hire providers, who 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 the 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 From July 2020, details of the children and young people requiring transport assistance have been received by the service, and will continued to be received throughout the summer. The majority of the young people are already known to the service but, in an effort to save costs, a transport review has been undertaken to provide our services more efficiently which is reflected in the routes to be tendered over the summer.
- 3.4 None of the individual call-off contracts are expected to exceed £500k per annum, and we estimate the overall costs of year-on-year equivalent work to fall compared to last year, due to the rescheduling activities over the summer.

#### 3.5 Timetable of procurement activity:

27/07/2020	Authority to Procure published
11/08/2020	Children's and Families inform Passenger transport of the varying routes required for 2020/21.
18/08/2020	Tender exercise will commence through both the framework agreement and DPS.
25/08/2020	Tender exercise completed
26/08/2020	Authority To award completed and signed

## **4. Corporate considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and engagement**

- 4.1.1 Consultation with both Children's and Families and Adult's and Health continues throughout the year in order that transport arrangements meet the appropriate requirements and is within the appropriate policy guidance.
- 4.1.2 The service also works in partnership with the Council's Taxi and Private Hire licensing service if there is any licensing or regulation issues with a provider.

### **4.2 Equality and diversity / cohesion and integration**

- 4.2.1 An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration screening report was considered for the framework arrangement and a further Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this request.

### **4.3 Council policies and the Best Council Plan**

- 4.3.1 The proposals within this report will contribute to the continued delivery of an effective Passenger Transport service for Leeds City Council. It is paramount that procurement within Leeds City council is undertaken with a view to ensure openness, transparency and fairness. As such the contracts for the supply of home to school transport will be procured in line with Leeds City Council's Contract Procedural Rules.

#### Climate Emergency

- 4.3.2 The service that is required to be delivered can have a significant impact on the environment as it can involve high numbers of repeat journeys in what have historically been diesel vehicles. In order to reduce the impact on the environment a number of actions have been taken by the service including commissioning a fleet of more fuel efficient, reduced emissions CAZ (Clean Air Zone) compliant in house vehicles, through the route review increasing occupancy rates and making routes more efficient to reduce mileage and smarter routing when requesting a service from external providers. We have also been working with suppliers on ensuring they are aware of the CAZ and are compliant and encouraging them to reduce emissions.

### **4.4 Resources, procurement and value for money**

- 4.4.1 A framework contract has been let and orders will be placed in accordance with its terms and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules. Competition has been used throughout the process to assure value for money.
- 4.4.2 There are adequate resources available through both CEL and the PACS team to undertake the procurement activity.

### **4.5 Legal implications, access to information, and call-in**

- 4.5.1 The Director of Resources and Housing is authorised to make this decision to utilise the taxi and DPS frameworks to invite tenders for home to school and day centre transport.

4.5.2 Advice regarding any procurement exercise, including terms and conditions of contract/arrangement will be obtained from the PACS section to ensure compliance with Council governance procedures.

#### **4.6 Risk management**

4.6.1 If Passenger Transport did not let the contracts on time, the Authority would be at increased risk of being in breach of its statutory responsibility to provide transport assistance for children and young people with SEND and children who are in care of the Authority.

#### **5.0 Conclusions**

5.1 Passenger Transport is commissioned to provide both 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 service is provided through a mix of an in house fleet and the utilisation of frameworks whereby taxi and private hire providers are invited to bid for routes as and when required.

5.3 Throughout the summer application forms for transport assistance are received by the service from parents and families of children and young people with SEND. The application forms are considered in line with the current Transport Policy and if there is no alternative available to parents, transport assistance is provided through the provision of a Passenger transport minibus or Taxi and Private Hire vehicle which has been commissioned by Passenger Transport.

5.4 The service has frameworks for the supply of taxis and a DPS for the supply of minibuses. All contracts for the 2020/21 academic year will be let from the appropriate framework and all suppliers will be invited to tender.

#### **6.0 Recommendations**

6.1 The Director of Resources and Housing is requested to approve the commencement of this procurement activity for home to school and adult day centre transport from the approved frameworks.

#### **7.0 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

None.

---

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