

West Yorkshire Liftshare Agreement

Date: 7 June 2022

Report of: West Yorkshire Liftshare agreement

Report to: The Chief Officer (Highways & Transportation)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- In 2011, West Yorkshire Combined Authority (the “Combined Authority”) entered into an agreement with Liftshare.com Ltd (“Liftshare”) for the provision of journey matching and journey sharing services to the public and member districts (the “Agreement”). The Agreement has been renewed each year without a competitive tendering process by the Combined Authority organisation “Travel Plan Network” (TPN).
- The total value of the Agreement in 2021-22 was £7,500 and Leeds City Council contributed £3,379.35 (45%) from the Influencing Travel Behaviour team budget, cost centre 27720.
- Officers from the Combined Authority presented a report to the Task Group on 22 April 2022 outlining a proposal that the Combined Authority review the Agreement with Liftshare.com Ltd which is due for renewal on 31st July 2022.
- The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation to withdraw from the Agreement with Liftshare.com Ltd and outline the alternative options to promote ridesharing in Leeds.
- Shared journeys (also called lift sharing, carpooling or ride sharing) is a form of shared mobility and is recognised in the Connecting Leeds Transport Strategy in theme 3 ‘Mobility and Services’. It supports Leeds Climate and Net Zero ambitions by reducing the number of single occupancy vehicles trips and thereby engendering the associated reduction in carbon emissions.
- Lift sharing is particularly beneficial when it enables people to access employment opportunities where public transport cannot provide an option for a particular journey (for example shift workers at factories) or where car parking is limited and needs to be managed more effectively by minimising the number of vehicles arriving at a site. This helps tackle the affordability of travel and improving access to employment.

Recommendations

The Chief Officer, Highways and Transportation is requested to:

- a) Note the contents of this report.
- b) Approve withdrawal from the Agreement with Liftshare.com Ltd

Why is the proposal being put forward?

1. Discussions between Combined Authority TPN officers, policy officers and district officers have indicated that the current agreement is not offering the benefits and value for money that it was originally set up to achieve.
2. When the Agreement was entered into in 2011, there were a limited number of journey matching suppliers in the UK. Whereas now, there a range of suppliers and several employers in Leeds have proactively partnered with these organisations to offer their staff ride sharing to promote sustainable travel.
3. As a result, the need for a ride matching agreement at West Yorkshire level is somewhat unnecessary. The Combined Authority have therefore asked districts if they wish to continue with an agreement in the future.
4. In Leeds, fourteen employers are registered to use Liftshare.com for ride matching services, including Leeds City Council. Employers have access to a dashboard to monitor uptake of ridesharing by their own colleagues, summary statistics about the scheme's membership numbers, journeys registered and matches made.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: All

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

5. Withdrawing from the Agreement will have minimal impact on employers and staff in Leeds. Employers that have joined Liftshare.com will still be able to access the services offered as part of their membership.
6. Leeds City Council officers will continue to signpost travel plan coordinators and employers to ride sharing services as a way of encouraging sustainable travel to work.
7. The Leeds City Council staff group will be removed from the platform, but staff will be able to access Liftshare.com and arrange lifts with other people registered on the platform.
8. The proposals requested in this report have no direct impact on any of the equality characteristics as it is purely an administrative function and therefore it is not applicable to carry out an equality, diversity, cohesion and integration screening at this time.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

9. The Combined Authority, through the TPN and their policy officers, have consulted with district officers to identify if an agreement is required and to consider the implications of withdrawing from the agreement.
10. The Executive member for Infrastructure and Climate has been informed of the proposal.

What are the resource implications?

11. The Combined Authority TPN has advised that as of financial year 2022-23, they would not be able to make a contribution to the fee and as a result, authorities will be required to pay more to cover this.
12. Allowing the Agreement to lapse will result in an annual saving of at least £3,379.35 from the annual Influencing Travel Behaviour team budget.

Table 2 Liftshare Agreement annual fees by district 2021-22

District	Fee breakdown	Percentage paid
Leeds	£3,379.35	45%
Bradford	£1,345.50	18%
Calderdale	£547.30	7%
Kirklees	£409.50	6%
Wakefield	£818.35	11%
WYCA	£1000.00	13%
-	£7,500.00	100%

What are the legal implications?

13. None identified.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

14. The wycarshare.com URL currently directs users to the West Yorkshire Liftshare platform and has been referenced in various promotional communications including Travel Plans, travel information guides and at events. Bradford District Council who own the URL, have agreed in principle that this URL can continue to be used to promote ridesharing/carsharing generally in West Yorkshire if the Liftshare agreement is not renewed.
15. There is the risk that the number of people ridesharing will continue to drop as people drive less, use other modes to travel or work from home more often. Leeds City Council officers will continue to promote ride sharing as part of a hierarchy of sustainable travel modes by raising awareness of the range of platforms that are now available.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

16. Council's Influencing Travel Behaviour team encourage ride sharing as a measure to address the transport needs of new and existing development which have a significant transport impact. Ride sharing is encouraged in Travel Plans prepared for new developments as a tool to reduce single occupancy travel and demand for parking.

17. Benefits to organisations and employers include reduced demand for car parking spaces and costs to provide and maintain parking bays, reduced emissions from commuting and employees arriving at work less stressed from commuting.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

18. The Combined Authority presented districts with two options regarding the Liftshare agreement:

- Option one is to re-tender a contract for a ridesharing platform for West Yorkshire, following appropriate procurement procedures and ensuring a more robust contract is put in place compared to the current Agreement.
- Option two is to let the current Agreement with Liftshare lapse at the end of July and instead promote the range of ridesharing platform options to individuals and organisations so that they can choose the one(s) that best suits their needs.

19. The consensus within the Council's Influencing Travel Behaviour team is to withdraw from the Agreement (option 2) and Leeds City Council officers will continue to promote ride sharing as part of a hierarchy of sustainable travel modes by raising awareness of the range of platforms that are now available.

20. The Combined Authority have advised that only one District wanted to continue with the existing Liftshare.com contract and therefore the agreement should cease and partnership working to promote ridesharing/liftsharing in West Yorkshire will continue.

b) What is the timetable for implementation?

21. The Combined Authority will advise Liftshare.com Ltd about the decision no later than 1st July 2022 to allow for a 30-day notice period to be served prior to the renewal date of 31st July 2022.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – West Yorkshire Combined Authority Task Group paper

Background papers

None