

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 9 April 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director Policy & Resources

SUBJECT: Passenger Transport Tenders

PORTFOLIO: Transportation

WARDS: Borough-Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To notify the Executive Board that transport tenders are to be published via The Chest in compliance with EU Public Procurement Regulations 2006 in line with Standing Orders part 6.0 and 6.8 – The Open Tender Procedure. This is a report for information purposes, to also comply with Procurement Standing Order Part 2.1 due to the accumulative value of the contracts projected to be in excess of £1.2 million. The award criteria for this contract will be based on Most Economically Advantageous Tender (MEAT) principles.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Executive Board supports the process of advertising transport tenders on behalf of Children and the Economy and Communities Directorates for services required from September 2015.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 The Transport Co-ordination Section is responsible for a complex range of passenger transport contracts and arrangements for vulnerable children and adults on behalf of both the Children & Economy and Communities Directorates with the full support from the Procurement Division. These arrangements, which if not provided by the Council's in-house fleet of passenger transport vehicles or by volunteer drivers, must be contracted out for a period of up to four years to external transport providers. Such providers typically include licensed taxi operators and drivers, and minibus/coach companies. Where possible, however, priority is given to arranging transport for passengers on the Council's in-house fleet provision. This is particularly for transport services that include multiple wheelchair users due to cost effectiveness and the fact that there is a severe shortage of wheelchair accessible minibuses in the area.

3.2 The Children & Economy and Communities Directorates are responsible for providing the transport requirements for any vulnerable passenger that needs and is entitled to assisted transport to educational establishments, adult day care facilities and community venues respectively. Transport Co-ordination is then responsible for procuring the most cost effective and practical means of transport, depending on the mobility and additional needs of each passenger.

- 3.3 All school and adults transport runs will be tendered as individual contracts with each specifying the minimum size/capacity of vehicle to be provided, the specialist needs/requirements of the passengers to be transported and whether a passenger assistant is to be provided by suppliers.

For information, there are currently 78 Mainstream and Special Education contracts, 23 contracts for vulnerable adults and 7 Looked After Children contracts. The total annual cost for providing these external contracts is currently £1,218,000.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 None

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

- 6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

All of the passenger transport contracts are constantly monitored to ensure that the required level and quality of service is offered to passengers on behalf of the Children & Economy and Communities Directorates.

- 6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Some of the passenger transport contracts to be tendered are to provide accessible transport services for vulnerable young people and adults to facilities providing lifelong learning and skills.

- 6.3 A Healthy Halton

Many of the passenger transport contracts to be tendered provide essential access to a wide range of activities, to key facilities across the Borough and to out of borough establishments as required. Therefore, passenger transport indirectly helps to ensure vulnerable adults and children live a healthy and active lifestyle.

- 6.4 A Safer Halton

Where passengers are not aware and/or confident enough to travel by public transport, the transport service enables all passengers to access facilities in a safe way, ensuring that they are socially included. Travel Training is provided, where appropriate, to individuals to provide them with the skills, confidence and independence to travel by public transport.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

There are no direct implications arising from this report.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Funding reductions may pose a risk to the services we are required to provide. Children & Economy and Communities Directorates may exert more stringent controls and criteria within their transport/travel policies and practice in order to manage reduced budgetary constraints.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Passenger transport service contracts are constantly monitored to ensure the operation of these services embrace equality and diversity issues in line with the Equality Act.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 None for the purposes of the Act.