

SCRUTINY COMMISSION FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES	Agenda Item No. 5
13 JULY 2010	Public Report

Report of the Executive Director of Operations

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PASSENGER TRANSPORT FRAMEWORK CONTRACT

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report is being presented at the request of the Scrutiny Commission for Rural Communities. The item is currently listed on the Forward Plan for July 2010.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Commission is asked to scrutinise and comment on the proposed decision prior to its submission to the Cabinet Member for Housing, Neighbourhoods and Planning for decision.

3. LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

- 3.1 This area of work relates directly to the Sustainable Communities Strategy, specifically the priority to create the country's environment capital and deliver substantial and truly sustainable growth. There are links to the following national indicators:

NI175 Access to services by public transport, walking and cycling
NI177 Local bus passenger journeys
NI185 CO2 reduction from local authority operations
NI186 Per capita CO2 emissions
NI198 Children travelling to school – mode of transport used

4. BACKGROUND

- 4.1 School transport is provided in line with the Council's Children's Services Transport Policy (September 2007) and provides free or subsidised transport for a number of schools as per the requirements of the Education Act 1996 and Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- 4.2 Transport is required for children in mainstream education and those with special educational and social care needs. Contracts are tendered on a rolling procurement programme to ensure best value.
- 4.3 The procurement process followed was an open process in accordance with EU Procurement Directives. Expressions of interest in the tender were invited by advertising it through the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU).
- 4.4 Full evaluation of the tenders has not yet been completed. The evaluation process will involve assessing each contractors under a number of categories - Financial, Insurances, Health and Safety, Equality (including equal opportunities) and Environmental criteria, with particular emphasis directed at the Technical Ability and Quality Capacity.

5. KEY ISSUES

5.1 None.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are financial implications in that the cost of transport may go up as well as down as a result of this tendering exercise.

6.2 There are no significant implications to any particular ward or area. Whilst, as a result of this tendering exercise, there may be a change to individual suppliers of services, there is no change to the Council's Children's Services Transport Policy.

7. CONSULTATION

Current Suppliers

If routes are to be transferred to another supplier, the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations may apply.

Childrens Services

As budget holders for this area, Children's Services have been consulted on this Framework process.

There is a service level agreement in place between the Operations and Childrens Services departments for the provision of children's transport.

Legal

The Council has a statutory duty to secure the provision of transport services as detailed in the Framework Contract. Legal Services have provided advice throughout this procurement process.

Procurement

Compliance with European legislation in relation to contract procurement has been adhered to throughout this procurement process.

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1 Full evaluation will need to take place as detailed at 4.1 above. In accordance with the Council's Contract Regulations, approval to award contracts to individual suppliers will be sought via a Cabinet Member Decision Notice.

9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

9.1 None.

10. APPENDICES

10.1 None.