

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**Report by the Chief Education Officer****Education Services Committee: 11 March 2020**

Subject: School Transport Tendering Procedures Session 2020/21**1. Purpose**

- 1.1** This report informs Members of the proposed timetable for the processing of tenders for mainstream home-to-school contracts.
- 1.2** This report seeks approval from Members to proceed with the proposed timetable in order to secure contracts for school transport for a 5 year duration from school session 2020/2021 to session 2024/2025.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** It is recommended that:
- i) The Chief Education Officer be authorised to make the necessary arrangements in liaison with Strathclyde Partnership for Transport (SPT) to renew mainstream contracts for session 2020/2021 to 2024/25; and
 - ii) Following completion of the tendering process, any tenders received will be considered by the Tendering Committee.

3. Background

- 3.1** The Education (Scotland) Act 1980 on Education Authorities to make appropriate provision to assist pupils with accessing education. The Act requires that free transport be provided for all pupils up to the age of 8 who live more than 2 miles from their local school and to pupils over the age of 8 who live more than 3 miles from their local school.
- 3.2** The policy presently operated by West Dunbartonshire Council provides free home-to-school transport for primary school children who live more than 1 mile from their local school and for secondary school children who live more than 2 miles from their local school.
- 3.3** In order to secure contracts for session 2020/2021 and beyond, it is now necessary to begin the process as timetabled below.

4. Main Issues

4.1 In order to address the Council's requirements, the following stages and timescales are recommended:

- a) March 2020 – Present information to Educational Services Committee and seek approval to proceed with the necessary arrangements to secure tenders for mainstream school transport;
- b) March 2020 – In consultation with SPT prepare information regarding contracts to be renewed;
- c) May/June 2020 – report to Tendering Committee seeking appropriate approvals; and
- d) June 2020– SPT to be informed of the outcome of the tendering process.

4.2 Members will be aware that in respect of mainstream contracts, SPT acts as agent for West Dunbartonshire Council in securing contracts.

4.3 For session 2020/2021, the estimated cost received from SPT based on the current mainstream school contracts is £718,912. This cost can be accommodated within the allocated budget.

4.4 It should be further noted that the duration of mainstream contracts can vary from 1 year up to 5 years.

5. People Implications

5.1 There are no people implications related to this report.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

6.1 Based on the current transport service requirements, the anticipated spend will be contained within budget. All costs will be subject to tender procedures.

6.2 Further opportunities to maximise the positive social, economic and environmental impact for West Dunbartonshire Council through the contract will also be explored, eg through the use of Community Benefit Clauses.

7. Risk Analysis

7.1 If timescales for tendering are met, there is no identified risk to the service in relation to this issue.

7.2 There is always a risk that tenders may exceed current estimates.

8. Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)

8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out. The assessment demonstrates that the school transport arrangements promote equality in terms of access to education for pupils.

9. Consultation

9.1 Legal, Democratic and Regulatory Services and Section 95 Officer have been consulted with on the content of this paper.

10. Strategic Assessment

10.1 High quality school transport contracts contribute to the Council's strategic priority of delivering efficient and effective frontline services that improve the everyday lives of residents.

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Appendices: None

Background Papers: EIA screening

Wards Affected: All

