

16 June 2014

Agenda Item: 10

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION STANDARDS AND INCLUSION

AWARD OF SCHOOL TRANSPORT SERVICE TENDERS

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Committee approval to award school transport service contracts.

Information and Advice

2. Tenders are sought on an annual basis for the provision of school transport services following a review and planning process. The contracts are for home to school journeys for which the County Council has a statutory duty to provide free transport.
3. The review and tender exercise has been completed with the need to secure efficiency savings whilst retaining standards of service. The current value of the services involved is £3m per year.
4. Tenders were invited through the County Council's Framework tender process (2013) and evaluated on the most economically advantageous basis with an average of five bids per tender. Seventeen contracts have not been awarded to the lowest bidder because of operating capacity issues.

Results

5. The proposed pattern of awards is shown in **Appendix A**. Committee should note that the recent withdrawal of Bus Service Operator Grant (BSOG) from the Department for Transport to operators may result in higher tender prices and it is estimated that prices could rise by 12% to reflect the loss of grant funding. However, on a like for like basis, the new contracts will achieve a full year efficiency saving of £69,000.

Other Options Considered

6. There are no other options available.

Reasons for Recommendation

7. The County Council provides the transport to meet its home to school transport statutory duties.

Statutory and Policy Implications

8. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

9. The current contracts cost £3.041m per year; the new contracts will cost £2.972m per year, delivering efficiency savings of £69,000 per year. This can be offered up to offset the County Council's current financial shortfall.

Implications for Service Users

10. The new contracts will ensure that appropriate transport services are provided for young people to travel to and from school.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) It is recommended that Committee approve the award of school transport service contracts as set out in **Appendix A**.

John Slater

Service Director, Education Standards and Inclusion

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Mark Hudson

Group Manager, Transport and Travel Services

T: 0115 9774519

E: mark.hudson@nottscc.gov.uk

or

Chris Ward

Team Manager, Transport and Planning Operations

T: 0115 9773520

E: chris.ward@nottscc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments (LM 02/06/14)

11. The Children and Young People's Committee have delegated authority within the Constitution to approve the recommendations in the report.

Financial Comments (KLA 02/06/14)

12. The financial implications of the report are set out in paragraph 9 above.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Divisions Affected

All.

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