

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director,  
Enterprise, Community & Resources

**PORTFOLIO:** Transportation

**SUBJECT:** Local Bus Contract Tenders

**WARDS:** Borough-Wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To notify the Executive Board that the current Local Bus Contract Framework is due to come to an end in March 2021. On this occasion it is proposed to move from a framework type agreement to a Dynamic Purchasing System(DPS) to cover the period April 2021 to March 2023 with an option to extend the period by a further two years. A DPS will allow for flexibility to allow suppliers to join at any time during the lifetime of the DPS once they have satisfied the relevant criteria.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: It is recommended that the Executive Board:**

- 1. Approves the use of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) agreement for the procurement of supported local bus contracts.**
- 2. Notes that under Procurement Standing Order Part 2.1, the accumulative value of the contracts is projected to be in excess of £1 million over period of the DPS agreement.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 The Council is responsible for providing supported local bus routes. These services are non-profitable due to the generally lower level of passenger demand they attract and hence are not provided on a commercial basis by local bus operators. The local bus budget provides support for these socially necessary bus services as there is evidence passenger demand for employment, educational, medical and/or leisure/social related journeys. These arrangements are required to be contracted out for a period of one to four years to external transport providers.
- 3.2 The local bus DPS will be a mechanism that allows the Council to identify public transport operators who are capable of delivering local bus transport contracts on behalf of the Council to the standard identified in the current conditions of contract. The DPS will provide a platform to

advertise long-term or short-term contracts over a reduced advertising period as all the qualifying requirements have previously been met.

- 3.3 To become part of the DPS providers are required to demonstrate their capabilities of delivering contracts by completing a Pre-Qualifying Question are (PQQ), which contains a series of quality, financial and experienced based questions relating to the contract requirements.
- 3.4 The main disadvantage of the current framework agreement is that any new operators expressing an interest to join are unable to do so until the agreement expires. The DPS allows for new operators to join the agreement at any time as long as they satisfy the PQQ. Therefore, providing further benefit for the Council in that the number of contractors can be increased at any time.
- 3.5 It should be noted that the supported local bus network currently provides for in excess of 253,000 passengers journeys across the Borough.
- 3.6 There are currently 13 local bus contracts in operation in the Borough providing access to employment areas, health facilities, education and training facilities. These contracts are tendered through the local bus framework as and when required.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no Policy Implications associated with this report.

#### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The annual budget to provide the local bus services is £529,000.

#### **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

It is widely recognised that good quality and affordable public transport services can help to improve access to key facilities for children and young people within the Borough.

- 6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The supported local bus network provides a wide range of accessible public transport services within the Borough aimed at improving access to key employment, learning and training facilities.

- 6.3 Healthy Halton

Many of the public transport contracts tendered provide essential access to a wide range of key facilities across the Borough and to out of borough

establishments. Therefore, public transport directly helps to assist and ensure that the public in general, live a healthy and active lifestyle.

#### 6.4 A Safer Halton

Public transport services are provided to enable passengers to undertake a variety of journeys in a safe and non-intimidating environment. It also enables all passengers to access facilities in a safe manner, ensuring that they are socially included.

#### 6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Provision of public transport services is widely acknowledged as playing a key role in sustainable regeneration and urban renewal. It also allows residents to access key areas within the Borough and cross-boundary to neighbouring districts.

### **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 There are no specific risks associated with this report.

### **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Public 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.