

Finance and Resources Committee

10.00 am, Thursday, 15 January 2015

Extension of Existing Community and Accessible Transport Agreements from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Item number	7.21
Report number	
Executive/routine	
Wards	All

Executive summary

This report seeks Committee authorisation to extend a number of service level agreements with Third Sector community transport organisations. This is to ensure that the provision of services to users will be maintained while phase 2 of the Community and Accessible Transport Review is concluded and a framework for group travel is put in place.

Links

Coalition pledges	P30
Council outcomes	CO10 , CO11 , CO13 , CO22
Single Outcome Agreement	SO2 , SO3

Extension of existing Community and Accessible Transport Agreements from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee authorises the extension of the service level agreements with: Lothian Community Transport Service, South Edinburgh Amenities Group, HcL, Pilton Equalities Group, Dove Transport and Lothian Shopmobility for a period of 12 months from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016.

Background

- 2.1 The City of Edinburgh Council currently funds six voluntary sector organisations to provide a range of community and accessible transport services. The organisations provide over 125,000 trips per annum for groups and individuals comprising older people, those with mental health problems, learning difficulties and physical disabilities, as well as young people. The organisations and the amount of funding they received are listed in the table below.

Organisation	Funding
Lothian Community Transport Service (LCTS)	£150,591
South Edinburgh Amenities Group (SEAG)	£98,847
HcL (formerly Handicabs)	
Dial a Ride	£341,435
Dial a Bus	£106,555
Pilton Equalities Group (PEP)	£29,800
Dove Transport	£29,800
Lothian Shopmobility	£78,207

- 2.2 The organisations all have a long history of working with the Council to deliver these services. They formerly received funding via the grants process, however in 2011/12 the funding mechanism was changed to service level agreements. The Finance and Resources Committee, at its meeting on 16 January 2014, agreed to extend the service level agreements with all six organisations, pending the outcome of the Community and Accessible Transport Review.
- 2.3 A report on phase 1 of the Community and Accessible Transport Review was recently considered at the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee at its meeting on 4 November 2014. Approval of the recommendations of the report was deferred to allow further consultation with community and accessible transport organisations. The report, as amended, is scheduled to be resubmitted to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee on 20 January 2014.
- 2.4 Pending approval of the above report, phase 2 of the Community and Accessible Transport Review will take forward the recommendations for the development and implementation of a plan for procuring a group travel framework. It is intended that a framework will be in place by April 2016.

Main report

- 3.1 It is proposed that contract standing orders are waived and that the existing service level agreements be extended for a further year from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 without going through a formal procurement process.
- 3.2 The extension of the service level agreements will allow services to continue to be provided to a range of vulnerable groups, while the second phase of the Community and Accessible Transport Review is completed and a procurement plan for group and other community and accessible transport is put in place.
- 3.3 The development and implementation of a procurement plan for community and accessible transport, including the establishment of framework for group travel, will require the involvement of, and consultation with, a range of stakeholders, particularly service users, many of whom will have close and valued relationships with their existing transport providers. Any procurement plan will need to give careful consideration to issues of transition and continuity of service, as well as the growing demand for accessible transport services.

3.4 It should also be noted that the community and accessible transport organisations:

- are charities committed to achieving aims consistent with the Council's priority outcomes and objectives;
- were created in partnership with the Council in order to achieve these aims because there were no other similar bodies in existence;
- have a co-ordinated network of community transport projects working in partnership with each other to provide safe, high quality services that meet the needs of individuals and voluntary and community groups in Edinburgh;
- are able to provide added value to the services that they provide for the Council through use of volunteers and an ability to access other sources of funding; and
- have not received an uplift in funding for several years while continuing to provide the same levels of service.

Measures of success

4.1 Key measures of success for extending the existing service level agreements for another year:

- enhanced performance information from the suppliers which will inform the review and a funding reduction; and
- continued service provision for existing users.

Financial impact

5.1 The funding provided to the all six organisations will remain at the current levels. The cost of extending the existing service level agreements for one year from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 will be £835,235. This amount is contained within the existing community transport budget.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

6.1 If the recommendations are not accepted the impacts would be that:

- the Council funded Community Transport provision would cease on 31 March 2015.
- the transport services provided by these organisations would cease or be significantly reduced.
- the Council's aims of promoting independent living and social inclusion would be compromised.

6.2 The risk of challenge to extending the service level agreements are low.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 The contents and recommendations of this report do not detract from the delivery of the general public sector equality duties. The work carried out by the suppliers on the Council's behalf as described in this report does not infringe upon the ten areas of Human Rights and makes a positive contribution to advance equality of opportunity by having due regard to:
- removing or minimising disadvantage; and
 - meeting the needs of particular groups that are different from the needs of others.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 The work carried out by the groups on the Council's behalf as described in this report supports sustainability objectives by enabling users to travel in groups, thus reducing carbon emissions.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 Consultation and engagement with stakeholders at the appropriate level is ongoing as part of the current review of Community and Accessible Transport.

Background reading/external references

Report to Finance and Resources Committee 16 January 2014 - [Extension of Community and Accessible Transport Agreements 1 April 2014 – 31 March 2015](#)

Report to Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee 4 November 2014 – [Review of Community and Accessible Transport – Phase 1 Report](#)

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Links

Coalition pledges	P30 – Continue to maintain a sound financial position including long-term financial planning
Council outcomes	CO10 – Improved health and reduced inequalities CO11 – Preventative and personalised support in place CO13 – People are supported to live at home CO22 – Moving efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible
Single Outcome Agreement	SO2 – Edinburgh’s citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health SO3 – Edinburgh’s children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential
Appendices	None