


<p align="center"><b>London Borough of Hammersmith &amp; Fulham</b></p> <p align="center"><b>CHILDREN AND EDUCATION POLICY &amp; ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE</b></p> <p align="center">21 November 2016</p>	
<p><b>TRAVEL CARE AND SUPPORT SERVICES</b></p>	
<p><b>Report of the Acting Cabinet Member for Children and Education – Councillor Sue Fennimore</b></p>	
<p><b>Open Report</b></p>	
<p><b>Classification - For PAC review and comment</b> <b>Key Decision: No</b></p>	
<p><b>Wards Affected: All</b></p>	
<p><b>Accountable Director:</b> Rachael Wright-Turner - Director of Commissioning, Children's Services</p>	
<p><b>Report Author:</b> Jody Nason, Head of Commissioning, Children's Services</p>	<p><b>Contact Details:</b> Tel: 07739314473 E-mail: jody.nason@rbkc.gov.uk</p>

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report provides a brief overview of the travel care and support project and of the service specification and the process through which it was developed.

## **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to review and comment upon the contents of this report.

## **3. THE PROJECT**

- 3.1. The current provision is procured as part of a shared service arrangement with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea and with Westminster City Council. This arrangement provided a cost benefit through shared routes bundled together by end location. There are currently 6 shared minibus contracts and 4 shared taxi contracts.

- 3.2. Due to the expiry of the frameworks used to procure this service, there is a need for a new arrangement for transport services. Whilst the Westminster Framework enables extensions for a period of up to two years, this is on a shared services arrangement for the same, shared routes and providers.
- 3.3. Following a decision by members to re-procure routes for the Jack Tizard School in December 2015 on an enhanced specification, a new provider (CT Plus) was awarded these routes. This provided an opportunity to test that the enhanced specification could provide the standard of service required by members and could provide a care and support service, as opposed to simply a transport service.
- 3.4. The Jack Tizard contract which was awarded to CT Plus in April 2016 stipulated greater emphasis on the quality of service and on providing care and support to children and young people using home to school transport, focusing on their individual needs. The vision was outlined to include the delivery of a high quality, transparent Travel Care and Support Service, which is first and foremost about caring for, and understanding the travel and mobility needs of vulnerable children and young people. The service was co-designed and will be continually improved in partnership with service users and stakeholders.
- 3.5. Performance to date (from April 2016) is positive with all targets achieved (including the enhanced training requirements), no complaints and no defaults for poor performance issued by the TCST (Travel Care and Support Team). This demonstrates that a higher quality of service can be achieved through a more prescriptive specification with an emphasis on quality and outcomes for the children and young people and adults using the service. It is the Council's intention to replicate the better quality service across the Borough, to be achieved via a tender exercise, as described below.

#### **4. THE COMMISSIONING STRATEGY**

- 4.1 The strategic intentions of this procurement are to create a quality travel care and support service to transport vulnerable children and young people to and from school as part of the wider priority of the current administration to give children the best start in life. The Travel Care Strategy created as part of the Passenger Transport and Travel Care Project initiated in Autumn 2014 is underpinned by the following strategic objectives:
  - Enhanced quality of service with a focus on care and support, achieved through increased training of drivers and assistants, communication between the providers and stakeholders and relationships between staff and service users.
  - Dedicated focus on Hammersmith and Fulham residents.
  - Establishment of a strategic relationship between contractors and stakeholders (including the Council.)
  - Contractors providing clear community benefits.

Further detail on these objectives is set out below:

### **Enhanced quality of service**

- 4.2 Using the specification developed for provision procured for the Jack Tizard School, enhanced quality, including quality of care for vulnerable children and young people, will be achieved through more prescriptive requirements pertaining to staff, the vehicles themselves and communications. Market engagement has identified that providers are willing and able to increase the quality of the service delivered if the Council is clear within the specification.
- 4.2 In order to measure quality and the impact of services on the child or young person, the performance of providers within this contract will be aligned to individual, child-level outcomes which are underpinned by key performance measures.
- 4.3 The outcomes are child-centric and aligned to the overarching outcomes of the SEN service:
- Vulnerable children and young people are picked up from home on time, arrive at school on time, and are taken home on time.
  - Vulnerable children and young people arrive at school ready to learn.
  - Vulnerable children and young people are safe, protected and their needs are met.
  - Vulnerable children and young people are supported, where possible and appropriate, to be assisted to travel independently.

### **Dedicated focus on Hammersmith and Fulham residents**

- 4.4 The new arrangements will be “sovereign” to LBHF to achieve the enhanced quality and focus desired by the current administration.

### **Establishment of a strategic relationship between contractors and stakeholders**

- 4.5 One of the key elements of the Jack Tizard contract which commenced in 2016 was the aspiration to build relationships between providers and stakeholders. In order to achieve this there will be one provider for SEN minibuses, one for Adult minibuses and a list of accredited taxi providers. Additionally, contained within the contract and service specification will be a requirement for providers to engage with schools and to facilitate training and introductions between their front line staff (drivers and escorts) and the children, young people and their families that they provide a service to, to ensure operational staff fully understand the individual needs of children and young people who they will be providing travel care and support to. Finally, continuity of staff was highlighted by stakeholders as a priority area, in order to reduce disruption and anxiety for vulnerable children and young people, and therefore there will be a performance measure regarding staff turnover within providers with the intention of creating a stable service and the ability to develop relationships.

## Clear community benefits

- 4.6 Aligned to the priority of the current administration to back business and support a strong local economy, social value is at the heart of this procurement. In order to ensure that local residents benefit from this service, the provider will be asked in the procurement exercise to highlight how the service will be of benefit to local residents. There are numerous opportunities which could be delivered including free/subsidised driver training for local people, targeted employment opportunities as passenger assistants for local people and close working with local job centres to advertise opportunities.

## 4. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT

- 4.1 Co-development was a key feature in the development of the Jack Tizard revised specification which ensured that parents and service users were able to actively shape the content of the specification and the evaluation criteria.
- 4.2 A small cohort of parents and schools (8 representatives) were recruited to attend 2 workshops with the purpose of reviewing the Jack Tizard service specification, ensuring that relevant feedback was captured in a new version and obtaining resulting questions that parents would like included as part of the evaluation process.
- 4.3 The main concerns outlined by parents throughout the consultation were:
- **Passenger & Travel Care:** The service should be first and foremost about caring for, and understanding the travel and mobility needs of children, rather than just about providing transport.
  - **Communication & Relationships:** Reciprocal information sharing should be taking place on any issue to do with travel care and support from providers to vulnerable children and young people, parents, carers, schools and after school provision.
  - **Quality:** The service should be person centred, with the needs of vulnerable children and young people clearly assessed in relation to travel care and support. The unique needs of each child or young person should be well known and understood by providers and staff.
  - **Transport & Safety:** Children and young people should be collected and returned on time at agreed points, with someone responsible for them at each stage of the journey, so they are never left unsupervised.
  - **Staffing & Recruitment:** All staff should be competent, skilled and well trained to ensure they have the knowledge required to undertake their responsibilities in offering support and care to children and young people's individual and often complex needs.
  - **Timing & Logistics:** The comfort of the child should be paramount when route planning, particularly on long journeys and in hot and cold weather.
- 4.4 The final service specification was signed off by the co-development group on 2<sup>nd</sup> November. A summary of the points raised for inclusion in the service specification is outlined below. Several elements including pricing are still in

development and will be confirmed following additional feedback from providers during the market day on 21<sup>st</sup> November.

<b>Action</b>	<b>Resolution</b>
<p>Information about the support needs of each individual child to be shared with the transport provider by the Local Authority, school and parent.</p>	<p>Travel Care Plans will be shared by the local authority with the service providers and will be kept up to date. PEN portraits will be produced in collaboration with schools and parents/carers which summarise the individual needs and behaviors of each child or young person. A service level agreement will be drafted to ensure that services have clear operating procedures including a clear protocol with defined responsibilities for drop off and pick ups.</p>
<p>Information about delays to the service or changes to staff and routes will be provided in advance to the parent by the provider and the TCST.</p>	<p>The TCST will continue to utilise the text messaging service, ensuring they hold a complete database of mobile numbers for parents/carers. Providers will be asked to demonstrate what “tracking” technology they can provide to give live updates to parents and schools; and also to make their vehicles available for any technology systems that may be procured by the Council in the future.</p>
<p>Appropriate training to be provided to staff on transport (passenger assistants and drivers) so they have specialist knowledge of children and young people in their care, and can respond appropriately to individual needs, and robust reporting of incidents to be implemented.</p>	<p>MiDAS and PATS training will be provided to all staff and monitored through contract monitoring arrangements. Additionally, the schools will provide additional training and techniques (where appropriate) to aid staff in better dealing with the bespoke needs of children and young people, and will provide briefings where necessary . Incident reporting mechanisms will be monitored through contract monitoring arrangements and unannounced audits.</p>
<p>Vehicles will have appropriate safety equipment and children and young people will be kept secure and comfortable whilst travelling.</p>	<p>A minimum standard for vehicles will be defined which includes harnesses (as required), child locks (where appropriate) and air conditioning. This will be monitored through unannounced audits and contract management.</p>
<p>Provider staff (both drivers and escorts) to be introduced to children, young people and their families before commencing a new route and for staff to remain consistent and focused on delivering a</p>	<p>Introduction events will be held during contract mobilisation to ensure that parents, school staff and service users are able to meet before commencing any service, to ensure operational staff have an excellent understanding of the needs of children in their care. Staff turnover will be monitored</p>

personal, service user focused service.	and feedback on staff performance will be captured through contract management.
Journeys to be kept at the minimum possible duration and pick up/drop off times to be agreed in advance between parents/carers and providers.	A maximum duration in line with DfT guidelines will be applied to journeys and monitored through contract management activities. Pick up and drop off times will be agreed in advance and practice runs will be required as part of the contract mobilisation.

## 5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 The full commissioning strategy was presented to Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2016 and has been signed off. This strategy noted the co-designed service specification and the technical elements of the procurement.
- 5.2 The procurement exercise is due to commence in early December to enable a longer mobilisation period for the new providers. The first event, a market day for all interested providers will occur on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2016. The communications plan outlined a Phase Three to align with the contract implementation. During this phase of the project, communication and engagement will focus on ensuring that parents, carers and service users understand the individual impact arising from the commencement of the new service.
- 5.3 One of the key elements outlined throughout both the consultation and the co-development group was communication with both parents and schools in advance of any service change and a meeting with the new provider and their staff before the new service commenced. A full communications plan has been drafted and an excerpt of Phase Three is outlined below:

Activity	Method/purpose	Timescale
Termly newsletter/bulletin to schools and parents	To communicate key elements of the process to the schools	Throughout the process and feedback, termly
School based sessions to introduce new provider to school and parents/carers	Face to face session held at schools for parents, carers and service users to meet the new providers.	By 21 July 2017
Letter to parents with specific route information	By letter to inform them of new provider, route, driver and passenger assistant.	July - August 2017

## **6. SAFEGUARDING**

There are no safeguarding issues arising from this proposal.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

A full equality impact assessment has been drafted to accompany the strategy contained within the Cabinet report.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate legal implications. However, any legal issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1. As this report is intended to provide an update on recent developments, there are no immediate financial and resource implications. However, any financial and resource issues will be highlighted in any subsequent substantive reports on any of the items which are requested by the Committee.

## **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000**

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS USED IN PREPARING THIS REPORT**

None.

#### **Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – You Said, We Did