

# EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

## SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE : 4 NOVEMBER 2004

### TRANSPORT – LEASING OF REPLACEMENT MINIBUSES

#### Report by the Executive Director of Educational and Social Services

#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Social Work Committee approval for the lease of replacement minibuses for use by the Department of Educational and Social Services in the provision of front line services.

#### 2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Resource Support operates seventeen buses and minibuses on behalf of Social Work Services providing transport to service users enabling them to access the various services of the Department.

#### 2.2 Children's Services

The Community Youth Support Team share one 17-seat minibus with the Riverside Centre in Cumnock which they use to transport children to groupwork sessions in the south of the authority while they have limited access to similar vehicles in the north of the authority.

#### 2.3 Older People's Services

The Dementia Outreach Service operates a standard 17-seat minibus to allow service users to access their service. One standard 17-seat minibus is also assigned to the Rosebank Unit in Kilmarnock to provide transport to service users attending day care within the unit. In addition, transport for service users attending day care services in Muirkirk, Catrine and Auchinleck is provided by three standard 17-seat minibuses operating across the department.

#### 2.4 Adult Services

Transport is provided for service users attending day care at Riverside, Hurlford and Balmoral Road by nine buses of 17, 20 and 24-seats.

#### 3. SERVICE USER REQUIREMENTS/ACCESSIBILITY

- 3.1 On those minibuses fitted with vehicle taillifts access is restricted to one or two wheelchair users per journey due to space limitation and the restricted axle weights of the vehicles.

- 3.2 While the number of service users who use powered wheelchairs is increasing, only the more modern minibuses have the variable anchor points necessary for securing powered wheelchairs during transport. The restricted axle weights of the standard minibuses limits the capacity of the vehicles to one powered wheelchair per journey.

#### **4. REPLACEMENT PROPOSALS**

- 4.1 It is proposed to replace 3 of the current fleet, with a lease termination date of 1 March 2005. The new vehicles will have enhanced vehicular access for up to three wheelchairs per journey plus powered side door and step to increase accessibility for users with limited mobility. These vehicles would replace those which do not meet the current access needs of the service users and those with accessibility issues.
- 4.2 The leasing of three new minibuses would enable the Department to provide a comfortable modern transport service to service users across East Ayrshire with increased accessibility to vehicles for wheelchair users, both manual and powered, and those with mobility restrictions.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The projected leasing costs are estimated to be between £8,000 and £9,000 per vehicle per annum over 5 years. Annual Maintenance would be provided under the Service Level agreement with the Transport Services Section of the Development Services Department at an annual cost of £3,412 per vehicle. This results in a maximum annual expenditure of £37,236.
- 5.2 Current annual costs for leasing and maintenance for the three vehicles amount to £33,500.
- 5.3 The additional costs of the proposed lease agreements will be met from savings generated from the reduced requirement for vehicle hires arising from the operation of a more modern and reliable fleet and greater fuel efficiency of newer vehicles.

#### **6. LEGAL / POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Vehicle acquisition will conform with the Council's Standing Orders for procurement.

#### **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 7.1 Members of the Social Work Committee are requested to:-
- (i) approve the lease of the three 17 seat minibuses; and
  - (ii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

**John Mulgrew**  
**Executive Director of Educational and Social Services**  
**20 October 2004**  
**Enc (0)**

**LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**NIL**

For further information on this report please contact:  
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**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: EUAN COUPERWHITE**