

**EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL**

**SOCIAL WORK COMMITTEE – 24 MAY 2001**

**TRANSPORT – LEASING OF REPLACEMENT MINIBUSES**

**Report by the Director of Educational and Social Services**

**1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To seek the approval of Committee 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 eighteen buses and minibuses on behalf of Social Work Services providing provide transport to service users enabling them to access the various services of the department. The details of the overall fleet is attached as Appendix A.

**2.2** Children's Services

One standard 17-seat minibus is permanently assigned to Kilmaurs and Bellsford Children's Units. 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

The minibus shared between the Riverside Centre and the Community Youth Support Team provides transport to allow service users to access

therapy services at Arrol Park and attend college courses. Transport is provided for service users attending day care at Gilliesknowe, Riverside, Hurlford and Balmoral Road by a fleet of nine 17-seat minibuses and three 20/24-seat buses operating across the Authority.

## **2.5 Other Services**

One further 24-seat bus provides transport services to physically disabled groups in the south of the Authority. An additional two 17-seat minibuses are retained as spare vehicles providing cover for the other buses during periods of servicing or repair and support to various voluntary groups across the Authority.

## **3 SERVICE USER REQUIREMENTS / ACCESSIBILITY**

- 3.1** Three of the minibuses providing services Social Work service users do not have vehicle taillifts preventing access by wheelchair users and those with restricted mobility.
- 3.2** On those 17-seat minibuses fitted with vehicle taillifts access is restricted to one or two wheelchair users per journey due to limitations of space and the restricted axle weights of the vehicles.
- 3.3** 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.
- 3.4** The restricted axle weights of the standard 17-seat minibuses limits the capacity of the vehicles to one powered wheelchair per journey.

## **4. REPLACEMENT PROPOSALS**

- 4.1** It is proposed that an additional two 17-seat minibuses meeting the current specification be leased [i.e. 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 vehicles which do not meet the current access needs of the service users or which have limited accessibility and be based at the Riverside Centre, Cumnock.
- 4.2** The leasing of two new 17-seat minibuses would enable the department to provide a comfortable modern transport service to service users across the department with increased accessibility of departmental vehicles for

wheelchair users, both manual and powered, and those with limited mobility.

## **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1** The projected leasing costs would be £6,772 per vehicle per annum over five 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.
- 5.2** The annual maintenance costs reflect a saving of £1,310 per vehicle per annum based on current maintenance costs. Additional savings would be generated from the reduced requirement for vehicle hires arising from the operation of a more modern, reliable fleet.
- 5.3** The additional costs of the proposed lease agreements can be met from within the Department's existing transport budget.

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

Nil

## **7. RECOMMENDATIONS**

Committee is requested to:

- (i) approve the lease of the two 17 seat minibuses; and
- (ii) otherwise note the contents of this report.

John Mulgrew  
Director of Educational and Social Services  
ENC(1)  
9 May 2001

### **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**Nil**

For further information on this report please contact Allan McDougall, Head of Resource Support, at 01563-576090

**IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER: ALLAN Y MCDOUGALL**

**AGENDA**