Abstract: This report outlines the award of local bus service contracts. In addition, Members are updated on negotiations in respect of extension of the existing Travel Concession Scheme with ScotRail, and on the production of public transport publicity information.

1 RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. homologate the award of contracts by the Director of Planning & Transport as outlined in this report;

2. note the on-going negotiations with ScotRail in respect of continuing the availability of concessionary travel on rail services until the end of the current rail franchise agreement with ScotRail and delegate authority to the Director of Planning & Transport in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Law & Administration to conclude these arrangements; and


2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This report informs Members of proposed changes to local bus services through the award of ‘best value’ contracts, of on-going negotiations in respect of the extension of the Travel Concession scheme arrangements on rail services and of the production of public transport publicity information.

3 AWARD OF LOCAL BUS SERVICE CONTRACTS

3.1 At the last meeting of this Committee on 22 January 2004, Members agreed exemptions from the normal tendering process for contracts awarded on a ‘best value’ basis (Report 69/04 refers). It was agreed that the Director of Planning and Transport be granted delegated power to award contracts up to a maximum annual subsidy of £12,000 per contract and that such awards would be reported back to the next meeting of the Infrastructure Services Committee. The circumstances when contracts will be awarded on a ‘best value’ basis rather than via the normal tendering procedure were agreed as follows:

- to enhance frequencies on an otherwise commercial route e.g. two-hourly to hourly, hourly to half-hourly etc;
to provide off-peak journeys on a route that otherwise operates commercially. This can avoid ticketing issues for passengers should another operator win the contract. Also this ensures that where a high quality vehicle is used on the service during the daytime it is also used off-peak;

to procure small amounts of work up to £12,000 per annum where it might not be cost effective to go through the tendering process;

to procure emergency replacements for withdrawn services until they can go through the tendering process;

to divert an existing commercial service to serve a settlement/area – the alternative being to provide a separate contract in order to provide the facility;

to protect overall service provision within the corridor and maintain/improve links with other corridors.

3.2 A number of contracts falling within one or more of the above categories have been tendered which will commence on 29 March 2004. In order to meet service registration timescales these contracts have been awarded by the Director of Planning & Transport under his delegated powers. These ‘best value’ contracts are as follows:-

A110 : Forfar – Kirriemuir

This contract is for the extension of the 23:00 journey from Dundee to Forfar to continue beyond Forfar to Kirriemuir on Friday and Saturday evenings. This additional journey has been requested following a recent consultation exercise. The contract is on a route which is otherwise commercially operated by the company on Monday to Saturday daytime and Sundays. The cost of the contract is £2,392 per annum. This contract is awarded on two months notice of termination to Strathtay Scottish Ltd.

A132 : Friockheim – Glens Estate – Links Health Centre

This contract has been sought following requests from local residents for improved service levels. It provides a service on Mondays and Wednesdays from Friockheim to Montrose which together with existing operation on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays will give a service on all weekdays. These new journeys and all existing journeys on this corridor will be routed via the Links Health centre in Montrose. The cost of this contract is £7,060 per annum. This contract is awarded on two months notice of termination to John Petrie Minicoaches.

A135 : Dundee – Forfar

This contract is for the extension of an existing Dundee to Forfar journey to provide an 08:00 journey from Forfar to Kirriemuir on Saturdays. This additional journey has been requested following a recent consultation exercise. The cost of this contract is £1,820 per annum. This contract is awarded on two months notice of termination to Strathtay Scottish Ltd.
A137 : Brechin Town Service

This contract is for the provision of additional journeys, which had previously operated on a de-minimis basis, on the Brechin Town service on Monday to Friday afternoons. The contract provides for three additional journeys after 16:00 to Provost Buchan Road and Drumachlie Loan. The cost of this contract is £8,060 per annum. This contract is awarded on 2 months notice of termination to Strathtay Scottish Ltd.

4 TRAVEL CONCESSION AGREEMENT WITH SCOTRAIL

4.1 The current Travel Concession arrangement with ScotRail is due to terminate on 31 March 2004. Negotiations are on-going for an extension to the existing arrangement on the current terms to the end of the current ScotRail franchise in October 2004. Members are asked to delegate authority to the Director of Planning and Transport in consultation with the Director of Finance and Director of Law and Administration to conclude these arrangements.

5 LOCAL BUS SERVICE PUBLICITY

5.1 The 2004 editions of the Public Transport Map and Guide and Days out by Bus and Train leaflets for the Angus Towns will shortly be published. The Days Out leaflets contain information designed to attract tourists to the various attractions within Angus. Separate publications have been prepared for Glamis Castle and for visitors to Dundee detailing day trips to Angus.

5.2 The Guide to Community and Public Transport is also being updated and republished.

5.3 These publications will shortly be available in Libraries, Tourist Offices, Council Offices and other outlets throughout Angus. All of these publications will also be available on the Council's website at www.angus.gov.uk/transport. This site also has available full timetable information for bus services in Angus, town plans, details of travel concession schemes including application forms, links to the Rail, Citylink and Traveline journey planners and a news page.

6 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The cost of the additional contracts awarded by the Director of Planning and Transport under delegated powers amounts to £19,332 in a full financial year. This expenditure can be contained within the Planning and Transport Revenue Budget for 2004 – 2005.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Director of Law and Administration have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

8 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

8.1 There are no human rights implications arising from this report.
9 CONCLUSION

9.1 The local bus service network is constantly kept under review and where possible, within the current resource provision, new services are introduced to meet passenger demands.

9.2 Public transport publicity is fundamental to ensuring that passengers are aware of services available to them. The Transport Team produces a wide range of information ranging from maps, bus timetables and roadside information through to more specialist material aimed at mobility impaired passengers. This information is made widely available throughout Angus both in hard copy and on the Council’s web site.

NOTE

No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973, (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above Report.

AA/LEM/KW
23 February 2004

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