

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	Decision to direct award contract to Volkswagen Financial Services (UK) Ltd for the Hire of 10 Vehicles under GCA Framework RM6265 VEHICLE HIRE SOLUTIONS
Date of decision:	31/07/2026
Decision maker:	Chief Operating Officer - Resident Services
Authority for delegated decision:	A Key Cabinet Member decision was taken on 31 March 2026 to agree to implement delivery of school transport routes through the council's arms' length trading company Hoople. This will extend the existing school transport operating model to include an additional option for delivering transport in partnership with Hoople, Herefordshire Council's Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo). a) Cabinet Member approves the implementation of a pilot programme for delivering school transport routes in partnership with Hoople, Herefordshire Council's Local Authority Trading Company and; b) Cabinet Member delegates authority to the Chief Operating Officer of Resident Services to take all necessary actions and operational decisions, including but not limited to entering into contracts or other legal agreements, as required to implement this decision. Full details of the decision taken can be seen at the following link: Issue details - School Transport Operating Model - Herefordshire Council
Ward:	Countywide
Consultation:	Finance, Legal Services and Procurement
Decision made:	To direct award a contract under a compliant framework to VW Financial Services for the hire of 10 vehicles to support the delivery of Herefordshire Council's In-House School Transport Operating Model. The contract will be for an initial period of 12 months with an estimated total cost of £67,870, with an option to extend for a further period of up to 12 months, subject to continued service need, satisfactory supplier performance, and budget. The total contract value will be £135,870 including any extension period and will remain within approved budgetary provision and in accordance with the framework's pricing structure. The vehicles will be deployed to enable the ongoing operation of in-house transport routes from September 2026, ensuring sufficient fleet capacity to

	meet service requirements.
Reasons for decision:	To enable the implementation of the Council's new In-House School Transport Operating Model by ensuring sufficient fleet capacity is available to deliver services from September 2026, following the Cabinet Member decision taken on 31 March 2026.
Equality Considerations	The implementation of a pilot programme for delivering school transport routes is expected to have a positive impact across two elements of the Public Sector Equality Duty because it directly addresses barriers that disproportionately affect children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), as well as their families. a. Eliminate discrimination: Neutral – the statutory offer remains unchanged. b. Advance equality of opportunity: Positive – improved reliability particularly benefits SEND pupils dependent on consistent and specialist transport. c. Foster good relations: Positive – more predictable and better- managed operations support improved trust with families. However, there are no associated equality considerations directly related to awarding this contract for the hire of vehicles.
Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:	Finance: Costs have been reviewed and are considered proportionate and deliver value for money when compared to alternative delivery models (e.g. external contracts) and to other framework pricing. Legal: • The vehicle hire arrangement will be procured in compliance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and relevant procurement legislation. • Legal Services have been consulted to ensure all agreements are robust and enforceable. Risk Management: • There is a risk of delays in vehicle availability or mobilisation impacting service commencement; this will be mitigated through early procurement activity and contingency planning. • Risk of service underperformance will be managed through ongoing monitoring, performance management, and the ability to adjust fleet usage as required. • The use of the compliant framework has contributed to minimising risks associated with procurement delay, demonstrating competition and value for money for the public purse.
Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:	Leasing/purchasing options have been considered; however, it was concluded that this approach would be more appropriate once the service has been successfully established and demonstrates a sustained requirement for expansion.
Details of any declarations of interest made:	None.

Signed
Gemma Dando
Chief Operating Officer- Resident Services

Date: 31/07/2026