

# TRANSPORT CROSS SERVICE REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT PROGRESS REPORT

**Report By: Director of Environment**

## Wards Affected

County-wide

## Purpose

1. To inform Members of the further progress that has been made on implementing the recommendations of the Transport Cross Service Review.

## Financial Implications

None as a result of this report.

## Background

2. The Transport Cross Service Review Implementation Project seeks to implement improvements that will help the transport services currently provided by the Education, Social Care and Public Transport Teams meet transport needs in a quality and cost effective way through better co-ordination and integration.
3. A Project Board is in place chaired by the Director of Environment and includes the Director of Children's Services. The Project Team draws membership from these Directorates.
4. Progress reports on the implementation of the recommendations of the Transport Cross Service Review were considered by the committee at meetings on the 10<sup>th</sup> February, 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003, 13<sup>th</sup> October 2003, 26<sup>th</sup> April 2004 and 15<sup>th</sup> October 2004. The report considered on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2003 set a number of targets and milestones to be achieved during the implementation of the project. This report seeks to update Members on the current progress.

## Considerations

5. The project is continuing broadly in accordance with the original programme, although there has been some slippage in the delivery of the scheduling software elements that will improve the scheduling of education mainstream transport.
6. The following table identifies the original milestones and targets and, where appropriate, revised targets that have been adopted to guide the implementation of the project. Further details of progress, what has been achieved so far and the reasons for any amendments to targets and milestones are presented below.

Key Targets / Milestones	Target / Milestone as reported 13 <sup>th</sup> October 2003	Status / Revised Target
<b>Develop and Implement Improved Co-ordination and Integration</b>		
1. Potential IT systems examined and demonstrations held	30/5/03	Achieved
2. Change Management Strategy Developed	1/6/04  (Revised milestone to undertake review by 31/3/05 of further opportunities for coordination and integration as reported 15/10/04)	Co-location of Social Care Transport with Education Transport.  Revised milestone achieved. Following a review of further opportunities for coordination carried out by the review team in January, the following items are being developed: - Protocol for coordination of tendering for transport services - Development of single contractual framework for use in all tendering for transport services
3. Change Management Strategy Approved for Implementation	1/8/04  (as above)	Protocol and Single Contractual Framework to support coordination to be considered by the Board by the end of May 2005.
<b>Identify and Procure Scheduling Software</b>		
1. Potential IT systems examined and demonstrations held	30/5/03	Achieved
2. Budget Approved to procure appropriate software	30/6/03	Achieved
3. Software Installed	1/3/04	Achieved

4. Commence Review of Contracts <i>and use of the system for demand responsive transport provision</i>	4/5/04	Achieved in relation to Social Care, Special Educational Needs and Demand Responsive public transport. <b>The systematic review of all Education Mainstream contracts will commence once the relevant module of the software for this piece of work is operational. It had been hoped that this would be achieved by January. However, the development of this software has taken longer than anticipated and it is now due to be installed in mid April. See below for further details.</b>
<b>Review Discretionary Policies</b>		
1. Draft Revised Policies Considered by Cabinet to approve for consultation	Project Elements transferred for consideration by Education Scrutiny Committee Transport Working Group. This group reported back to Education Scrutiny Committee on 22 <sup>nd</sup> June 2004 and Cabinet considered a report in relation to this on 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2004 and resolved to broadly retain the status quo pending the outcome of other considerations. In response to developments, on 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2005, Cabinet approved a review of the current discretionary policy providing free home to school transport on denominational grounds.	
2. Publish Revised Policy		
3. Revised Policy Takes Effect		
<b>Pilot Projects for Staggered Opening Times for education and social care establishments</b>		
1. Identify suitable area for trial	28/2/03	Achieved
2. Complete desk top study prior to trial implementation	31/7/03	Achieved
<b>3. Agree revised transport services and opening times for live pilot</b>	<b>28/4/05</b>	<b>See progress report below</b>
<b>Brief LEA Governors on School Transport</b>		
1. Briefing held for Governors	30/4/03	Achieved

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Richard Ball, Transportation Manager on 01432 260965

## Commentary on Progress

### Develop and Implement Improved Co-ordination and Integration

7. The co-location of the Social Care Transport Team with the Education Transport team continues to make joint working easier. This has assisted with staff training and support in relation to the installation and use of the scheduling software.
8. A review of opportunities for further coordination has been undertaken and two pieces of work have been identified to complete this element of the project.
9. Firstly, a protocol is being developed for coordinating and agreeing the detail of services to be tendered. This seeks to minimise the potential for conflict between the requirements of the three service areas, which may reduce the level of competition for tenders and adversely affect value for money to the Council. The development of this protocol will consider stakeholder involvement in the process and review current budget arrangements to evaluate the potential for changes to budgetary arrangements to support greater coordination.
10. Secondly, work has now commenced on the development of revised contractual documentation for transport services, the aim being to produce a single, contractual framework that will be used by each Directorate.
11. Historically, each Directorate has produced its own contract for the purchase of transport services. However, to complement the tendering protocol, the project team is now looking forward to the implementation of a more co-ordinated approach for the purchase, management and delivery of transport services and a new contractual framework will undoubtedly assist this process. In addition, it may in due course be appropriate to revise certain contract conditions to take account of best practice and the new framework. Such amendments could consider quality issues such as driver training.
12. The project team is currently reviewing the existing contract documentation used in each Directorate. It is planned to complete a draft of a single contractual framework in May for consideration by the Board. Reference will also be made to the revision of the Council's procurement strategy.
13. It is intended that the new protocol and contractual framework would be reported to the relevant Cabinet Members for consideration and approval. This work would also enable the board to assess the possible extent of further integration of the service areas.

### Identify and Procure Scheduling Software

14. As reported in October 2004, the installation of the Trapeze "PASS" software for the service to provide a dynamic scheduling tool to enable the efficient use of vehicles for education, social care and public transport demand responsive trips has been completed and this part of the system is operational. There has been a qualitative improvement, particularly in relation to Social Care transport bookings, with the change from a paper based system to a computerised system that has enabled improved record keeping and better management of bookings.
15. As reported previously, Trapeze Software Ltd has committed to tailoring the software to specifically meet our requirements for the planning of mainstream education

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transport. This development work was due to be completed in time for the system to become operational from January 2005. Unfortunately, the development work has taken the company longer than they anticipated and Trapeze have apologised for the delay. Trapeze have now assured the Council that the software development work is nearing completion and have undertaken to supply and install this part of the system by mid April. In accordance with the contract with Trapeze, the company has not yet been paid for the outstanding work and the need for Trapeze to provide additional training at no additional cost due to the gap between initial training and the supply of the software is being discussed for when the new module has been installed.

16. A programme for reviewing current mainstream contracts will then be established once the full system is operational to enable opportunities for further efficiency improvements to be identified.
17. As reported in October 2004, a number of performance indicators have been established to monitor the improvements being achieved as a result of the adoption of the new Scheduling Software to ensure the predicted improvements in efficiency are being achieved. Once the system is fully operational, those indicators will be used to track progress.

#### **Pilot Project for Staggered Opening Times for education and social care establishments**

18. Good progress has been made in developing the details of this element of the project to develop a live pilot for coordination of transport to education and day centres. Following consultation with the manager of St Owens Centre for adults with learning disabilities and members of the project team. It is clear that staggering the opening hours of day services, in this case, could cause some difficulties to our service users. These could include:
  - Carer's time would need to be extended at home prior to transport arriving later.
  - Users might be starting day services too late and getting home too late, making the day too long for the user.
  - Users might not be able to access college courses due to transport running after course time starts.
  - Users would be limited to the use of the mini buses for other activities.
19. In the light of these concerns, in this particular case, it is planned to consider the potential benefits of sharing the transport (children & adults travelling together) when accessing schools and day services rather than staggering journeys. This could provide a cost effective way of meeting the needs of both groups. However, opportunities for staggering opening times will continue to be considered in appropriate future cases.
20. Careful consideration of individual client needs will be necessary to determine those children and adults that can travel together. Consultation will take place with carers, parents and guardians prior to making any changes to existing arrangements. Following the consultation process, routes will be reviewed to maximise the use of our resources. It is planned, subject to consultation, to introduce a live pilot of these arrangements in the Autumn.

## Conclusion

21. The above report highlights the progress that is being made to implement the recommendations of the Transport Cross Service Review. The work to develop a coordinated approach to tendering for contracted services will assist with ensuring closer working between the service areas. Whilst it is disappointing that there has been a delay in the delivery of the scheduling software elements for education mainstream transport, the supplier has undertaken to deliver these improvements by mid April and this will be closely monitored to ensure this element of the project is delivered. Attached at Appendix 1 is a copy of the current programme for the project. A further progress report will be submitted in six months time.

## RECOMMENDATION

**THAT the progress with the implementation of the Transport Cross Service Review be noted.**

## BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None

# APPENDIX 1 – TRANSPORT CROSS SERVICE REVIEW IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT PROGRAMME

