

Acquisition of Electric Buses for Riversider Service 100

Committee Strategy and Programmes

Date of meeting 28 March 2014

Date of report 19 March 2014

Report by Assistant Chief Executive (Operations)

1. Object of report

To recommend the committee to award a contract for two Public Service Vehicles powered by 'plug in' electric battery technology for operation on the Riversider Service 100, which operates between Glasgow City Centre and the Riverside Museum. This would be a pilot project to introduce 'Plug In' electric bus technology to the SPT operating area. It is proposed to award the contract to Optare Group Ltd.

2. Background

Contained within the Regional Transport Strategy is a commitment to improve the quality of bus provision under the 'Step Change for Bus' and Integrated Transport action plans whilst at the same time reducing carbon emissions from public transport. It is accepted that vehicles of midi-bus size maximises range and duration of daily operation, while use of electricity, instead of diesel, significantly reduces emissions and operating costs.

SPT currently tenders and manages Service 100 which operates between Glasgow City Centre and the Riverside Museum on behalf of Glasgow City Council (GCC). The service coverage, low daily mileage and city terrain are particularly well suited to zero emission electric vehicle operation. The current contract for Service 100 is due for renewal in 2014, and GCC have confirmed that they will continue to support this service for the duration of the contract period. All revenue funding for Service 100 is provided by GCC.

3. Outline of proposals

The Cost of the project is £456,500. Scottish Government has agreed that £281,000, previously awarded to GCC in support of reducing local bus emissions, can be transferred to SPT in furtherance of the project. In addition, GCC will provide general capital of £88,400, subject to approval. It is therefore proposed that SPT fund the balance of £86,790 from the already approved capital budget for bus replacement, and that the vehicles are added to the SPT fleet.

SPT would deploy these Zero Emission vehicles on future Riversider Service 100 contracts, issued on behalf of GCC. The contract will be tendered with options for 3 – 5 years in duration, and it is anticipated that contract costs should be minimal, if not zero, being offset by passenger revenue and the funded vehicle. However, this remains to be market tested and GCC have agreed to underwrite any revenue required. Tendering for the service operative will go through the normal process and be considered by SPT Operations Committee, in due course.

Tenders Received

SPT issued a tender specification for the electric buses which met the following criteria;

- 9 metre long, 2.475 metre wide midi-buses
- 31 seats
- Full electric propulsion system. No diesel engine
- ECO Drive Telematics for monitoring efficient driving performance
- Low Carbon Vehicle Certification for double Bus Service Operator's Grant
- 5 CCTV Cameras fitted for passenger safety.

Tenders were received by Optare Ltd and Wrightbus Ltd. Both tenders were compliant with the tender specifications.

Following tender evaluation it is recommended that two Optare Solo electric vehicles are purchased from Optare Group Ltd.

Summary

SPT would supply the vehicles to the operator of Service 100 on a full repairing lease basis, thereby significantly reducing any on-going revenue costs to Glasgow City Council for this service. The capital cost to purchase the two electric vehicles is expected to be £456,400. GCC will continue to meet any revenue costs attributed to Service 100.

As members will be aware from previous such initiatives, this 'spend to save' approach has generated significant savings against revenue budgets, whilst simultaneously delivering enhanced local bus services.

Service 100 has been identified as suitable for the application of electric vehicles to improve service quality, significantly reduce emissions and operating costs.

4. Committee action

The Committee is recommended to agree to the award of a contract to Optare Group Ltd for the purchase of 2 Optare Solo electric vehicles via the Bath and North East Somerset framework at an approximate cost of £456,400.

5. Consequences

- Policy consequences: *In line with Regional Transport Strategy.*
- Legal consequences: *Full repairing leases of the buses will require to be concluded with the operator of Riverside Service 100.*
- Financial consequences: *The vehicles require to be ordered before 31/03/14 to meet the terms of the grant funding. The purchase cost of the vehicles will be met from existing resources within the 2014/15 capital budget.*
- Personnel consequences: *None.*
- Social inclusion: *Retains current service provision.*
- Risk consequences: *None.*

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