

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of the process for budget reductions for next year 2004/05 and beyond, it is proposed that some Revenue savings could be forthcoming from an amalgamation of transport management. In order to achieve this saving, it will be necessary to bring the management sides together. Currently, for the main part, fleet and the management of the large number of vehicles, including waste and cleansing, is under LESD. It is proposed to maximise the benefits of having a joint management by including within LESD's remit the Passenger Transport Service which currently resides with DEAL.
- 1.2 At the current time, the Passenger Transport Service operates on a Licence held by officers within LESD and there is, therefore, an impetus to bring together the services under a single management structure. It follows, that the officer who currently holds the Licence would have a direct responsibility for service management and overview of operations.

2. Benefits of a Merged Service

- 2.1 The main benefits of bringing together the Passenger Transport Service with other fleet management activities are seen as:
- integrated management opportunities;
 - there is a certain expertise within LESD around transport issues and support will be more widespread;
 - improved communication between officers running similar services;
 - improved opportunities for shared training;
 - possibility of joint use of resources and reduced vehicle down-time;
 - reassessment of working arrangements.
- 2.2 Some initial discussions have been held with the trade unions to advise them of the proposed changes and no objections have been received. Indeed the TGWU have indicated that they see this as a positive move.
- 2.3 A meeting was held with staff last year at which staff were informed of the proposals. Further meetings with staff will be held in the lead up to 1 April 2004.

3. Site Issues

- 3.1 Members will be aware that the current location of the service has been an issue for many years. As a result of the problems identified, the Executive agreed a new location at Creek Road, Barking. This process of relocation has started by visits to inspect the site in conjunction with officers from DEAL and LESD.

4. Service Level Agreements

- 4.1 For the future it will be imperative that SLAs are in place for the provision of a passenger transport service to Social Services and Education. These SLAs are currently under development.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the transfer of the Passenger Transport Service to LESD. However, new computerised financial monitoring systems will be introduced into the service during the next year, which will enable much more rigorous financial and resource management monitoring to be embedded in the service.
- 5.2 Both Education and Social Services will be able to monitor their expenditure on transport on a monthly basis once these systems are installed. The savings required from the amalgamation of the management of the transport services in 2004/05 (£50,000) will be realised by the more efficient use of vehicles and staff as a result of the new monitoring system that will be installed. Further savings arising out of the more efficient use of resources will follow in 2005/06 once the new control systems have become embedded

6. Consultation

The Management Team and the following have seen this report and have raised no objections. .

Leisure and Environmental Services Department:

Maureen Perkins, Head of Human Resources, LESD
Bob Cooper, Interim Head of Finance, LESD
Laura Williams, Management Accountant, LESD

Education, Arts and Libraries Department:

Mike Freeman, Head of Administration and Assets, DEAL
Gail Clark, Head of Human Resources, DEAL
Paul Pearson, Head of Finance, DEAL

Social Services Department:

Steve Whitelock, Head of Finance DSS

Corporate Strategy Department:

Hayley Miller - Senior Human Resources Advisor Organisational Development & Employee Relations
Keith Warrior - Employee Relations Officer Organisational Development & Employee Relations.

Trade Unions:

GMB, APEX, TGWU and Unison (consultation is ongoing)

Portfolio Holders:

Councillor Bramley, Safeguarding Children and Young People
Councillor Alexander, Better Education and Learning for All
Councillor Osbourn, Housing Health and Social Care
Councillor Geddes, Deputy Leader Portfolio (finance issues)