

NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

REPORT

AGENDA ITEM NO: 6

To: Education (Resources) Sub- Committee	Subject: School Transport arranged by SPT : Performance Review
From: Director of Education	
Date: 2nd February 2006	
Ref: MM/KF/FC	

Summary

This report reviews the mainstream transport contract for the period October to December 2005. It aims to ensure that the financial performance of the contracts, the agency role of SPT and the general performance of transport contractors are subject to scrutiny by the sub committee.

Recommendations

The education (resources) sub committee is recommended:

- (i) to note the performance of the home to school transport contracts arranged by SPT for the period October to December 2005.
- (ii) to request the submission of a further performance review report to a future meeting of the sub-committee.

Michael O'Neill

Members wishing further information about this paper should contact

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NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

School Transport arranged by SPT : Performance Review

Report by the Director of Education

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This report covers the period October 2005 to December 2005 and covers the school contracts arranged by SPT on behalf of the council. The table below gives further details of these contracts.

	Primary	Secondary	Total
No of Schools	75	24	99
No of Pupils	3186	6096	9282
No of Contracts	116	126	231*

* Some contracts serve both primary and secondary schools

1.2 PUPILS ATTENDING SCHOOLS OUTWITH NORTH LANARKSHIRE

During the period under review, a number of pupils were transported from North Lanarkshire Council area to other local authority areas. The table records details of the number of pupils, number of contracts and local authority areas.

Council Area	Number of Contracts	Number of Pupils Transported
South Lanarkshire	5	411
East Dunbartonshire	5	29

In the same period a number of pupils were transported to schools within North Lanarkshire Council from other authorities

Council Area	Number of Contracts	Number of Pupils Transported
East Dunbartonshire	6	278
South Lanarkshire	5	248
Glasgow City	7	567

2. MONITORING

- 2.1 Monitoring of school contracts is undertaken on both a proactive and reactive basis. It aims to ensure that school contracts operated by SPT on behalf of North Lanarkshire Council meet the quality standards set by the Council.

Pro-active monitoring is based on a programme of checks with the aim of checking all contracts at least once during the school year. However, where complaints are received, reactive monitoring takes place with intensive checks being made on both the contracts concerned and the operator of the contracts. Additionally, where complaints are received regarding vehicles, arrangements are made to have the vehicles inspected by SPTs engineering inspectors.

2.2 VEHICLE MONITORING

Checks on vehicles are divided into operational checks undertaken by the SPT customer care inspectors and engineering checks undertaken by the SPT engineering inspectors.

Generally, operational checks are undertaken at schools whilst engineering checks are mainly conducted at operator garages or other maintenance premises. Engineering checks are also undertaken at schools, mainly as "spot checks" and usually following specific complaints regarding vehicle condition.

The following table records the number and type of vehicle checks carried out during the period

Monitoring Item	Double Deck Buses	Single Deck Buses	Minibuses	Taxis & Cars
customer care inspections	51	75	15	22
engineering inspections.	8	12	6	9

2.3 CO-ORDINATED MONITORING CHECKS

These inspections aim to ensure buses and other vehicles are roadworthy and all requirements of the contracts are met. The service provided is checked by inspectors to ensure the conditions of contract were complied with. The police check the vehicles are being operated legally and are in a roadworthy condition. The vehicles are also examined by the Vehicle Inspectorate's Vehicle Examiners, the SPT'S engineering inspectors, and specially trained police officers all working to the same standards as the Vehicle Inspectorate. This results in vehicles being given a comprehensive "roadside" examination. In the North Lanarkshire Council area, 23 vehicles were inspected during the period covered by this report. The table below gives further details of these inspections.

No of Schools	No of Vehicles Inspected	No of Vehicles found to be in a satisfactory condition
7	23	13

3. ACTION AGAINST POOR PERFORMANCE

- 3.1 The table below indicates the action taken against 10 vehicles which were not found to be in satisfactory condition.

Immediate Prohibitions	Delayed Prohibitions	Defect Notices
4	1	5

Defect notices allow the operator to remedy the defect. Provided this is carried out no further action is taken.

- 3.2 Warning letters may be issued to operators drawing attention to apparent breaches of the conditions of contract. Where the explanation is not acceptable deductions are made from payments, and the warning is recorded against the contractor. If more than 4 warnings are issued in a 12 week period, or more than 6 warnings in a 12 month period the contract can be withdrawn.
- 3.3 During the period October to December, a total of 56 warning letters were issued to contractors because of failure to meet the required performance . A total of 2 warning letters were rescinded after successful appeals by the operators.

£1432.87 was deducted from payments due to contractors in the period October to December 2005 including £1,220 for failing to submit traffic returns timeously and £212.87 following the issue of warning letters.

- 3.4 During the period, 1 contract was cancelled due to being no longer required. There were no other contract cancellations and there were no contracts or contractors suspended during the period covered by this report.

4. BUDGET PERFORMANCE

- 4.1 The budget allocation to meet mainstream transport costs in 2005/2006 is £3,302,940. The projected outcome for this financial year is currently £3,483,120. This spend covers the cost of mainstream school contract payments, temporary contract payments, S.P.T agency fees and advertising costs.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The education (resources) sub committee is recommended:

- (i) to note the performance of the home to school transport contracts arranged by SPT for the period October to December 2005.
- (ii) to request the submission of a further performance review report to a future meeting of the sub committee.