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| To:- EDUCATION (RESOURCES) SUB COMMITTEE | | Subject:- SCHOOL TRANSPORT ARRANGED BY SPT: PERFORMANCE REVIEW |
| From:- DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION | | |
| Date:- JULY 2006 | Ref:- MM/KF | |

Summary

This report reviews the mainstream transport contract for the period August 2005 to June 2006. 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

- (a) to note the performance of the home to school transport contracts arranged by SPT for the period August 2005 to June 2006.
- (b) 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 report should contact:

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NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL : DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

School Transport arranged by SPT: Performance Review Report by Director of Education

1. Background

- 1.1 This report covers the period August 2005 to June 2006 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 | 25 | 104 |
| No of pupils | 3393 | 5920 | 9313 |
| No of contracts | 121 | 115 | 221* |

* 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 |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| South Lanarkshire | 5 | 275 |
| East Dunbartonshire | 6 | 278 |
| Glasgow City | 7 | 567 |

2. Monitoring

- 2.1 Monitoring of school contracts is undertaken on both a pro-active and re-active 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, re-active monitoring takes place with intensive checks being made on contracts.

Additionally, where complaints are received regarding vehicles, arrangements are made to have the vehicles inspected by SPT 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 and cars |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Customer care inspections | 247 | 375 | 55 | 82 |
| Engineering inspections | 39 | 54 | 15 | 20 |

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 are complied with. The police check the vehicles and ensure the vehicles are being operated legally and are in a roadworthy condition. The vehicles are also examined by the Vehicle's Inspectorate's Vehicle Examiners, the SPT'S engineers and specially trained police officers all working to the same standards as the Vehicle Inspectorate. In the North Lanarkshire Council area, these initiatives resulted in 75 vehicles operating on contracts arranged by SPT being inspected. Appendix 1 gives further details.

3. Action against poor performance

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 During the period August 2005 to June 2006, a total of 335 warning letters were issued to contractors because of failure to meet the required performance. Following successful appeals, 41 warnings were rescinded. A further 30 appeals by contractors are under review, leaving 264 warnings standing.
- 3.3 During the period August 2005 to June 2006, 4 contracts were cancelled due to being no longer required. There were no other contract cancellations and no contract suspensions

4. Specific Problems Investigated

During the period covered by this report, in addition to the routine monitoring of contracts, a number of specific problems were investigated and action taken to remedy the situation. Specific problems investigated by SPT customer care inspectors and the action taken are summarised in appendix 1.

5. Budget performance

The 2005-06 budget allocation to meet the mainstream transport costs, including contract payments, temporary contract payments, SPT agency fees and advertising costs, was £3,229,954. The outcome for this financial year was £3,513,092 resulting in an overspend of £213,138.

6. Disclosure Scotland

During the period August 2005 to June 2006, 934 application forms for enhanced disclosure were processed. Of these, 54 were found to be unsuitable.

7. Recommendation

The education (resources) sub committee is recommended

- (a) to note the performance of the home to school transport contracts arranged by SPT for the period August 2005 to June 2006.
- (b) to request the submission of a further performance review report to a future meeting of the sub-committee.

Strathclyde Partnership for Transport, Vehicle Operator Services Agency & Strathclyde Police Joint Checks 2005 – 2006

| School | Contractor | Allegation/ Complaint | Verdict | Action Taken |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Braidhurst High School | Stuart's Coaches Limited | Late arrival | Inspection carried out and time was found to be within the time band specified | No action required |
| Braidhurst High School | Stuart's Coaches Limited | Condition of vehicle | Complaint found to be justified and a vehicle prohibition order was issued due to a number of defects being found. | Defects were repaired and a formal warning letter issued |
| Caldervale High School | Thomas Arthur (trading as Arthur's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Excessively worn pivot on load sensing valve | Immediate prohibition |
| Rosehall High | William Miller (trading as Miller's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Broken emergency door handle | Immediate prohibition |
| Rosehall High | William Miller (trading as Miller's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Oil leaks | Defect notice issued |
| Cumbernauld Primary | John Duggan (trading as JD Travel) | Routine Monitoring | Defective rear near side tyre | Delayed prohibition |
| Cumbernauld Primary | William Dunn (trading as Dunn's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Seatbelt mechanism cover missing | Defect notice issued |
| Condorrat Primary | Derek R Wright (trading as Wright Travel) | Routine Monitoring | Small hole in floor | Defect notice issued |
| Condorrat Primary | James McCann (trading as J McCann Transport) | Routine Monitoring | Worn brake linings Split drive shaft inner gaiter | Immediate prohibition Defect notice issued |
| St Francis of Assisi Primary School | Jay Coach Travel Ltd | Pupils arriving at school well after the start of the school day | Complaint justified | Warning letter issued |
| St Maurice's High School | Jay Coach Travel Ltd *1 | Routine Monitoring | Fuel cut off switch missing | Defect notice issued |
| St Maurice's High School | Jay Coach Travel Ltd | Routine Monitoring | De-misters inoperative | Immediate prohibition |
| St Maurice's High School | Jay Coach Travel Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Inoperative brake lights | Immediate prohibition |
| St Maurice's High School | Thomas Arthur (trading as Arthur's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Engine oil leak, defective door open light leaking exhaust system and excessive play in the steering joint | Immediate prohibition |

| School | Contractor | Allegation/ Complaint | Verdict | Action Taken |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| St Maurice's High School | Thomas Arthur (trading as Arthur's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Upper saloon emergency door stiff to open and engine access flap insecure | Defect notice issued |
| St Maurice's High School | Thomas Arthur (trading as Arthur's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Incorrect legal lettering | Defect notice issued |
| Clyde Valley High | Denis O'Neill (trading as O'Neill's Minibuses) *2 | Routine Monitoring | One tyre found to be worn to near the limit | Defect notice issued |
| Clyde Valley High | Denis O'Neill (trading as O'Neill's Minibuses) | Parental complaint | Complaint justified | A warning letter was issued |
| Clyde Valley High | Hutchison Coaches (Overtown) Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Seat cushion torn | Defect notice issued |
| Clyde Valley High | Hutchison Coaches (Overtown) Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Worn brake pipe hose, loose side access panel | Delayed prohibition |
| Clyde Valley High | Stuart's Coaches | Routine Monitoring | Engine oil leak | Delayed prohibition |
| Sikeside Primary School | Edward Linday (T/a Lindsay of Coatbridge) | Routine Monitoring | Contract from Carnbroe and Orchard Grove was found to be arriving early at the school | Warning letter issued and further monitoring to be carried out. |
| St Ambrose High | Essbee Coaches Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Engine oil leak | Immediate prohibition |
| St Ambrose High | JJ Travel Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Work spring eye bush | Delayed prohibition |
| St Ambrose High | JJ Travel Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Insufficient capacity being provided on vehicle covering Bargeddie area | Warning letter issued |
| Clyde Valley High | Denis O'Neill (trading as O'Neill's Minibuses) | Routine Monitoring | Rear emergency door inoperative | Immediate prohibition |
| Clyde Valley High | Hutchison Coaches (Overtown) Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Broken rear seat frame | Immediate prohibition |
| Clyde Valley High | Hutchison Coaches (Overtown) Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Oil leak | Defect notice issued |
| Clyde Valley High | Stuart's Coaches | Routine Monitoring | Oil leak | Defect notice issued |
| St Thomas' Primary School | McKinless Bus Company | Complaint received that vehicle was taking the wrong route | Complaint unfounded as pupil concerned was alighting at the wrong bus stop. Inspectors noted that pupils were misbehaving when attendant moved between the upper and lower deck. Pupils were also throwing torn paper out of the window on the upper deck of the vehicle. | No action required |

| School | Contractor | Allegation/ Complaint | Verdict | Action Taken |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Our Lady's High School, Cumbernauld | First Glasgow (No. 2) Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Oil leak | Defect notice issued |
| Our Lady's High School, Cumbernauld | Red Lion Transport (Scotland) Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Side luggage locker doors insecure | Immediate prohibition |
| Our Lady's High School, Cumbernauld | Red Lion Transport (Scotland) Ltd | Complaint received | Vehicle overloaded. 6 non-entitled pupils identified | Contractor instructed to tighten procedures to ensure that all pupils travelling on the bus have valid travel passes |
| Our Lady's High School, Cumbernauld | William Dunn (trading as Dunn's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Seat frame loose, door warning device inoperative & exhaust tailpipe broken) | Defect notice issued |
| St Patrick's High | Essbee Coaches | Routine Monitoring | OSF flexible air pipe air leak | Delayed prohibition |
| St Patrick's High | Essbee Coaches | Routine Monitoring | Insufficient capacity was being provided | Warning letter issued |
| St Patrick's High | Millers Coaches (Scotland) Ltd | Routine Monitoring | Engine oil leak | Delayed prohibition |
| St Joseph' Primary | Robert MacDonald (trading as Macdonald's Coaches) | Erratic time keeping and overcrowding from Station Road | 36 pupils were conveyed on a 53 seater vehicle. However, delays were noted because of heavy traffic particularly at the Crowwood roundabout | No action required |
| Stepps Primary | Robert MacDonald (trading as Macdonald's Coaches) | Routine Monitoring | Oil leak | Delayed prohibition |
| St Patrick's Primary, Kilsyth | James Lafferty (trading as Lafferty Minibus Service) | Routine Monitoring | Insufficient capacity on contract serving Balmalloch and Queenzieburn area | Warning letter issued |
| St Patrick's Primary, Kilsyth | James Lafferty (trading as Lafferty Minibus Service) | Routine Monitoring | Vehicle was displaying the wrong size of statutorily required "yellow" school bus sign. | Warning letter issued |
| St Patrick's Primary, Kilsyth | James Lafferty (trading as Lafferty Minibus Service) | Routine Monitoring | Oil leak | Defect notice issued |

Notes:

1. A window on this bus was broken from inside as vehicle entered school. Police, who were present, dealt with this incident.
2. This vehicle was also found not to be displaying an operators licence disc.

All of the vehicles operated by the undernoted contractors were found to be in a satisfactory condition, with no defects being found:

Alan MacPherson (T/a MacPherson's Luxury Travel)
First Glasgow (No. 1) Ltd
James Cairney (T/a Redline Cars)
Louise Gilchrist (T/a Kwik Cars)
MacPhail Coaches Ltd.
Margaret McKindless (T/a McKindless Express)
Marshall of Baillieston Ltd.
Mssrs. Graham, Sanderson & Nimmo (T/a Eastfield Cars)
Peter Irvine (T/a Irvine's Coaches)
Shawburn Minibus Hire Ltd.