**Specification for a Dial a Ride scheme on St Mary’s, Isles of Scilly**

**Introduction**

The Council of the Isles of Scilly is seeking a provider to continue a service to enable older adults and children, young people and adults with a disability that impacts their mobility to access the full range of community resources to support independence and social inclusion and enable service users to live full and meaningful lives.

**GENERAL SCOPE OF THE SERVICE**

1.1 The Council of the Isles of Scilly is seeking a VCSE provider with a proven track record in similar schemes to deliver a door-to-door demand-responsive transport service for anyone who finds it difficult or impossible to use ordinary transport services on St Mary’s on the Isles of Scilly.

1.1 The Council of the Isles of Scilly continues to be fully committed to supporting current and future residents who are unable to access services easily in the interests of improving health and wellbeing and overcoming social isolation. The Council also considers that the service should be available to residents with mobility difficulties, whether through disability or age, residents with sensory impairments, residents with learning disabilities and those residents who suffer from mental health difficulties.

1.2 The Council of the Isles of Scilly has successfully commissioned a Dial a Ride scheme known as Buzza Bus from Age UK Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly. Details of current provision are outlined at Appendix 1 to assist the preparation of tender submissions.

1.3 Tenders are now being invited for the provision of a Dial a Ride scheme, as specified below for the next three years, with a contract extension of two years possible, commencing February 2024 . However, this is subject to an annual review and cannot be guaranteed. It is expected that service users will contribute towards the cost of the service.

**SERVICE PROVISION, LEVELS AND CHARGES**

2.1 The Service currently being supported is available to all residents aged 50 and over and/or those with a disability including children and young people.

**Dial-a-Ride (DaR):**

DaR trips will be booked in advance through individual bookings, with dedicated booking hours detailed by the operator, comprising of one-off trips and will typically be aimed at the following categories:

* Shopping trips;
* Visiting friends and family, which may include visiting hospitals;
* Leisure based trips, e.g. sports facilities, clubs, restaurants, etc.;
* GP/Dentist appointments;
* Transport to hospital appointments, where the individual does not meet Health Authority transport criteria; not for use as regular hospital attendance transport.

The service is subject to user demand and resource availability. Users of the service are required to contribute towards the transport.

During the period April 2022 – March 2023 approximately 7350 Dial a Ride trips were provided by the current Dial a Ride provider with 215 Passengers  Registered.

Only Passengers who meet the Council’s eligibility criteria shall be permitted to use the Service. All Passengers must register for the service. The Contractor must maintain a record of all registered Passengers against the Council’s eligibility criteria (see Appendix 1). Registered Passengers may be accompanied by an essential escort or travel companion (see Appendix 1).

2.2 Organisations with an interest in providing the service will be required to provide the following detail:

* details of fare structure;
* the hours of operation;
* the booking procedure/ease of access;
* the type of vehicle(s) used;
* the driver training arrangements.

Payment by the Council for the Dial a Ride Services will be by lump sums. Users of the service will also be required to contribute towards the cost of transport, so proposed charges will need to be submitted with the tender. These charges are to be levied direct by the contractor, and retained as part of the payment for the cost of the service. It is required that the service is both affordable for service users and also sustainable in the face of public sector funding cuts.

3.2 Payments should only be used to fund Dial a Ride provision for residents of the Isles of Scilly as described in **Section 1**.

3.3 The Council also reserves the right to revisit the terms of the contract if it decides that, in addition to the current provision, other services could be reasonably undertaken by the contractor, e.g. certain educational transport or further innovative transport provision which would benefit residents of the Isles of Scilly. Any revisit to the Contract would be undertaken with the full consultation of the contractor, and any changes would only take place with the full contract of both parties, subject to suitable adjustments in the Contract price and/or fare structures.

3.4 The services detailed in this Contract should be available to all residents of the Isles of Scilly who reflect the descriptions set out under **Section 1** (operational membership rules apply under Section 19 licences).

3.5 Transport is to be provided across St Mary’s, Isles of Scilly with the following principles

* The service should not duplicate existing voluntary or commercial transport services but complement them.
* The service should not be used for transport to and from the airport except as part of a journey to access medical treatment and/or for reasons of disability.
* The service is expected to provide passenger transport services for individuals travel to and from a wide range destinations across the island of St Mary’s. Apart from destinations specifically exempted within this scope of service or where access is restricted, either legally or due to physical obstructions, this service shall provide journeys from any embarkation point to any disembarkation point on the island of St Mary’s for eligible passengers. Included within this is the expectation to support the Thursday off-island shopping trips, winter transport to and from St Mary’s quay, trips to support access to libraries, all St Mary’s based community and leisure facilities and/or events, outings from Park House Care Home, trips in connection with non-emergency hospital services, trips to the health centre and journeys in relation to prescription collection, also support for other demands if deemed possible.

3.6 To ensure that all eligible residents are aware of the availability of the service, it will be the responsibility of the successful operator, assisted by, and in partnership with the Council to promote the service proactively throughout the term of the contract.

3.7 The Dial a Ride provider will be required to inform members that the Council will request access to their personal details (i.e. name, address, date of birth) for the purpose of improving communication with service users with regard to the various opportunities available. The Dial a Ride provider will be required to ask members for their consent and the Dial a Ride provider will then be required to share the details of those members who have consented, with the Council. The Council will require the Dial a Ride provider to forward information, from time to time, to its membership, as the Council deem appropriate.

3.8 Passenger(s) will be asked to pre-book journeys in advance. An advertised telephone number must be staffed between published times. Short breaks in staffing, e.g. at lunchtime are permissible; providing an answerphone or message service is available. (For reference, the current contractor has booking lines open between:

Mon 9.30am-1.00pm

Tues 8.30am-4.00pm

Weds 1.00pm-5.00pm

Thurs 8.30am-4.00pm

Fri 9.30am-5.00pm

Sat 10.30am-2.00pm

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3.9 The Contractor must schedule the service efficiently to achieve a good balance between maximising the number of passengers carried and meeting passengers’ individual needs.

**4 OPERATING LICENCE AND VEHICLES**

4.1 The service will be provided by licence under Section 19 of the Public Transport Act 1985, and delivery of the service through this Contract is on a not-for-profit basis if the successful operator is a charitable organisation in the Dial a Ride sphere. A commercial company must satisfy the Council that they are able to meet the requirements of the Contract in the most economical, and adequate manner. All transport providers must ensure that user comfort and safety is upheld at all times.

4.2 The minimum vehicle (s) requirement is as follows

* Capacity for at least 6 seated passengers, with flexible layout such that at least one wheelchair user can travel seated in their wheelchair (with a reduced capacity for seated passengers)
* Passenger lift or ramp for access by wheelchair users
* M2 tested floor tracking, four-point webbing restraints to secure wheelchairs (including powered wheelchairs) and passenger restraints for the wheelchair occupants.
* Three point lap and diagonal seat belts fitted to all passenger seats
* Handrails for use by ambulant passengers
* Any steps to have high visibility edging
* Means of securing a folded wheelchair
* No sharp edges or hazards that could lead to bruising, injury or damage to the skin of frail older people
* Vehicle should not display the word ‘Ambulance’.

4.3 Providers may also wish to offer the following additional desirable enhancements:

* Vehicle(s) of no more than 10 years old
* Ability to accommodate one wheelchair
* Passenger lift or ramp with a Safe Working Load that exceeds 350 kg

4.3 Partnerships may be permissible, subject to approval by the Council of the Isles of Scilly; however, the ultimate responsibility for service provision will remain with the prime operator.

**5 DRIVER TRAINING AND MONITORING**

5.1 Drivers must have good interpersonal skills, be helpful and sympathetic when dealing with older people who may have sight or hearing loss and willing to carry shopping short distances if required. Drivers must be willing to accompany certain Passengers to/from their front doors but shall not enter Passengers’ homes.

5.2 The current contractor is of the opinion that the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employees) Regulations 2006 (‘TUPE’) may apply to staff currently employed to deliver this service. TUPE information will be supplied to tenderers upon completion and return of the TUPE Confidentiality Undertaking.

5.3 All staff and volunteers must be subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service check, the cost of the checks to be borne by the operator. All the driver’s licences should be checked and regularly monitored. All staff will receive appropriate training as detailed in the MiDAS Accessible Module training scheme and Department for Transport good practice guidance prior to the commencement of duties. No person shall drive without training to MiDAS standards. The only exception to this will be when a new recruit is under supervision and being assessed, prior to commencement of training. Disability awareness training is required for all staff.

5.4 The provider will provide a copy of its Safeguarding Policy and training commitment for its staff.

**6 SERVICE MONITORING INFORMATION**

6.1 The Council will require trip monitoring information to be provided electronically on a monthly basis to assess the service delivery under this Contract. Access to all computer held data relevant to the Contract shall be provided to an authorised officer acting on behalf of the council when required, at the operator’s establishment; however, data will not be downloaded by the said officer.

6.2 The following information is required on a monthly basis and will include:

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| The following information will be required monthly by the Council from the Contractor in relation to the Service provided: **Patronage**  • Number of registered Service users;  • Total Passenger trips (Note: 1 single journey = 1 passenger trip; a return journey = 2 passenger trips)  • Passenger trips involving wheelchairs;  • Total vehicle miles;  • Number of different Service users. |
| **User Profile**  • Number of new registered Service users;  • Number of new Service users;  • Age profile of membership;  • Mobility profile of membership;  • Frequency of Service user profile;  • Date records last updated. |
| **Operation**  • Number of Vehicle Operating Hours set against scheduled Vehicle Operating Hours;  • Details of the days when Vehicle Operating Hours were not achieved and an explanation why this was the case;  • Number of booking hours set against the specified booking hours;  • Details of the days when booking hours were not achieved and an explanation why this was the case;  • Number and nature of compliments;  • Number and nature of complaints;  • Outcome of complaints. |
| **Finance**  • Fare revenue for the month;  • Fare   |  | | --- | | revenue paid by concessionary fares. | | **Productivity and Value for Money**  • Number of passenger trips per vehicle operating hour;  • Subsidy per passenger trip (Monthly contract price divided by passenger trips for that month). | | **Concessionary Fares Reimbursement**  • Standard information required for reimbursement. | |

At least 98% of contracted Vehicle Operating Hours achieved each month

• At least 98% of Booking Line Hours achieved each month

• Passenger trips: 5,000 per year;

• Average number of different users per month: Improvement of 2% per annum

• Number of registered users per annum: 150

Where the Monitoring Information shows that the Contractor has delivered less than 98% of the contracted Vehicle Operating Hours in a particular month, the Council may apply a deduction to the Contractor’s accompanying invoice for that Contract (a “Service Credit”); a reduction in the payment due proportionate to the percentage of Service (in Vehicle Operating Hours) not delivered. For example:

• Contracted Vehicle Operating Hours for that month: 100

• Actual hours delivered by Contractor: 92 (92%)

• Shortfall of service: 8%

Service Credit to be applied: a deduction of 8% from the Contractor’s accompanying monthly invoice for the Service [deduction = 8% of (7.5% of the annual Contract Price)].

(The Council recognises that individual personal data held on computer is subject to the Data Protection Act 1998)

The above data will be compiled by producing a report utilising a computerised booking system.

6.3 A review meeting will take place between the Council of the Isles of Scilly and the service provider every quarter during the term of the Contract. The meetings will allow for the service provider to demonstrate that the needs of the islands’ service users, across all age ranges and groups, are being met and to enable either party to raise issues for discussion.

**7 PAYMENTS**

7.1 This program is part funded by the Better Care Fund and cannot be guaranteed beyond 2025. The service grant award is expected to be capped between £45,000and £50,000 per annum over the next three years, this is subject to annual review and cannot be guaranteed. Tenders should include a set scale of charges for users. Any increase must only be made following consultation with, and after gaining the full approval of the Senior Manager – Services to our Community.

7.2 Payment may be withheld if the Council is not reasonably satisfied that:

* Dial a Ride services are being provided to all sectors of the client base, as detailed under Section 1 of this document;
* complete monitoring information is being supplied, as detailed in Section 6 of this document.

7.3 Payments will be made monthly in arrears upon receipt of an invoice

Appendix 1

Current service: To deliver a door-to-door demand-responsive transport service for anyone who finds it difficult or impossible to use ordinary transport services on St Mary’s on the Isles of Scilly

Eligibility criteria:

Residents of the Isles of Scilly with mobility difficulties, whether through disability or age, residents with sensory impairments, residents with learning disabilities and those residents who suffer from mental health difficulties.

Location of service: Isles of Scilly

Current timetable:

Monday 0930 to 1300

Tuesday 0830 to 1600

Wednesday 1300 to 1700

Thursday 0830 to 1600

Friday 0930 to 1700

Saturday 1030 to 1400

Current number of users

During the period April 2022 – March 2023 approximately 7350 Dial a Ride trips were provided by the current Dial a Ride provider with 215 Passengers registered.

£2 per trip