

School and Community Vehicle Bids

What is the scheme?

Cheshire West and Chester Council have a number of vehicles which they have agreed will be offered to local communities, including local schools, to benefit residents of the borough.

The vehicles are second hand and may range from small yellow non accessible minibuses to medium sized accessible minibuses (with tail-lifts).

Applicants are invited from September 2015 to detail how they would use the vehicle to benefit local residents.

Joint bids are particularly encouraged where they will offer benefits to young people as well as to adults in the local community.

Who can apply?

From September 2015, initial bids will be invited from local schools, working ideally with other community groups. This initial round offers a **unique** opportunity for schools to partner with their local communities prior to the opening up of the process more widely in November. An initial evaluation will take place in November 2015.

From November 2015, bids will be invited from communities overall. Schools will still be able to bid during this time but they will then be assessed along side the second evaluation round.

How do I apply?

An application form is attached. Should you have any questions, please contact Transport Commissioning on 01244 973912.

Are there any restrictions on who can drive these vehicles?

Yes, there are restrictions relating to driver licencing and vehicle weights.
In addition, applicants need to be aware of the rules surrounding 'hire and reward'.

Proposed Vehicle Relocation

Application Process

A number of vehicles will be decommissioned in 2015 from the Council's fleet. Some of these vehicles will be made available to organisations which propose to provide services which benefit the residents of the Borough of Cheshire West and Chester.

The vehicles potentially range from MPV size through to accessible and non-accessible minibuses.

If you are interested in bidding to take on ownership and operation of one of these vehicles, please complete the questions below. Your application will be assessed and you will be advised of the outcome between November 2015 and February 2016:

Application

1. Can you please detail below the type of vehicle users will be licenced to drive. Only complete the sections which relate to the vehicle you would be interested to take on.

Vehicle Type	Organisation Type	Transport Licence Requirement	Driving Licence Requirement	Would drivers be able to meet this criteria? (Yes/ No?)
Car	Private Company	Private Hire	Cheshire West & Chester Licenced Driver Qualification	
	School (cannot operate for hire & reward)	Section 19	B	
	Third Sector/ Charity	Section 19	B	
MPV	Private Company	Private Hire	Cheshire West & Chester Licenced Driver Qualification	
	School (cannot operate for hire & reward)	Section 19	B	
	Third Sector/ Charity	Section 19	B	
Minibus under 3.5 tonnes, over 9 seats	Private Company	Operator licence	PCV	
	School (must be driven on 'voluntary' basis/ no hire & reward)	Section 19	B	
	Third Sector/ Charity	Section 19	D1	
Minibus 3.5 - 4.25	Private Company	Operator licence	PCV	
	School (must be driven on 'voluntary' basis)/ no	Section 19	D1	

tonnes, over 9 seats	hire & reward			
	Third Sector/ Charity	Section 19	D1	

2. Can you indicate how you plan to use the vehicle? Please include whether you will be the sole organisation using the vehicle or whether it will be shared with other organisations.

4. Please indicate below the details of potential 'occasional' use of the vehicle.

Name of Organisation	Number of Weeks Per Year Vehicle will be	Hours of Use						
		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday

5. If you are proposing to allow the vehicle to be used by local communities, please advise of the booking facilities available.

All applications should be returned to:

Sarah.mcglynn@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Tel: 01244 976721

Applications will be evaluated and successful applicants informed between November 2015 and February 2016.

Legal and Maintenance Considerations

1. Legality Of Operation

Future use must ensure that the vehicles are used within the realms of the law and that the new owner does not fall foul of either private hire (8 seats and below) or Operator's Licence legislation (9 seats and above).

As the majority of our vehicles are large minibuses, for many providers, there is a requirement for an Operator's Licence which has stringent requirements and must be managed by a qualified Transport Manager (Certificate of Professional Competence).

This will virtually always be the case where the vehicle is 9 seats and above and is operated by a private company. This may not be the case where the vehicle is operated by a charity or similar non-profit making organisation.

What about shared taxi provision scheme that could be operated with a car and could sit in the community or with local taxi provider to manage the scheme?

2. Maintenance Requirements

Due to the size, weight and specialist nature of the vehicles, a future owner would need to ensure they could access maintenance facilities to keep the vehicle to the high standards required under Operator Licence regulations.

For vehicles with a tail-lift, a LOLER test is required by law at least every 6 months.

3. Driver Licence Requirements

Generally, vehicles of this size may only be driven by those with category D1 on their driving licence. Anyone who passed their driving test prior to January 1997 will automatically have grandparent rights allowing this. After this date, drivers must take an additional test.

For vehicles under 3.5 tonnes, a B category entitlement is sufficient.

The majority of vehicles being decommissioned weigh in excess of 3.5 tonnes.

4. Charging for Services

New providers will need to be aware of the regulations around 'hire and reward' in Transport which prevent them being able to simply charge for a journey in the majority of cases. As referred to already, either a Private Hire licence or an Operator's Licence is required to legitimately operate and charge a fair.

An exception to this is where a community group provides transport for a group and the group make a contribution to the costs of the trip. If the community group is simply a local group, not set up with an intention to profit, this can take place legally through the use of a much more straight forward, section 19 permit at most.