

TAYSIDE AND CENTRAL SCOTLAND TRANSPORT PARTNERSHIP**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE****8 October 2025****CONTRACT DEVELOPMENT, BUS DEVELOPMENT PLAN****REPORT BY PROJECTS AND PROGRAMME MANAGER**Purpose

The purpose of the paper is to seek approval to award a contract for the update of the Tactran Bus Development Plan (the bus plan) as consistent to the RTS priority of reducing inequalities, previously approved by the Partnership Board, described below.

Summary

The Tactran bus plan is a discrete assessment of bus service needs, gaps, and opportunities. At the partnership level it supports the delivery of the RTS priorities, whilst further providing an assessment framework for service delivery and enhancement at a local level.

A methodology for the update and further development of the bus plan is set out in this document, in line with the allocation of RTS funds, specifically associated with reducing inequalities, as reported and approved by board, with the attached request for delegated authority for the appointment of consultants to which this document refers.

1 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That the Executive Committee approve the appointment of Transport Analysis & Advocacy Ltd. (TAA) as qualified consultant for the delivery of the bus plan update to a maximum value of £33,550.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The development of the bus plan incorporates an update of previous work undertaken by and for the partnership in relation to the delivery of bus services, to incorporate analysis of the opportunities, including those of the Transport Scotland Act 2019, and subsequent market options and evidence emerging.
- 2.2 The development has been identified as requiring specialist consulting knowledge, including the review of evidence as has emerged since the initial publication of the 2019 Act, and subsequent and more recent guidance as to its intent and application. The latter including guidance released by Transport Scotland in the period after the initial report.

- 2.3 The identification of project delivery consultants has been undertaken and is detailed in overview below. A winning bid has been identified in terms of both quality and price criteria, summarised in table 1, below.
- 2.4 The evaluation process has been undertaken in line with current procurement practices and resulted in the allocation of scores set out in table 1. A mix of quality submission (55%), and price (45%) is applied.

Proposer	Quality Score / 55%	Cost Score / 45%	Total Score %
1	40.98%	24.57%	65.55%
2	37.88%	10.96%	48.84%
3	33.02%	22.50%	55.52%
TAA	44.93%	33.55%	78.48%

3 DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The development of the Tactran Bus Plan provides an opportunity to monitor, improve, and sustain bus services in the region. The plan provides a reference point for local transport authorities, and a review of best practices across a wider range of locations and operational models than may be apparent in any single location in isolation.
- 3.2 In order to maintain and be of increased benefit the plan itself needs to reflect changes in the market, and of a wider range of experiences in the Scottish market as these emerge. Effectively that market changes are fully reviewed and incorporated.
- 3.3 The benefit of such a document has a direct impact on the design and continued optimisation of services within and across the region, whilst further supporting the links between transport provision and the priorities as identified within the RTS.
- 3.4 A competitive process was developed and applied via the Public Contracts Scotland system. A copy of the contract strategy is included in the appendix to this document. Four submissions were received, with a three-person team applying scores to each of the categories. A best value consultant was identified, shown as submission 4 in the table above.
- 3.5 Following Executive Committee consideration and approval, the consultant would be notified of outcome and asked to commence work. A time limit of 31 March 2026 for reporting would be applied in line with the current timescales applied to annual funding by Transport Scotland.

Value of the contract

- 3.6 The contract value is £33,550.

4 CONSULTATIONS

- 4.1 Local Authority officers assisted in the development of the Bus Plan. Tactran officers have contributed to the contracting strategy, assessment design and application.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 All operating and administration costs have been included in the submission, Tactran will be able to support from RTS funds as allocated.

6 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Equality Impact Assessment, and no major issues have been identified.

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NOTE

The report includes reference to the Tactran Contract Strategy document, appended below.

Appendix: Contract strategy

1.1 CONTRACT OVERVIEW	
Contract Title	Tactran Bus development plan update
Author	Dr. James M Cooper
Contract Reference Number	PKCXXXXX
Final Date for Approval by Procurement	ASAP <30 07 2025
1.2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
<p>Tactran require the update of the Bus development plan document, as continuing to support the work of the RTP, the Tayside Bus Alliance, and associated partners and Local Authority stakeholders. The contract relates to an identified consultant to provide immediate input to the development of the bus plan.</p> <p>The procurement route is based on the use of Public Contracts Scotland to announce the opportunity, followed by a mini competition amongst a minimum of three invited suppliers. The use of a contracted consultant, working directly alongside Tactran staff, has been identified as the most effective and expedient route to support project delivery.</p>	
1.3 SERVICE STRATEGY/FORWARD PLAN	
<p>The opportunity arises as a result of potential changes in the regulation and supply of bus services and opportunities in parallel sustainable transport projects supported by the People and Place award, amongst others. There is, however, a diminishing amount of delivery time for projects, constrained to the end of the financial year in March 2026, that would be harmed by a lengthy tender process. It is also notable as the available time for delivery diminishes, the opportunity to provide a detailed report also declines.</p>	
1.4 CONTRACT OBJECTIVE	
<p>To provide specialist input to the delivery of an updated bus development plan, being aware of the changes in context and operational circumstance across the Tactran region. To be aware of examples of best, and worst, practices elsewhere in Scotland and the UK; and to be aware of alternative approaches to delivery models as applied elsewhere.</p>	
1.5 AGREED BUDGET	
Budget Amount:	£35k
Report – how was the budget approved?	The costs are accommodated in the existing budget allocation for RTS development, as approved by the Tactran Partnership Board.

Budget year(s) in which expenditure will be incurred	FY25/26
Cost Code(s)	N/A
Budget Holder Signature:	
Print Name:	Mark Speed
Date:	

SECTION TWO – CURRENT STATUS

2.1 CURRENT SITUATION/CONTRACT STATUS

Contract to be awarded on basis of cost and quality. Minimum quality standards based on defined requirements.

2.2 LESSONS LEARNED

This is a new contract to support staff with focused specialist consulting related to the bus market. Where possible a staff recruitment process will be followed in future rounds to establish ongoing capacity and capability, though this has not been possible in the current round.

2.3 HISTORICAL SPEND INFORMATION

Department	Total Expenditure (p.a.)	Suppliers	Comments
N/A			

SECTION THREE – PROPOSED CONTRACT STRATEGY

3.1 CONSIDERATIONS OF ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY METHODS

Alternative Delivery Opportunities

- **Existing in-house resource:** insufficient capacity and skills of existing resources to undertake this work
- **New in-house resource:** not appropriate for a one-off, low value piece of work

Further Comments

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3.2 COLLABORATION CONSIDERATIONS

Is there an existing collaborative contract available?

No

If YES - List collaborative body or Partner Organisations involved in the contract. Please describe the advantages or disadvantages arising from the use of the collaborative agreement.

If NO - Is there an opportunity for Collaboration with another organisation?

Not within the scope of the current project.

Who will be the Lead Authority?

Tactran

Other commodities/work streams dependent or to be considered in conjunction with this contract

Tactran acts as the lead body for projects delivered within the Tactran region. There are only limited opportunities for wider collaboration with other RTPS, and these have not been pursued by Tactran nor other RTPs.

Further Comments

3.3 ICT Requirements

None

3.4 SUPPLY MARKET STATUS

Supply Market Requirements

Transport Planning, economic, and market awareness. Legislative awareness. Research methods aware and competent.

Market Overview

There is a diminishing range of transport consultancies due to a number of mergers over recent years. Nonetheless, there is a small and strong group of consultancies which currently operate in Scotland.

3.5 KEY RISKS

Description of Risk	Probability (L/M/H)	Impact (L/M/H)	Actions required to manage Risk
Delay in appointment	M	H	Proposed quick contract route with three quotes.
Overspend	L	H	Strict term condition as risk borne by supplier. As per current T&Cs
Overall Contract Risk			L

3.6 MARKET SUMMARY TABLE

Factor	Findings
Industry Description	Specialist consulting services
Market Overview - Summary of the market conditions	A number of competitive providers with experience in similar specialist fields
Trade Associations	N/A
Key Suppliers	Multiple competitive suppliers
Market Trends	Competitive and mature market. Market pricing based on competition in the market.
Developments and Innovation	Innovation reflecting changes in market structure and opportunity incorporated within the proposed work.

3.7 SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS TO INCORPORATE INTO SPECIFICATION

Environmental Factors to consider

To be delivered by environmentally aware company.

Economic Factors
Supports mature market within the UK. Supports infrastructure by contributing to reducing inequalities priorities of the RTS
Social Factors
Supports social factors by contributing to the RTS priorities.
Community Benefits
Suppliers will be required to support Tactran, being aware of the community impacts and benefits of the work as undertaken.
Fair Work Practices
Suppliers will be required to conform with Fair Work Practices. They will also be required to provide information confirming if they are a Real Living Wage Employer. Information will be gathered for reporting purposes to allow PKC to monitor how many suppliers are Accredited Living Wage suppliers.

Commercial Considerations

3.9 PROCUREMENT OPTIONS APPRAISAL	
PROCUREMENT ROUTE	Detail the Pro's and Con's of each option
1) This contract has been exempted	Where contract awarded below the current threshold for wider process, the approach supports both speed and defined outcomes.
2) Work with an ALEO to deliver	Issues with cost and speed of engagement.
3) Use existing collaborative arrangement	None in place
4) Publicly advertised tender	Likely to add significantly to the selection time and add to the cost in its assessment.
<i>Recommendation/Justification</i>	Exemption to include three competitive bids. To be exempt from wider process as below threshold.
PROCEDURE	Detail the Pro's and Con's of each option
1) Open/Single Stage	Adds to time and cost of process.
2) Restricted	Allows selection on basis of price and quality from defined number of suppliers. Criteria defined by Tactran in advance and submissions reviewed on price, quality and conformity.

3) Competitive Procedure with Negotiation	Adds to time and cost of process
4) Other (Mini-competition, Direct award under framework etc)	As per 2.
Recommendation/ Justification	Restricted, three quotes to be assessed by cost, quality, and conformity.
TYPE OF AGREEMENT	Detail the Pro's and Con's of each option
1) Develop a Contract	Allows specificity and measurable outcomes.
2) Develop a Framework	Less relevant to a single website delivery
3) Develop a Dynamic Purchasing System	Less relevant to a single website delivery
Recommendation/ Justification	Single contract
LOTS (if applicable)	Detail the Pro's and Con's of each option
1) Multiple lots	N/A
2) Single Lot	As per 4
3) Geographical	N/A
4) Product/Service	Single website delivered under a single contract
Recommendation/ Justification	As per 4
SUPPLIERS PER LOT (if applicable)	Detail the Pro's and Con's of each option
1) Single Supplier	To be selected competitively from three quotes
2) 2-5 Suppliers	Insufficient work required
3) 5+ Suppliers	Insufficient work required
Recommendation/ Justification	Single supplier

3.10 PROCUREMENT PROCESS TO BE ADOPTED	
Procurement Route selected (see 3.9 above)	Direct engagement based on three quotes
Procurement Regulations/Rules applicable	N/A Falls within exemption criteria
Lots (if applicable)	None

Call off procedure (if applicable)		N/A			
Financial Criteria	Insurance Types/Levels	Minimum requirements as per Tactran T&C			
	Financial Standing	To have been trading for a minimum of 3 years with financial records lodged and up to date at companies house			
	Other e.g. Dun & Bradstreet report	N/A			
Award Criteria (Price/Quality Ratio)		Price =	45%	Quality =	55%
Award Criteria (Headings for Quality Questions) e.g. Methodology, Risk Management, Contract Management, Waste Management, Community Benefits, Sustainability, Climate Change		Product structure Compliance with specification Appearance and audience specific facilities			
Commercial Evaluation		Lowest cost able to deliver per minimum specification			
Terms & Conditions		Minimum requirements as per Tactran T&C			
3.11 CONTRACT SPEND INFORMATION (ESTIMATED)					
Annual Contract Value		35,000			
Total Contract Value		35,000			
Total contract Value incl VAT (if applicable)					
Length of Proposed Contract Period (+ Optional Extension(s))		<8 months			
Price Review		N/A			

SECTION FOUR – PROPOSED CONTRACT BENEFITS

4.0 FORECAST SAVINGS			
Value	Percentage	Description	Financial Year
N/A			
Additional Comments			

4.1 PLANNED CONTRACT BENEFITS: NON-FINANCIAL	
Description	Comment

Relate to support for and contribution to the Tactran RTS	

SECTION FIVE – CONTRACT MANAGEMENT

5.1 Contract Management	
Contract Manager	James Cooper
Level of Contract Management	Medium
Mobilisation Meeting	Yes, as workshop with supplier
Review Meetings Frequency	Monthly
How will performance be monitored?	Delivery
Reporting Arrangements and Frequency	Written at frequent intervals c.2 months
Contract Administration Requirements	Engagement in administration

5.2 PLANNED CONTRACT PERFORMANCE MEASURES		
KPI ID	KPI Label	KPI Default Instructions
KPI/1508-004	To what extent is the supplier performing in delivering the specific outcomes set within the contract?	Progress meetings and written reporting to Projects and Programmes Manager
KPI/0901-009	To what extent does the supplier provide consistently good responses to enquiries and requests, and play an active role in ensuring effective communication channels?	Project meeting and reporting
KPI/0901-013	To what extent does the supplier meet the agreed performance levels in relation to lead/delivery times?	Agreed outputs

5.3 EXIT STRATEGY	
Requirement	How this will be achieved
Continuing Service Requirements	Continued support on outputs and hand over throughout life of project
Data Security and Privacy	Tactran maintaining control of all material post delivery

Knowledge and Documentation Transfer	Provision of all outputs and supporting material post delivery
Costs	Invoiced monthly in arrears
People	Internal staffing
Additional Requirements	

SECTION SIX – GOVERNANCE

6.1 RESOURCES (CROSS-FUNCTIONAL TEAM)		
Role	Name	Department
Procurement Lead (end user service)	James COOPER	Tactran
Insurance Advisor	Office Manager	Tactran
Health & Safety	Office Manager	Tactran
Finance	James SALSIBURY	Tactran accounts
Technical Specialists	James COOPER	Tactran
	Merry SMITH	Tactran
Corporate Procurement Officer	Lynzi STEWART	Corporate Procurement Team
Tender Evaluation Panel	James Cooper Jonathan Padmore	Tactran

6.2 Key Activities		
Key Milestone	Start Date	Completion Date
Tender Published	August 2025	
Tender Return Date	August 2025	
Tender Evaluation	August 2025	
Tender Report Submitted to Board/SMT	August 2025	
Approval Obtained		
Notification of Outcome	Aug 2025	

Obtain supporting documents (RFD)		
Standstill Period		
Contract Award	Aug 2025	
Contract Implementation Tasks Pre-meetings scheduled, Contract set up on eCM including KPIs Set supplier up on Integra, PECOS or other back-office systems	Aug 2025	March 2026
Contract Start Date	Aug 2025	
Review Tasks Complete Lessons Learned document		March 2026

SECTION SIX – STRATEGY APPROVAL

Signed by Head of Service	
Printed	Mark Speed
Title	Director, Tactran
Date	