

## ITEM 11 PROCUREMENT POLICY EXEMPTION - CAB CHARGE AUSTRALIA LIMITED

This report seeks Council approval for exemption from the Procurement Procedures Management Policy in relation to the purchase of e-ticket services from Cab Charge Australia Limited, for Council's Community Transport Program. The request for exemption affords compliance with Section 55(3)(i) of the Local Government Act 1993.

### RECOMMENDATION

Council under Section 55 (3)(i) of the Local Government Act 1993, enters into an agreement with Cab Charge Australia Ltd without inviting tenders, due to the unavailability of competitive or reliable tenders and otherwise, for the reasons set out in this report.

### REPORT AUTHORISATIONS

Report of: Jenny Thompson, Director Community Services - Creative + Innovative City (Acting)  
Authorised by: Kerry Hunt, Director Community Services - Creative and Innovative City

### ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.

### BACKGROUND

Council's Community Transport: Wollongong-Shellharbour (CT:W-S) service provides a variety of affordable transport options to eligible, older people in the community to support their continued independence and well-being. The service is funded under the Commonwealth Home Support Program and administered by Transport for NSW.

CT:W-S delivered 117,405 community transport trips during 2018/2019, with up to 50% of those trips delivered via a subsidised taxi-transport program.

In seeking business efficiencies and innovation and in response to enhanced data reporting requirements from Transport for NSW, CT:W-S piloted the use of e-tickets as an alternative to the existing, paper-based taxi voucher system, during the second half of 2019. The pilot was highly successful, delivering benefits for both Council and community transport customers.

Illawarra Taxi Network, Council's supplier of taxi services, has an exclusive partnership with Cab Charge Australia for the provision of e-ticket services.

### PROPOSAL

It is proposed that Council purchases e-ticket services from Cab Charge Australia Ltd. As the value of the proposed purchase, on a cumulative basis, is anticipated to be greater than \$150,000 per annum, an exemption to deviate from Council's Procurement Policy, based on "the unavailability of competitive or reliable tenders" is proposed.

The request for exemption from Council's Procurement Policy is based on the following criteria:

- Cab Charge Australia Ltd is the only provider of e-tickets which are accepted by taxi services within the Wollongong and Shellharbour Local Government areas.
- Council currently has a contract with Illawarra Taxi Network until June 2020 (with provision for extension) which was procured via a competitive tender for delivery of taxi services to Council, that was conducted in February 2019.

## CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

### Internal

- Legal Services Unit – Local Government Act provisions
- Governance and Customer Service Division (Supply Chain and Logistics Unit) – Procurement Policy and Procedures
- Information Technology - access to Cab Charge portal

### External

- Transport for NSW
- Illawarra Taxi Network
- Cab Charge Australia
- Community Transport: Wollongong-Shellharbour customers

## PLANNING AND POLICY IMPACT

This report contributes to the delivery of Our Wollongong 2028:

- Goal 5 – We have a healthy community in a liveable city, and
- Goal 6 - We have affordable and accessible transport.

It specifically delivers on the following:

Community Strategic Plan	Delivery Program 2018-2021	Annual Plan 2018-19
Strategy	3 Year Action	Annual Deliverables
5.2.2 Healthy, active ageing programs are promoted in partnership with government agencies and community organisations.	5.2.2.1 Deliver a range of programs and recreational pursuits for older people	Support the provision of Community Transport services across Wollongong and Shellharbour Local Government Areas.
6.3.5 Community Transport options for frail older people, people with disabilities and the transport disadvantaged are actively promoted and available	6.3.5.1 Develop an alternative service delivery, governance model and auspice for Community Transport in response to the Federal Government's Aged Care reform legislation. Support the provision of Community Transport services across Wollongong and Shellharbour Local Government Areas.	Promote access to Community Transport

## RISK ASSESSMENT

Risks to reputation or to the community that may be posed by the lack of successful implementation of the e-ticket taxi transport program have been mitigated by the piloting and evaluation of the new program.

The use of e-tickets will mitigate risk associated with the existing, paper-based taxi voucher program. as the system provides for online, cloud-based tracking and management of the tickets and improved monitoring and reporting on their use.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications for Council.

The expenditure budget for the CT:W-S taxi-transport service is around \$300,000 per year. The service is fully funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and operates on a cost neutral basis to Council. Any costs associated with the replacement of Taxi Vouchers with Cab Charge e-tickets will be accommodated within the Community Transport budget.

## CONCLUSION

Council endorsement of an exemption under section 55 of the Local Government Act for the delivery of e-ticket services by Cab Charge Australia Ltd, will enable continued mobility and independence for more than 1,300 older people in the community who are unable to access other forms of private and public transport.