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Tender

## **Bus Franchising in the Liverpool City Region - Category 2 Passport System**

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

F07: Qualification system – utilities

Call for competition

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-004341

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-04dd40

Published 10 February 2025, 1:27pm

### **Section I: Contracting entity**

#### **I.1) Name and addresses**

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority

No 1 Mann Island

Liverpool

L31BP

#### **Contact**

Procurement Team

#### **Email**

[tender@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk](mailto:tender@liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk)

#### **Country**

United Kingdom

**Region code**

UKD7 - Merseyside

**Justification for not providing organisation identifier**

Not on any register

**Internet address(es)**

Main address

<https://www.liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/>

**I.3) Communication**

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

<https://www.the-chest.org.uk/>

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

<https://www.the-chest.org.uk/>

**I.6) Main activity**

Other activity

Public Transport

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## **Section II: Object**

### **II.1) Scope of the procurement**

#### **II.1.1) Title**

Bus Franchising in the Liverpool City Region - Category 2 Passport System

Reference number

DN762654

#### **II.1.2) Main CPV code**

- 60112000 - Public road transport services

#### **II.1.3) Type of contract**

Services

### **II.2) Description**

#### **II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)**

- 60000000 - Transport services (excl. Waste transport)

#### **II.2.3) Place of performance**

NUTS codes

- UKD7 - Merseyside

#### **II.2.4) Description of the procurement**

On 25 April 2023, LCRCA published an Assessment on Bus Franchising in the Liverpool City Region which sets out the proposed bus Franchising Scheme in accordance with the Transport Act.

In October 2023, the Liverpool City Region Mayor made a Franchising Scheme covering the Liverpool City Region. Franchising is to be introduced over a number of tranches of procurement. Franchised contracts will be let in two categories:

- Category 1 franchises, which are those Franchise Agreements involving multiple services that will operate from a depot provided by LCRCA. LCRCA will provide the depot from which the services relating to the Category 1 franchise must be operated. LCRCA will predominately provide the fleet that must be used on the Category 1 franchise.

ii. Category 2 franchises, which are those Franchise Agreements which either i) provide services to serve schools or ii) provide other local services. In both cases the franchises will be delivered from an operator's own depot.

This notice relates to Category 2 franchises. The first tranche of Category 2 franchises are expected to relate to St Helens, Wirral and Sefton and South Liverpool.

This notice relates to Category 2 franchises.

Key elements of Category 2 franchises will include:

Delivery of requirement: the operator of each franchise will be required to provide bus services in accordance with detailed individual franchise package specifications.

Revenue risk: the operator will not be required to assume revenue risk. Revenue risk will be primarily taken by LCRCA.

Depots: the operator of each franchise will be required to provide the depot(s) from which the Category 2 franchises will be operated.

Buses: the operator of each franchise will primarily be responsible for providing the vehicles which will operate Category 2 franchises.

Repair, maintenance and servicing of buses: the operator will be responsible for the repair, maintenance and servicing of vehicles whilst ensuring that there are in a roadworthy condition.

Staff: the operator is responsible for ensuring that it has all necessary and suitably trained staff to deliver the requirement detailed in the individual franchise specifications.

### **II.2.5) Award criteria**

Price is not the only award criterion and all criteria are stated only in the procurement documents

### **II.2.8) Duration of the qualification system**

Start date

11 February 2025

End date

23 February 2029

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## III.1) Conditions for participation

### III.1.9) Qualification for the system

#### Conditions to be fulfilled by economic operators in view of their qualification

The Qualification System for Category 2 franchises will involve different stages as described below and in the documents referred to in this notice and allows for registered and qualified suppliers to be considered for contract opportunities without further calls for competition for such contracts.

#### 1. Passport System Stage

Liverpool City Region Combined Authority has established a Passport System by which potential suppliers can apply for inclusion on the Qualification System and pre-qualify so that they can bid for Liverpool City Region Category 2 franchises.

Potential suppliers who wish to apply to become a Category 2 Passport Holder are required to provide a submission in accordance with the Passport Selection Questionnaire (which contains selection questions and criteria relating to mandatory and discretionary exclusion grounds and PSV Operator's Licence requirements) and should do so with reference to the Passport Process Document which provides further detail on the application process and the criteria and requirements. These documents can be found on the Pro-Contract E-Tendering portal The Chest (<https://www.the-chest.org.uk/>) and responses must be uploaded to the Pro-Contract e-tendering portal.

A potential Supplier wishing to participate in a particular Liverpool City Region Category 2 Bus Franchise competition must have submitted an application to join the Category 2 Passport System on or before the relevant date for each tranche. The relevant dates for each tranche are in the process of being finalised, but the indicative date for tranche 1 is set out below:

- Tranche 1: Currently anticipated for 31st July 2025, 11:00am - this date is subject to change and further details will be released in advance of this.

#### 2. Franchise Expression of Interest (EOI) Stage

LCRCA will issue to those Potential Suppliers which have successfully qualified in the Passport System stage and have become a "Category 2 Passport Holder", (ie, have met all of the necessary criteria stated in the PSQ and supporting documents) a franchise specific EOI as a further qualification process to determine those to be invited to negotiate.

Further qualification criteria in the EOI will relate to economic and financial standing and technical and professional ability. Responses to a franchise specific EOI will be evaluated in accordance with the qualification criteria as specified in the relevant franchise specific EOI.

### 3. Invitation to Negotiate (ITN) Stage

An ITN will be issued to those Category 2 Passport Holders that have successfully met the requirements of the franchise specific EOI (with the qualification criteria being specified in the franchise specific EOI).

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## **Section IV. Procedure**

### **IV.2) Administrative information**

#### **IV.2.4) Languages in which tenders or requests to participate may be submitted**

English

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## **Section VI. Complementary information**

### **VI.4) Procedures for review**

#### **VI.4.1) Review body**

The High Court (England, Wales and Northern Ireland)

The Strand

London

WC2A 2LL

Country

United Kingdom