

## **BRIEFING NOTE FOR FORWARD PLAN SELECT COMMITTEE MEETING ON 3 NOVEMBER 2009**

### **FUTURE ACQUISITION STRATEGY FOR THE BRENT TRANSPORT FLEET – CONSULTATION WITH USERS ON PREFERRED TYPES OF VEHICLE**

Northgate Kendric Ash (NKA), working in partnership with Brent Transport Services (BTS), is currently working on the specification for new vehicles that will be included in the Invitation To Tender (ITT). In addition further work is now being undertaken to identify options to work collaboratively with other West London Alliance local authorities with regards to vehicle procurement and other areas of service operations.

The ITT will not specify particular manufacturers or models for passenger transport vehicles, but the specification will include a list of essential and desirable requirements for the vehicles offered. Proposals made by companies in response to the ITT will then be evaluated and scored against this list as part of the overall evaluation of bids.

BTS has considerable experience in operating passenger transport vehicles over many years and is in continuous consultation with users about the service offered through its vehicle crews. Therefore, to assist in preparing the vehicle specification, BTS established a Future Vehicle Working Group (FVWG) in Spring 2009. The FVWG is comprised of experienced drivers, passenger attendants and vehicle fitters who have consulted widely amongst their colleagues and service users to obtain their views on what should be included in the specification for new vehicles, subject to practicality and affordability. This work is ongoing but is addressing the key concerns of users including accessibility, comfort, ventilation, heating/cooling, on-board facilities, safety, security, livery etc., as well as a range of technical requirements relating to drivers' requirements and maintenance/reliability issues.

In addition, in a recent user survey, 91% of respondents said that they were satisfied that the current vehicles were 'clean, comfortable and suitable for the journey', and a further 8% had no opinion. Only 3 respondents (out of 164) offered any comment on the vehicles – one relating to a safety issue and 2 regarding the ventilation/temperature; these comments will be taken into account in the preparation of the specification for new vehicles.