

## **COMMUNITY TRANSPORT – PROGRESS REPORT**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 Members to consider the report of the Head of Revenue and Housing Management on the progress of the Community Transport Scheme since its introduction on 6 October 2003. The scheme is operated by Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Service (RAVS) with support from the Council and other statutory bodies.

### **2 INTRODUCTION**

- 2.1 The scheme was introduced in October 2003 to provide a transport service to special groups within the District who are unable to access public transport. It offers a door-to-door service to its members, for a minimal fee.
- 2.2 Members pay an annual £5 registration fee to join the scheme and a charge of £1.50 for journeys up to 5 miles, then 40p per mile thereafter.
- 2.3 The scheme operates a 16-seater wheelchair accessible minibus, with 2 part-time drivers, and 5 social car drivers.
- 2.4 All drivers used by RAVS are vetted by the Criminal Records Bureau and vehicles used as social cars are inspected to ensure their suitability.
- 2.5 As the scheme has only been operating for a short period of time, the social cars have been used on the odd occasion when the bus has been fully booked. However, it is intended to use them on a more regular basis, in particular to undertake longer journeys when travelling outside of the Rochford District.
- 2.6 The Community Transport Scheme has over 70 members, and carries out around 300 journeys per month. Journeys tend to average one per week, per member with the most popular destinations being social clubs
- 2.7 It is intended to promote the scheme further by forwarding information to taxi voucher and bus pass users as an additional form of transport. Members may also wish to include this service for a full scrutiny examination. A scoping form is attached for consideration.

**3 RISK IMPLICATIONS**

**3.1 Strategic Risk**

It is the responsibility of the Community Transport Scheme to ensure that its members feel safe when booking a journey and that the vehicles used are MoT'd, taxed and insured.

**3.2 Resource Risk**

The Head of Service, together with the Transport Manager, made a bid to the Department of Transport for funding via Essex County Council under the Urban Transport Grant Scheme. Unfortunately, this failed. This has no impact on the Council's resources and will not affect the existing service provision. However, it might impede on the ability of the project to develop and expand the services provided.

**3.3 Reputation Risk**

Community Transport Schemes have been operated successfully for a number of years in other Local Authorities, providing valuable transportation to residents. It is therefore important that the Scheme is a success within the Rochford District.

**3.4 Regulatory Risk**

All appropriate controls on vehicles are met.

**3.5 Third Party Risk**

No risk to the Council.

**4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Community Transport Scheme is jointly funded by Rochford District Council, Essex County Council and from income generated from fees and charges. Proposals are that the project should swiftly move to a Community Transport Trust with a Management Board. The Service Level Agreement provides for this to happen in 2004/5.

**5 RECOMMENDATION**

**5.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES****

To note the progress of the Community Transport Scheme and to consider further scrutiny.

Steve Clarkson

Head of Revenue and Housing Management

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**Background Papers:**

None

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