

TAXI VOUCHER SCHEME - USAGE

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 Members to consider the year three analysis and comparison of data before its release to Essex County Council (ECC).

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 In April 2002 the Council withdrew from the South East Essex Dial-a-Ride Consortium and replaced it with a Taxi Voucher Scheme to provide subsidised travel to those who were unable to use conventional forms of public transport.
- 2.2 When setting up the scheme, Members asked for an annual review of the level of vouchers granted and a year three report to assess the level of usage and the purpose of journeys made; hence this report.

3 DETAILED ANALYSIS

- 3.1 The information below illustrates scheme membership (which has grown by 38%), the value of vouchers issued to applicants and the surrender value of vouchers over the period 2002/03 to 2004/05.

Detail	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Scheme Membership at end of year	329	402	454
Value of Vouchers issued in year	£66,156	£120,308	£138,960
Value of Vouchers redeemed in year	£48,280	£59,222	£97,038

- 3.2 Vouchers are issued on a quarterly basis with a three-month expiry date. Once surrendered, the voucher must be encashed by the taxi proprietor within a three-month period. There can, therefore, be a six-month time lapse before the voucher hits the Council's accounting mechanisms.

4 JOURNEYS AND PURPOSE

- 4.1 Although not necessarily required for this Council's purposes, as part of the ECC funding agreement, we agreed to collect and record the number of journeys and the purpose of those journeys. ECC will use this information to assess whether their funding is still meeting the overall aims and objectives of their Passenger Transport Policy.

Detail	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05
Number of journeys in year	7013	8836	15035
Journey purpose:			
Social	44%	46%	45%
Shopping	30%	30%	29%
Personal Care/Other	26%	24%	26%

- 4.2 Members will note that although the number of journeys has increased in line with both increased membership and higher issue of vouchers, the purpose of journeys is substantially unchanged.

5 RECOMMENDATION

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

That the continued growth in the usage of the Taxi Voucher Scheme and its positive impact on those sectors of Rochford's community who are unable to use conventional forms of public transport be noted.

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Background Papers:-

None

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