

Finance and Resources Committee

10.00am, Thursday, 26 November 2015

Community Transport – Interim Funding Arrangements

Item number 7.19
Report number
Executive/routine
Wards

Executive summary

This report seeks Committee approval to extend funding arrangements for a number of Third Sector Community Transport organisations. This is to ensure that the provision of transport to service users will be maintained while the Community Transport Public Social Partnership Business Case is developed.

Links

Coalition pledges [P1](#), [P30](#), [P37](#) and [P47](#)
Council outcomes [CO3](#), [CO13](#), [CO14](#), [CO22](#), [CO26](#) and [CO27](#)
Single Outcome Agreement [SO1](#)

Community Transport – Interim Funding Arrangements

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- 1.1.1 approves the continuation of funding for a further 12 months from 1 April 2016, as an interim arrangement, with Lothian Community Transport Service, South Edinburgh Amenities Group, HcL, Pilton Equalities Partnership, Dove Transport and Lothian Shopmobility; and
 - 1.1.2 notes the intention to bring back a final report to Committee in February 2016 to seek approval on the business case in for a Community Transport Public Social Partnership.

Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 24 September 2015, Finance and Resources Committee considered a report on developing a Public Social Partnership (PSP) with Third Sector organisations for the provision of community and accessible transport and agreed:
- to approve the development of a PSP with Community Transport providers for the provision of accessible transport on behalf of the Council.
 - to note the intention to bring back a further report seeking approval to formally enter into a PSP.
- 2.2 Currently Third Sector Community Transport organisations provide over 125,000 trips per annum for groups and individuals comprising older people, those with mental health problems, learning difficulties and physical disabilities, as well as young people. The organisations and the amount of funding they receive from the Council are listed in the table below:

	Funding
Lothian Community Transport Service (LCTS)	£150,591
South Edinburgh Amenities Group (SEAG)	£ 98,847
HcL (formerly Handicabs) Dial a Ride	£341,435
HcL (formerly Handicabs) Dial a Bus	£106,555
Pilton Equalities Group (PEP)	£ 29,800
Dove Transport	£ 29,800
Lothian Shopmobility	£ 78,207
TOTAL	<u>£835,235</u>

Main report

- 3.1 Community Transport providers have reaffirmed their commitment to work with the Council to develop a PSP and redesign services to help meet the increasing demand for accessible transport. However all six organisations have indicated that they need a level of certainty about funding while the PSP is being developed and, if approved, implemented. Current funding arrangements are due to expire on 31 March 2016. Community Transport providers have advised that they will be obliged to issue a three month redundancy notice to staff in January if funding beyond 31 March 2016 remains uncertain.
- 3.2 In order to avoid the need to issue redundancy notices and the potential disruption to service provision that this may cause and to enable community transport providers to fully engage in the development of the PSP, it is proposed to extend the current funding arrangements, at the same levels, for a further 12 months.
- 3.3 This approach will support the Community Transport Providers to continue to provide services to vulnerable groups and individuals while they make the transition to a PSP. The PSP has an initial three year lifespan and funding arrangements may change during this time to reflect redesigned and new services developed by partners.
- 3.4 The development and implementation of the PSP will give close consideration to issues of transition and service continuity as well as setting out a range of options to meet growing demand, reducing Council spend on individual taxi travel and improving quality and efficiency.
- 3.5 It should be noted that the Third Sector Community Transport organisations have already made a considerable investment of time in developing the PSP model and its strategic fit with the Cooperative Capital Framework and Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.

Measures of success

- 4.1 Key measures of success for extending interim arrangements for a further 12 months will be:
 - Business continuity to 450–470 vulnerable third sector groups and individuals.
 - Joint development of the PSP funding model to be presented at the Finance and Resources committee in February 2016 with a range of options and examples to deliver high quality accessible transport while achieving savings in other areas.

Financial impact

- 5.1 The interim funding model and Service Level Agreements will be superseded by a long term strategic partnership formed on the basis of the three year PSP. Although the cost of interim arrangements will be £835,235 for a 12 month period, this will be superseded by the three year plan set out in the Finance and Resource Committee Report in February 2016.
- 5.2 A more detailed assessment of the financial impact will be considered in the Business Case that will be reported to this Committee at its meeting in February 2016.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 If the recommendations are not accepted the impacts would be that:
- Third Sector Community Transport organisations would be required to make alternative arrangements for the transportation of vulnerable people and groups.
 - Transport services to vulnerable people would cease or be significantly reduced.
 - The Council's aims of promoting independent living, social inclusion and partnership working would be compromised.
 - The risk of challenge to funding on an interim basis is low.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 An Equalities and Rights Impact Assessment is being undertaken as a core part of Stage 2 of the review of community and accessible transport and is ongoing.
- 7.2 A further assessment will be scheduled at the end of 2016/17 to identify whether the needs of third sector groups are fully addressed during the ongoing period of service re-design.
- 7.3 The contents of this report do not detract from the delivery of the general public sector duties. The work carried out by the Third Sector Community Transport organisations on the Council's behalf, as described in this report, does not infringe upon the ten elements of Human Rights and makes a positive contribution to advance equality of opportunity by having due regard to:
- removing and minimising disadvantage; and
 - meeting the needs of particular groups that are different from the needs of others.

Sustainability impact

- 8.1 Sustainability in service delivery remains a key focus of all services and has particular relevance here in the efficient allocation of assisted travel and transport solutions. Making best use of capacity also reduces miles travelled and hence contributes to improved air quality and reduced carbon emissions.
- 8.2 With reference to the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005, the City of Edinburgh Council requires all reports and procedural matters to comply with all aspects of Strategic Environmental Assessment. The SEA toolkit is used to define and scope this report.

Consultation and engagement

- 9.1 There has been extensive consultation with Edinburgh Community Transport Operators Group members concerning the development of the PSP.
- 9.2 Consultation and engagement with stakeholders is ongoing and Public Consultation is scheduled for November 2015.

Background reading/external references

None.

John Bury

Acting Director of Services for Communities

Contact: Frank Henderson, Senior Project Manager

E-mail: frank.henderson@edinburgh.gov.uk | Tel: 0131 469 6248

Links

Coalition pledges	<p>P1 – Increase support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer go into care.</p> <p>P30 – ~Continue to maintain a sound financial position including long-term financial planning.</p> <p>P37 – Examine ways to bring the Council, care home staff and users together into co-operatives to provide means to make life better for care home users.</p> <p>P47 – Set up a city-wide Transport Forum of experts and citizens to consider our modern transport needs.</p>
Council outcomes	<p>CO3 – Our children and young people at risk, or with a disability, have improved life chances.</p> <p>CO13 – People are supported to live at home.</p> <p>CO14 – Communities have the capacity to help support others.</p> <p>CO22 – Moving efficiently – Edinburgh has a transport system that improves connectivity and is green, healthy and accessible.</p> <p>CO26 – The Council engages with stakeholders and works in partnership to improve services and deliver on agreed objectives.</p> <p>CO27 – The Council supports, invests in and develops our people.</p>
Single Outcome Agreement	<p>SO1 – Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all.</p>
Appendices	<p>None</p>