

Bath & North East Somerset Council

DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Francine Haerberling , Leader of the Council	
DECISION DATE:	On or after 26 March 2011	
TITLE:	Voluntary Sector Funding Applications for Community Transport 2011/12	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE: E 2256
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: Appendix 1 – Service Criteria for funding Community Transport Schemes Appendix 2 – Funding applications for Community Transport 2011/12		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 Funding applications have been received from voluntary sector bodies for the provision of community transport services in 2011/12. This Report gives details of those applications with recommendations on the allocation of funding.
- 1.2 Normally, the decision on this matter would be taken by the Cabinet Member for Service Delivery. However, the Cabinet Member is a trustee of one of the organisations recommended to receive a grant (Swan Advice Network) and has, therefore, referred the decision to the Leader of the Council.
- 1.3 This Report is being progressed under the urgency provisions (rule 15) and approval has been given by the relevant senior officers to do so.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Leader is asked to agree that:

- 2.1 Funding proposals in Appendix 2 be approved.
- 2.2 Officers be given delegated powers to reallocate funds, in consultation with the Leader, from approved projects that become unviable owing to the level of funding allocated or to a change in circumstances of the applicant group, should such situations arise during the year.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The Service Level Agreements for the three dial-a-ride schemes end on 31 March 2011 but the schemes have all expressed their willingness to extend the SLAs for another year to 31 March 2012 and maintain their current level of provision. An inflation-related adjustment of +2% to the grant for Keynsham Dial-a-Ride and Midsomer Norton & Radstock Dial-a-Ride is proposed. Total funding recommended for the three schemes in 2011/12 amounts to £186,412.
- 3.2 Eight other community transport providers applied for funding of £93,415 in total for 2011/12. The applications have been evaluated against the normal criteria and awards totalling £81,111 are recommended.
- 3.3 If the recommended awards are made, total spending on community transport support in 2011/12 will be £267,523. Budget provision has been made for this amount.
- 3.4 In addition to support for community transport services, the Council provides funding for CRB checks for paid staff and training for trustees in their roles and responsibilities.
- 3.5 The government has announced recently the provision of additional funding to kick-start the development of community transport services in rural areas. The allocation to Bath & North East Somerset Council will be £42,540 but the conditions attached to it have not been published yet.

4 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 4.1 The proposals will ensure the continuation of community transport schemes provided by the voluntary sector and will meet the following Corporate Priorities:
- Building communities where people feel safe and secure
 - Promoting the independence of older people
 - Improving life chances of disadvantaged teenagers and young people
 - Sustainable growth
 - Addressing the causes and effects of Climate Change
 - Improving transport and the public realm

5 THE REPORT

- 5.1 The Joint Local Transport Plan for the West of England Partnership Area 2011 – 2026 aims to maintain, diversify, expand and integrate community transport provision by:
- Linking with other forms of public transport
 - Optimising community transport operations
 - Encouraging social enterprises
 - Helping with marketing, publicity and information

- 5.2 Community transport improves access to education, training, shopping, leisure and health facilities for people living in remote rural areas and those who are elderly or disabled.
- 5.3 Recommended awards have been arrived at following assessment of grant applications against the criteria in Appendix 1 and a comparison of value for money.
- 5.4 Six schemes that received grants for 2009/10 have applied for funding again this year to continue the provision of affordable and accessible transport. Some schemes applied for higher grants to reflect increases in their operating costs. Details are given in Appendix 2.
- 5.5 Two new schemes that started operating over the past two years have applied for revenue funding for the first time this year. Chew Magna Community Transport received a pump-priming grant of £8,000 in 2009 from the Local Area Agreement funding to help them buy a people carrier. Wellow Community Bus started in 2010 with a one-off revenue grant of £8,000.
- 5.6 5.5 Keynsham & District Dial-a-Ride operates a well-established service in the urban areas of Keynsham and Salford as well as a rural service covering five parishes. The service runs under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) that expires on 31 March 2011. The group have agreed to an extension of the SLA for another year to give time to consider future provision in the light of the government's recent announcement of additional funding.
- 5.6 Midsomer Norton and Radstock Ring & Ride operates a dial-a-ride service in the urban areas of Midsomer Norton and Radstock as well as a substantial rural service covering 34 parishes in the Chew Valley and the area south of Bath. The service runs under a Service Level Agreement that expires on 31 March 2011. The group have agreed to an extension of the SLA for another year to give time to consider future provision in the light of the government's recent announcement of additional funding. administration. The group has been keen to expand for some time.
- 5.8 In addition to the dial-a-ride services provided by voluntary groups, the Council's in-house transport fleet operates a dial-a-ride service in the Bath City area under the direction of the Corporate Transport Services Group. No increase in support is needed in 2011/12 to maintain this service.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The report author and the Leader have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 A proportionate equalities impact assessment has been completed and will be published on the Council's website.

8 RATIONALE

8.1 The recommended awards will ensure the continuation of existing community transport services.

8.2 The Council's Public Transport Team considers all applications against set criteria (see Appendix 1) and assesses value for money by comparing the cost per trip of comparable schemes, based on the information that applicants provide.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None.

10 CONSULTATION

10.1 Consultation has been carried out with the Section 151 Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer. As in previous years, it was not deemed appropriate to consult more widely.

10.2 Approval has been given by Chief Executive, the Section 151 Finance Officer and the Monitoring Officer to treat this report under the urgency provisions (rule 15).

10.3 Consultation has been carried out electronically.

11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

11.1 Social Inclusion; Customer Focus; Sustainability; Young People; Equality (age, disability);

12 ADVICE SOUGHT

12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Council Solicitor) and Section 151 Officer (Strategic Director – Resources & Support Services) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

Contact person	Andy Strong, Public Transport Team Leader - 01225 394201
Background papers	None
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	