

GRANTS TO COMMUNITY PROVIDERS

To: Audit and Accounts Committee

Meeting Date: 24 March 2020

From: Steve Cox - Executive Director, Place and Economy

Electoral division(s): All

Forward Plan ref: **Key decision:** No

Purpose: To report on the impact of introducing revised membership criteria for community transport schemes receiving grant funding for Dial-a-Ride services.

Recommendation: Committee is asked to:

a) note and comment on the report;

<i>Officer contact:</i>	<i>Member contact:</i>
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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) has provided grant awards to community transport operators, to contribute to the cost of the provision of dial-a-ride services, for a number of years. It should be noted that this is now a function that is the responsibility of the Combined Authority and for this year and next year, the Combined Authority has delegated the delivery of the work to the County Council.
- 1.2 From last year, grants to operators are awarded following a procurement exercise to test the market for the grants. As part of the grant agreement operators agree to only transport members who meet a membership criteria.
- 1.3 The Council's Audit & Accounts Committee asked for a report on the impact of introducing revised membership criteria across all dial-a-ride schemes funded by CCC.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 There are currently five grants awarded to operators covering the areas of Fenland (£40,265), Huntingdonshire (£12,095), Cambridge City (£27,280) villages in East Cambridgeshire around Newmarket (£18,071) and villages in East Cambridgeshire around Ely (£50,000). The annual grant amounts are shown in brackets.
- 2.2 The current community transport operators in receipt of the grants are Fenland Association for Community Transport (Fenland), Huntingdonshire Association for Community Transport (Huntingdonshire), Cambridge Dial-a-ride (Cambridge), The Voluntary Network (Newmarket area) and Ely and Soham Association for Community Transport (Ely area).
- 2.3 In January 2019 Economy and Environment Committee approved revised membership criteria for all CCC funded dial-a-ride schemes, and these criteria were introduced from April 2019. The criteria were introduced for all new scheme members and at the time of membership renewal for existing members.
- 2.4 Although there were initially some concerns from operators, the revised membership criteria have been introduced. Spot checks are carried out every three months on randomly selected scheme members for all operators to ensure that only members meeting the criteria have been accepted. To date no breaches have been discovered.
- 2.5 Table 1 shows the number of members for each scheme for March 2019 and March 2020, enabling a comparison between the schemes and years.
- 2.6 Table 1 shows that although there may be other factors involved, such as promotion of the schemes and membership campaigns, the introduction of the revised criteria appears to have had little effect on membership of the schemes. In particular, the figures suggest that there has been no adverse effect on membership.

Table 1. Membership information by community transport scheme.

Community Transport Scheme	Number of scheme members 2019	Number of scheme members 2020
Fenland Association for Community Transport	1,228	1,236
Huntingdonshire Association for Community Transport	473	519
Cambridge Dial-a-ride	358	415
The Voluntary Network	122	122
Ely and Soham Community Transport	155	179

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

3.1 A good quality of life for everyone

Dial a ride services are a vital way of allowing communities where there are limited alternative forms of transport to access services they need and as such, is important for the overall health of the county.

3.2 Thriving places for people to live

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.3 The best start for Cambridgeshire's children

There are no significant implications for this priority.

3.4 Net zero carbon emissions for Cambridgeshire by 2050

There are no significant implications for this priority.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.7 Public Health Implications

The Transport and Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has a section on community transport and the role it plays in enabling residents to access health services in rural areas.

The transport and health JSNA can be found at: <http://cambridgeshireinsight.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Transport-and-Health-JSNA-2015-Access-to-Transport.pdf>

Implications	Officer Clearance
Have the resource implications been cleared by Finance?	Yes or No Name of Officer:
Have the procurement/contractual/ Council Contract Procedure Rules implications been cleared by the LGSS Head of Procurement?	Yes Gus De Silva
Has the impact on statutory, legal and risk implications been cleared by the Council's Monitoring Officer or LGSS Law?	Yes Fiona McMillan
Have the equality and diversity implications been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes Elsa Evans
Have any engagement and communication implications been cleared by Communications?	Yes Sarah Silk
Have any localism and Local Member involvement issues been cleared by your Service Contact?	Yes or No Name of Officer:
Have any Public Health implications been cleared by Public Health	Yes Iain Green

Source Documents	Location
None	