

## **Project Plan – Community Transport Hub and Car Scheme Federation**

Whilst the Bucks Accessibility Partnership has largely faded there is significant demand for advice and support to local groups and organisations on transport matters. In particular over the last year there has been increased demand for assistance and support in establishing community led solutions to transport needs. Pressure for such an approach is both a reflection of the national Big Society agenda and the associated drive to make public sector expenditure reductions, and a genuine response to local need (particularly in light of actual and potential reductions in rural bus services).

A number of the Local Area Forums have recognised this need and provided additional funding, to be used by 31 March 2011, to promote community car schemes in up to 20 local areas. Whilst the focus at the moment is on community car schemes, it is anticipated that other community solutions (such as community bus schemes along the lines of the Risborough Community Bus) will also be needed. Our experience is that such initiatives can deliver significant benefits but frequently have a longer gestation period due to their larger funding and operational requirements.

In light of this two objectives for the immediate future development of community and rural transport within Buckinghamshire are apparent:

- Community Transport Hub
- County-wide federation of community car schemes

Funding to develop both of these projects has been secured and an initial project plan for their implementation is shown below.

### **Project 1: Community Transport Hub**

Not everyone has access to a traditional bus service and are seeking a more needs-led alternative. There are at least 20 community car schemes in Buckinghamshire, who already offer an outstanding service to people from rural areas, but they are often under resourced and leave their advertising to word of mouth. In the past year, Community impact Bucks have taken an increased number of enquiries from members of the public looking for transport solutions, often to visit relatives in hospital or to attend day centres. This has demonstrated that people are often confused about what services may be able to help them, and how to access those services. Our proposal is to pilot a community transport hub, which would act as a “one stop shop” for information, advice and guidance on community transport services, where customers can call one centralised number and find out which service best meets their needs. There would also be the option of booking trips through this centralised number if the client wishes

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to do so and the individual community transport provider has highlighted a need for help with bookings and administration. In addition to this, the hub would support those individual services, by reviewing policies, procedures and practices; providing business development support and financial healthchecks and identifying potential tender opportunities. Key aims are:

- a. Work with Dial-A-Ride to review procedures and practices with a view to improving customer service through implementing a central co-ordinating hub
- b. Support the local Dial-A-Ride in improving accessibility to a range of other community transport providers
- c. Provide business development support (eg financial healthchecks, identification of tender opportunities, advice on financial costing) to the local Dial-A-Ride as necessary
- d. Establish links with local community transport providers to develop joint working and awareness.

The hub would initially be piloted in the Chiltern area, and operated with Chiltern Dial A Ride, who are already well established as valued community transport provider with booking systems, telephone staff and governance. There is a possibility of extending the pilot to the Wycombe and South Bucks areas during the year, although this is subject to further discussion and agreement by the relevant parties. The work will begin on 1 April, with a view to “go live” by 31 August 2011:

<b>Task</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>Completion Date</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Recruit Coordinator	01-Apr	30-Apr	High
Recruit Volunteers for research projects	01-Apr	30-Apr	High
Visit to Wiltshire	01-Apr	30-Apr	Medium
Needs Assessment Survey- public	01-Apr	31-May	High

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Needs Assessment Survey- community transport providers	01-Apr	31-May	High
Collect Data on Car Schemes and other transport options/Gap analysis	01-May	31-May	High
Set up policies and procedures/terms and conditions	01-Apr	31-May	High
Set up booking system	01-Apr	31-May	High
Research and purchase journey planning software	01-Apr	30-Jun	High
Organise seminar/meeting of existing providers	01-May	30-Jun	Medium
Toolkit provided to all schemes	01-May	30-Jun	Medium
Database of vehicles	01-May	30-Jun	Medium
Insurance	01-Apr	30-Jun	High
Marketing Plan including targeted marketing in areas where gaps have been identified	01-Jun	30-Jun	High
Income Generation/Business Planning	01-Jun	30-Jun	High
Recruitment of new volunteers	01-Jun	ongoing	High
Agree fee structure- chargeable services and membership fees	01-May	30-Jun	Medium
Database of volunteers	01-Jun	31-Jul	High
Database of schemes	01-Jun	31-Jul	High
Website	01-Aug	31-Jul	High

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Official Launch

01-Jun

31-Aug

High

## Project 2: County Wide federation of community car schemes

Since October 2010, Community Impact Bucks has been involved with the set up of community car schemes in 20 LAF areas and the support of existing community transport providers. On speaking to existing schemes it has become evident that many are under resourced, with a dwindling number of volunteer drivers, limited financial back up and there is a great disparity in terms of policies, procedures and administration. In addition to this, in some villages there are as many as five car schemes, all operating independently of each other despite offering a very similar services and working with the same client groups. This can cause confusion among potential passengers, and also results in wasted resources, when schemes could be working together, sharing volunteers and vehicles. Potential coordinators and volunteer drivers are often uncertain about legal requirements regarding CRB checks, public liability insurance, vehicle insurance, and have asked for help with these issues. To this end we have published a toolkit for all schemes across the county, and offer telephone support and advice for new and existing schemes. Our proposal is to establish a federation of car schemes across Buckinghamshire, to give the opportunity to share resources, have expert support and the opportunity to join a county wide public liability insurance policy. This service would be given in return for a small annual membership fee.

There are two aspects of work, which will cover:

1. Establish a county wide federation of community car schemes, building on best practice from elsewhere in the country.
  - a. Federation to provide marketing, publicity and promotional support
  - b. Federation to seek group insurance for local community car schemes (subject to financial viability)
  - c. Federation to provide governance and operational information and advice, including model documents (eg reimbursing arrangements, driver agreements, good practice etc) to participating community car schemes
  - d. Federation to assist with recruiting and training volunteers (possibly to include CRB checking)
2. Work with local communities to develop new community led transport schemes, in particular;

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- a. Keeping up to date a community car implementation toolkit
- b. Promoting best practice and ideas from other areas

Task	Start Date	Completion Date	Priority
Recruit Volunteers for research projects	01-Apr	30-Apr	High
Visit to Wiltshire	01-Apr	30-Apr	Medium
Needs Assessment Survey- community transport providers Gap analysis	01-Apr	31-May	High
Collect Data on Car Schemes and other transport options	01-May	31-May	High
Agree governance, terms and conditions etc	01-Apr	31-May	High
Organise seminar/meeting of existing providers	01-May	30-Jun	Medium
Toolkit provided to all schemes	01-May	30-Jun	Medium
Database of vehicles	01-May	30-Jun	Medium
Public Liability Insurance	01-Apr	30-Jun	High
Marketing Plan including targeted marketing in areas where gaps have been identified Recruitment of new volunteers	01-Jun	ongoing	High
Agree fee structure- chargeable services and membership fees	01-May	30-Jun	Medium
Database of volunteers	01-Jun	31-Jul	High
Database of schemes	01-Jun	31-Jul	High
Website	01-Aug	31-Jul	High

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## Funding Needs 2011/2012

Community Impact has assessed these two areas of activity and estimates that the following funding is required to meet the outcomes set out above.

	Community Car Schemes	Community Transport Hub
Salary costs	11,020	7,540
Project Costs	5,000	7,000
Management and Administration	1,100	750
	<b>17,120</b>	<b>15,290</b>
Bucks County Council *	10,000	
District Contribution (£500 each)	2,000	
Chiltern District Council *		13,000
Community Impact Bucks *	5,120	2,290
	<b>17,120</b>	<b>15,290</b>

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\* funding agreed