

26 November 2012**Agenda Item: 7****REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER
TRANSPORT AND TRAVEL SERVICES****COMMUNITY TRANSPORT FUNDING****Purpose of Report**

1. To note the award of £316,910 grant funding from the Department for Transport to kick start the development of Community Transport and an additional award of £2,600 for consultancy support on practical ways of getting value for money from community transport.
2. To note the programme of spend.

Background

3. On 7th June 2011 the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Highways was notified of the government announcement about additional funding for community transport including £158,455 for Nottinghamshire. The funding is to kick-start the development of community transport services, with an additional £2,600 consultancy credit available for support on practical ways of getting value for money from community transport. This kick start funding was repeated in December 2011 with a further £158,455 allocated.
4. The expenditure can be used as capital or revenue, but cannot be used to displace planned expenditure on community transport and supported services.
5. A programme of spend was determined to support the development of community transport in line with the stated objective of the funding which complements the Mobility Strategy Action Plan and the TITAN transport improvement project:
 - Purchase of two fully accessible passenger carrying vehicles for use within the community transport sector.
 - Provision of a Minibus Driver Assessment Scheme (MiDAS) Training Fund to support the up-skilling of car and minibus volunteer drivers.
 - Independent Travel Training pilot project to enable children, young people and adults with disabilities to become competent public transport users who are not reliant on specialised transport provision.
 - Consultancy credit utilised for best practice events and workshops for voluntary and community sector partners

Community Transport Growth Fund

6. The remaining funds will be used to establish a local Community Transport Growth Fund. The purpose of this fund is to kick start the development of Community Transport in areas of the county where there is little or no provision.

7. The Growth Fund is available to Minibus and Car Schemes currently being Grant Aid funded by Nottinghamshire County Council from 2012-2015.
8. Existing grant funded schemes have been invited to submit funding proposals for projects that will result in growth in the services provided by the scheme, in line with the strategic aims of the council including the TITAN project and the Mobility Strategy action plan.
9. The closing date for applications is 23rd November and examples of the range of projects which funding applications might include are as follows:-
 - Additional staff time to prepare for Level 1 or 2 of the Community Transport Association (CTA) Quality Mark
 - Funding for the provision of a minibus or a wheelchair accessible 'Car Scheme Plus' vehicle
 - Identifying unmet need and creating opportunities to address this issue
 - Paying for external support to develop the organisation's business plan
 - Project costs for new minibus schemes and car schemes
 - Scheme Publicity
 - Training for staff or volunteers
 - Upgrading office equipment and IT
 - Upgrading vehicle equipment
 - Volunteer Incentives and rewards
 - Volunteer Recruitment Campaigns
10. The Growth Fund will also include the opportunity to bid for new fully accessible small vehicles to complement the services provided by transport schemes using funds identified from the Local Transport Plan, integrated transport block for 2013/14. This funding will potentially enable schemes to offer a service to people with particular needs including wheelchair and mobility scooter users, similar to schemes recently launched in Broxtowe.
11. The outcome of the bidding process is expected in January 2013, and the awards will be reported to the Transport and Highways Committee and to the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee for information

Recommendations

12. It is recommended that Members note this report.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Mark Hudson
Group Manager, Transport and Travel Services

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Pete Mathieson
Team Manager
Passenger Transport Travel and Development
Environment and Resources Department
T: 0115 977 4520
E: pete.mathieson@nottsc.gov.uk

Constitutional Comments

14. Because this report is for noting only no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments

15. The financial implications of this grant are explained within the context of the report and the grant will be drawn down at regular intervals to offset the level of expenditure incurred.

Equal Opportunities

16. The use of this funding will provide additional opportunities for people with mobility difficulties to access key services.

Background Papers

Mobility Strategy Action Plan – March 2011.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.