

RENEWAL OF JOINT FUNDING AGREEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

1. ITEMS FOR DECISION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to extend the current funding agreements New Forest District Council (NFDC) has with Hampshire County Council (HCC) for Community Transport Provision. This will allow the existing Call and Go (previously called Dial a Ride, Wheels to Work (moped loan) scheme and Community Transport Services (includes mini bus brokerage and linked training for the voluntary sector) to continue until 31 March 2017 (31 July 2018 for Wheels to Work).

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1. New Forest District Council have for a number of years funded three main community transport project jointly with Hampshire County Council (HCC) through a funding agreement. This agreement provides funding for the following services:

- Call and Go
- Wheels to Work
- Group Hire Mini Bus Scheme / Transport Worker.

- 2.2. The current contracts are all between HCC and Community First New Forest are as follows:

(i) Community Transport Group Hire ('Transport Worker's Post')	Ends 31 March 2017
(ii) Call & Go	Ends 31 March 2017
(iii) Wheels to Work Moped loan scheme	Ends 31 July 2017

3. PROPOSALS

- 3.1. HCC are seeking confirmation from NFDC for a firm commitment to extend the current arrangements for Community Transport for a further year pending a full review of the service provision over the course of 2017/18.

- 3.2. The arrangements proposed by HCC for renewal or extensions of these contracts are as follows:

- (i) Community Transport Group Hire: This scheme has been subject to a full open tender. The proposed contract is for a 1 year with effect from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018. Tenders are assessed on both price and quality.
- (ii) Call & Go: existing tendered contract to be extended by one year to 31 March 2018;
- (iii) Wheels to Work Moped loan scheme: existing tendered contract to be extended by one year to 31 July 2018

- 3.3. The cost to this Council for the Community Transport provision is the same as that of the 2016/17 and is contained within current budgets as set out below:

NF Community Transport Services	£12,416.05	Includes assistance to voluntary transport sector and CFNF transport services
Wheels to Work	£7,294.06	Assistance for young people to get to work by moped (short term arrangement).
NF Call & Go	£26,035.09	Assistance for elderly/disabled people and others who do not have access to public transport.
TOTAL	£45,745.20	

- 3.4. HCC are currently undertaking a full review of their CT procurement arrangements in order to ensure value for money. It is hoped that the new arrangements will be in place by 1 April 2018 which is why only a single year tender and single year extensions are proposed. The proposal for The Wheels to Work contract does have the option for a further year extension to 2019 which may be taken up at a later date.
- 3.5. Once the full model for the future procurement of CT is known this will be subject to a separate report for consideration on whether to continue to contribute to the scheme.
- 3.6. The topic of Community Transport was discussed Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel in March 2016 which proposed a number of recommendations be made to Community First New Forest for enhancements to the service. These were:
- That Community First New Forest be asked to carry out a feasibility study to explore a neighbour car / volunteer driver scheme in the New Forest to assist young people attending medical appointments.
 - That Community First New Forest be asked to carry out a feasibility study to explore the option of running a weekly Call & Go route to Bournemouth, Southampton and Lymington hospitals to coincide with visiting times, and the potential of also using the Group Hire scheme for this purpose.
 - That Community First New Forest are asked to undertake wider promotion of Call & Go scheme to the under 25 age group and exploration of potential grant funding available for Group Hire specifically to assist the under 25 age group.
- 3.7. The recommendations were made to Community First New Forest to consider. Once the HCC review has been undertaken and a full package of work is known it may be possible to incorporate these recommendations in to the tender package.
- 3.8. If NFDC decides not to enter into new funding agreements it is anticipated that the CT services will at the very least be significantly reduced as HCC are most unlikely to make up the sum equivalent to NFDC's current contribution. HCC may even decide to withdraw one or more of the CT services if NFDC decides to no longer contribute.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. No significant implications arising out of the recommendations. The proposed funding levels are as those in 2016/17 and contained within the existing budgets.
- 4.2. If the recommendations are not approved then there will savings of the sums referred to above, however it would be likely that the Community Transport services would not continue.
- 4.3. The Agreement to Contribute attached includes a termination clause which means the NFDC is in a position to end its funding should that be deemed necessary. NFDC will seek to ensure any new agreements include a similar clause.

5. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. None.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1. None provided recommendations accepted. Given that CT benefits people with disabilities and those who suffer the effects of deprivation any reduction in CT services will have negative implications especially as there have been some reductions to local bus services.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. The identified proposal allows the current levels of community transport services to be retained thus encouraging the use of community transport.

8. RECOMMENDATION

- 8.1. That New Forest District Council enter into new funding agreements with Hampshire County Council for a further year as set out in this report to allow existing Call and Go, Community Transport Group Hire and Wheels to Work services to continue beyond March 2017.

9. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ENDORSEMENT

- 9.1. I have agreed to the recommendations of this report.

Signed: E J Heron

Date: 6 March 2017

Date on which notice given of this Decision – 6 March 2017

Late date for call-in – 13 March 2017

FURTHER INFORMATION:	BACKGROUND PAPERS
<p>Please contact</p> <p>Louise Evans Service Manager (Policy and Strategy) Tel: 023 8028 5588 louise.evans@nfdc.gov.uk</p> <p>Dean Brunton Senior Policy Planner (Implementation and Transport) Tel: 023 8028 5588 dean.brunton@nfdc.gov.uk</p>	<p>Published papers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Call & Go Cabinet decision Oct 2008 at http://www.newforest.gov.uk/committeedocs/cab/CDR04199.pdf .• Wheel to Work & Community Transport Services Portfolio Holder March 2009 decision at http://www.newforest.gov.uk/committeedocs/p-tphd/CDD04714.pdf .• Portfolio Holder Decision May 2012 at http://www.newforest.gov.uk/committeedocs/p-tphd/CDD07608.pdf .• Cabinet decision January 2015 at https://democracy.newforest.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/20150107/Agenda/CDR09425.pdf• HCC Executive Member for Environment and Transport on 12 October 2016 http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearchmeetings/meetingsitemsummary.htm?sta=&pref=Y&item_ID=7529&tab=1&co=&confidential=