

-vcsTogether

Community Transport Forum

Notes of meeting Wednesday 21 June, 2007 2.00pm

Present:

Andrew Campbell, Norwich and Norfolk Voluntary Services
Maureen Clark, North Norfolk District Council
Brenda Coldrick, First Focus Fakenham
Nita Good, Aldborough Community Bus
Tracy Jessop, Norfolk County Council
Paul Gray, North Walsham Area Community Transport Association
Barry Langley, West Norfolk Community Transport Project
Peter Morris, West Norfolk Voluntary Action
Jane Murchie, Great Massingham Community Car Scheme
Daphne Potter, BMACCS (Burnham Market Area Community Car Scheme)
Brad Stein, West Norfolk Community Transport

Apologies:

Norman Cooker, Sandra Ormerod, Alison Taylor, Margrete Thorsen-Moore, Andy Turner, John Wratten

1 Notes of Meeting 2 May and matters arising

Andy Weston, CarLink to be added to the list of attendees.

Volunteer Recruitment Campaign

This had resulted in a front page article of the North Norfolk News (31 May) and an article in the EDP (May 29), both featuring the Holt Area Caring Society. There had also been an item on North Norfolk Radio and mentions on BBC Radio Norfolk, though to date no new recruits had come through as a direct result.

Andrew will chase the Lynn News to see whether they are still planning to do something. (Since published.)

Soft Outcomes and Monitoring – Barry Langley

Barry and Brad will continue to develop a template in order to monitor passenger levels and purpose combining both hard and soft outcomes.

Paul Gray circulated a draft survey (attached) that he will be distributing via the post to a sample of his users to evidence the demand, value and benefits of community transport to healthcare services in order to develop the level of support from Norfolk PCT. He is happy for other groups to adapt this and use it to develop their own evidence base in the meantime.

An updated list of organisations and their contact details is attached. Please let Andrew know if there are any changes necessary to these.

2 Tracy Jessop, Head of Passenger Transport Unit, Norfolk County Council

Opened by saying this Forum is testament to the developments that have taken place over the last eighteen months and it is pleasing to see that it has got off the ground.

The Passenger Transport Group delivers public transport services such as home to school services and transport for adult social services with integrated services to provide bulk public transport. It also delivers the Norwich Park and Ride services, and the subsidised bus network. Throughout the county is supports nine major community transport schemes, 14 smaller schemes (community car), six taxi-based demand responsive schemes

Community demand responsive transport is essential to complement the 'big bus' network in rural areas. Scheduled bus services throughout the county is not an option and the Local Transport Plan recognises the need for flexible services to augment the scheduled services that will continue to serve the market towns. Community Car schemes are recognised as a vital part of this approach.

The Wymondham Flexibus will be rolled out to other suitable areas in Norfolk – North Walsham and Fakenham are possibilities.

Funding is obviously an issue for the County Council whose allocation from central government is being reduced. There is a predicted shortfall of £500,000 in the passenger transport budget for 2007-8. The current average subsidy per passenger for Demand Responsive Transport is £1.96. The variation between the current schemes is 39p to £5.76 per trip.

Part of the unit's work this year is capacity building with schemes to develop their skills and promote the sustainability of projects.

She is aware that the image of community transport needs to be opened up and seen as being genuinely there to support the whole community, not just for older people. And it is also necessary to lobby for service provision to be put in places that minimise the journeys.

3 Maureen Clarke, Active Communities Manager, North Norfolk District Council

North Norfolk District Council has allocated £17,000 of 'core funding' for community transport. The process for distributing this needs to be fair and transparent, The Forum could contribute to determining how this happens. In addition the Council's Concessionary Fares service has a budget of £45,000. Transport is recognised as being a core issue and there may in addition be funds in other budgets that might be used to support transport initiatives.

Keen to work with the Forum on developing the Council's Community Transport policy. Key members of the District Council are Councillor Hilary Nelson, who has the community overview in Cabinet supported by Councillor Anthea Sweeney who has specific responsibility for transport.

4 Next Community Transport Forum meeting – 13 September

Proposal to combine this meeting with the launch of the Report from the Access4Life pilot project, and to use it as an opportunity to develop some specific proposals arising as a result of the pilot's findings.

It would also be an opportunity to invite statutory and commercial partners to discuss the formation of a multi-agency North Norfolk Forum to help ensure a more co-ordinated approach to transport and access issues.

Proposal agreed.

This is likely to be a morning and afternoon event with lunch provided by the North Norfolk Community Partnership.

5 Forum Action Plan

This was circulated before the meeting and several comments were made. These have been included in the attached draft document which is circulated again for further comment and additions. Please pass any comments to Andrew Campbell as soon as possible.

6 vcsTogether Forum – Fakenham, Monday June 11

A brief report was given of the proceedings and a number of members had attended. Full details are available from www.nvs.org.uk/vcs_together_nn

7 Future meetings

The group felt it would be useful to continue with meetings of the Community Transport Forum and the venue is suitable.

8 AOB

BMACCS has reluctantly resigned itself to the decision of the Big Lottery not to award a grant for the consortium bid, and is considering what to do next in the light of this.

Next meetings:

13 September, 9.30 for 10.00am – 3.00pm, Hempton Memorial Hall (to be confirmed)
22 November, 2.00pm, Hempton Memorial Hall