



PRCC.60 16/17

Prosperous Communities

21<sup>st</sup> March 2017

**F**

**Subject: Rural Transport – Programme Update**

Report by:	Chief Executive
Contact Officer:	Enterprise & Community Services Manager 01427 675145
Purpose / Summary:	To update the committee on the Rural Transport programme and proposed projects for delivery.

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**

1. That Members note this update on the Rural Transport programme.
2. That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to spend on Rural Transport project 1.1 Transport Publicity Programme
3. That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to spend on Rural Transport project 2.2 Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride Car Scheme – Volunteer Co-ordinator
4. That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to spend on Rural Transport project 3.1 Call Connect – North of Lincoln expansion pilot
5. That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to spend on Rural Transport project 3.2 Access to Transport Fund
6. That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to amend the Capital Programme for 2017-2018.

## IMPLICATIONS

**Legal:** Appropriate procurement procedures must be followed and set criteria will be required for managing and monitoring certain activity we may decide to deliver.

### **Financial : FIN/139/17**

In 2014-2015 the Council approved the earmarking of £300k for supporting Rural Transport as part of its Medium Term financial plan. To date £18.5k has been spent and therefore a balance of £281.5k remains.

The Rural Transport proposals contained within the body of the report equate to an estimated cost of delivery of £237.5k (Revenue £215k, Capital £22.5k).

The remaining forecast balance on the Connectivity Fund Earmarked Reserve is £44k at the end of 3 years (2017-2018 to 2019-2020).

As stated under Theme 2.2 Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride there may be a requirement for possible future funding to help establish a new scheme. This would be subject to a further report to this Committee.

A summary of the financial implications is provided at Appendix A.

**Staffing :** A virtual team of officers will deliver the Rural Transport work. Close working arrangements have also been developed with Lincolnshire County Council and transport officers. Clear project leads will be identified for each specific project or activity being delivered.

**Equality and Diversity including Human Rights :** Any projects or initiatives will be delivered in a way to ensure fair and unrestricted access to all residents.

**Risk Assessment : N/A**

**Climate Related Risks and Opportunities : N/A**

**Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

**Call in and Urgency:**

**Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?**

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

**Key Decision:**

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

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## **1. Background**

- 1.1 In 2014-2015 the Council agreed to allocate £300,000 from reserve funds to go towards making improvements and/or tackling issues with rural transport in West Lindsey. As a large rural district, lack of or gaps in transport and connectivity is often seen as a barrier to accessing services and ease of mobility. £18,500 was spent in 2015-2016 on consultancy work therefore £281,500 remains in the earmarked reserve.
- 1.2 Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) as the upper tier local authority has the responsibility for transport. LCC provide a wide range of transport initiatives that combined with services provided by the private sector transport companies, gives Lincolnshire a comprehensive coverage. In effect all parts of West Lindsey are connected by public transport but to different levels.
- 1.3 Following research work and collaboration with external partners including Lincolnshire County Council and transport providers, we now have a selection of projects and actions for delivery. This projects and actions have been developed to respond to need and be achievable to deliver and sustain.
- 1.4 The methodology and decision making process for any project activity was agreed by the Prosperous Communities Committee on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2015 and a Rural Transport Member Working Group was established. The Council's Project Board process will approve and oversee any project activity.

## **2. Corporate Plan Themes**

- 2.1 All activity delivered as part of the Rural Transport programme will help support our six main priority areas within the Council's Corporate Plan 2016-2020:
  - Open for Business
  - People First
  - Asset Management
  - Partnership/Devolution
  - Central Lincolnshire Local Plan
  - Excellent Value for Money Services

## **3. Programme Update – Proposed projects and actions**

- 3.1 For the Rural Transport programme we have identified 5 core themes. Under each theme we have developed and continue to develop a range of projects and actions to make improvements to rural transport.

These are detailed below in the action plan:

## **Theme 1: Communication and Information**

### **1.1 Transport Publicity Programme 2017-2020**

We will deliver coordinated publicity and promotion of existing transport services. A communication plan will detail all specific forms of publicity and communication we shall undertake.

This work will be completed in-house by existing Community Officers and Communications Officers. It will include the following:

- New content about public transport on WLDC website
- Social media promotion of transport services
- Distribute transport posters to all Parish Councils (once per year)
- Other promotional and publicity materials to promote transport options

**Project Status:** Started delivery. Communications Plan being finalised ready for April 2017.

**Financial Impact:** A £5,000 revenue budget over 3 years.

**Progress Reporting:** Progress will be reported to the Member Working Group and in any updates to Committee.

## **Theme 2: Community Transport**

### **2.1 Community Car Schemes**

We are working with LCC to identify existing schemes and communities that would like to have a scheme where none currently operates. Communities that show an interest in setting a scheme up will be given further advice and support from LCC and WLDC officers.

This work will be completed in-house by existing Community Officers working in partnership with LCC officers. It will include the following:

- Promote benefits of Community Car Schemes to areas with no coverage
- Provide advice and support with scheme set up and funding

**Project Status:** Started delivery. WLDC and LCC officers working to support existing and possible new schemes.

**Financial Impact:** Possible future funding requirement to help a new scheme establish. Would be eligible to apply to Access to Transport Fund as detailed in Theme 3.2.

**Progress Reporting:** Progress will be reported to the Member Working Group and in any updates to Committee.

## **2.2 Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride Car Scheme – Volunteer Co-ordinator**

Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride has launched a new community car scheme service which operates in West Lindsey. Whilst the Dial-a-Ride services are limited to a 6 mile radius of Lincoln, the car scheme is only limited by volunteer driver availability.

This project will provide a Volunteer Co-ordinator post to help drive volunteer recruitment, training and retention. The ability to recruit and maintain a strong volunteer base will enable this community car scheme to expand and provide greater cover in West Lindsey.

This work will be delivered by Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride and be managed through a grant funding agreement. It will include the following:

- Grant funding to part-fund the Volunteer Co-ordinator post for 2 years (West Lindsey work only)
- Provision of dedicated volunteer coordination to expand service in West Lindsey

**Project Status:** Grant agreement and project scope being finalised agreement by end March 2017.

**Financial Impact:** A £20,000 revenue grant agreement over 2 years (£10k per year)

**Progress Reporting:** On-going grant monitoring by officers. Progress will be reported to the Member Working Group and in any updates to Committee.

## **2.3 North Notts and Lincs Community Rail Partnership**

The Council continues to support a new Community Rail Partnership that has been formed in our area. The partnership is an unincorporated association of local government, public transport operators and community groups.

The Partnership aims to bring together representatives of the local transport authority, local planning authorities, train operating companies, infrastructure operator and wide range of local community groups, with the objective of securing the future of the Lincoln to Sheffield, Lincoln to Doncaster, Lincoln to Grimsby and Sheffield to Cleethorpes via Brigg railway line through increased patronage and revenue through the eleven stations in the area of the NNLCRP.

The first meeting of the Partnership was held on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2017. The constitution was agreed and an initial action plan for the Partnership is currently in development.

We have played a key role in communication and co-ordination with Local Authorities in the area. We will continue to provide representation and officer support for the Partnership. A new website is currently in development.

The following image shows the geographical coverage of the Partnership:



### Theme 3: Commercial Opportunities

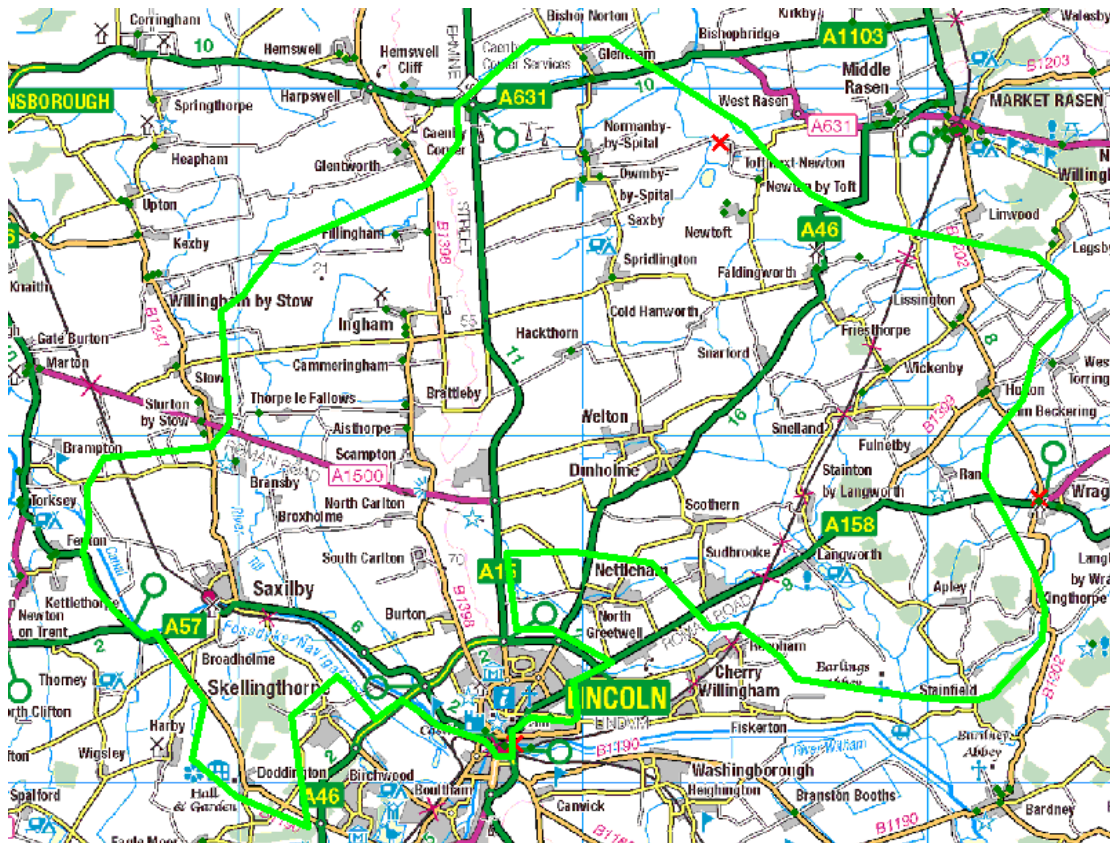
#### 3.1 Call Connect – North of Lincoln expansion pilot

Call Connect currently has a gap in provision impacting villages north of Lincoln. The proposed service will be operated using a 14 seat minibus serving West Lindsey rural settlements to the north and east of Lincoln. This will greatly improve transport options for journeys to Lincoln and for location to location journeys within West Lindsey. For example to medical facilities at Welton. The service will be a flexible demand responsive service with the option of a fixed route at peak time.

Most rural services of this nature require ongoing subsidy and will never be commercially sustainable. However the aim is to ensure services are sustainable in terms of value for money and patronage. To achieve this the service will be marketed and promoted to residents and shared use will be encouraged (for example community groups, education, social groups etc.)

It is also envisaged that the service could be part of a 'Total Transport' trial in the Lincoln and West Lindsey area. Total Transport will trial the shared use of Call Connect/LCC services with Non-Emergency Patient Transport which is funded by the CCG's. This could generate extra income by carrying Health Passengers on the Call Connect bus and increase service capacity by utilising availability/downtime of Non-Emergency vehicles for West Lindsey residents.

The map below shows the coverage of this new service:



This work will be delivered by Lincolnshire County Council and be managed through a grant funding agreement. It will include the following:

- Grant funding to part fund (50/50) a pilot of new service for 2 years

**Project Status:** Grant agreement and project scope being finalised for Entrepreneurial Board approval.

**Financial Impact:**

- **Capital** – minibus cost £35,000 to £45,000
  - WLDC contribution £17,500 to £22,500
  - LCC contribution £17,500 to £22,500
- **Revenue** – Until we go out to tender we can only give indicative revenue costs but it is likely to be in the region of £90,000 pa or £180,000 for the 2 year pilot
  - WLDC contribution £90,000
  - LCC contribution £90,000

WLDC total contribution: £107,500 to £112,500

LCC total contribution: £107,500 to £112,500

Following this 2 year pilot an on-going source of funding will be required to ensure the service continues. A full service assessment will take place during the pilot to demonstrate the need and demand.



**Progress Reporting:** On-going grant monitoring by officers. Progress will be reported to the Member Working Group and in any updates to Committee.

### **3.2 Access to Transport Fund**

The Access to Transport Fund will provide funding to deliver local projects that improve awareness and/or access to public transport. Funding can be used to support Council led improvements and be applied for by other organisations including Town and Parish Councils.

The aim of the fund is to enable small to medium projects to be delivered at a local level. Local community led projects will help increase and/or maintain access to public transport. The fund will empower local communities to develop enhancements and solutions.

This fund will be delivered in-house with advice and support from LCC as required. We shall seek match funding opportunities where possible to further enhance local projects and secure leverage of funding into the District. Examples of what the fund could support include:

- New bus shelters
- Bus stop signage
- Footpath improvements
- Local transport promotion
- Feasibility and research for transport improvements
- Transport projects identified through Neighbourhood Planning

**Project Status:** Fund guidance notes and application process being finalised for Entrepreneurial Board approval.

**Financial Impact:** A £100,000 fund with ability to support revenue and capital. Fund amount can be increased if other projects do not proceed and/or to respond to identified need. The fund will initially run for 3 years and can be extended if funds are remaining.

**Progress Reporting:** On-going fund administration and monitoring by officers. Funding decisions shall be made by the Member Working Group and programme officers. Progress will be reported to the Member Working Group and in any updates to Committee.

## **Theme 4: Transport Planning**

### **4.1 Transport Planning Tools**

Lincolnshire County Council has launched a new online bus journey planning tool. It is supported by a telephone based journey helpline.

The online tool and helpline shall be promoted as part of our communication work for this programme.

The website address is: [www.lincsbus.info](http://www.lincsbus.info)

#### **4.2 Neighbourhood Plans – Transport**

As part of the Council's approach to supporting the development of Neighbourhood Plans, advice and support is being provided to ensure local transport is adequately reflected. WLDC and LCC officers continue to provide advice to ensure new Neighbourhood Plans consider and identify transport needs as part of the wider planning process.

#### **Theme 5: Total Transport**

No specific projects have been developed under this theme. Currently awaiting further progress and decisions to be made by Lincolnshire County Council who are leading on this work. The North of Lincoln Call Connect pilot in Theme 3 may lead to a Total Transport trial.

#### **4. Financial Summary**

See Appendix A.

#### **5. Recommendation(s)**

- 5.1 That Members note this update on the Rural Transport programme.
- 5.2 That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to spend on Rural Transport project 1.1 Transport Publicity Programme
- 5.3 That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to spend on Rural Transport project 2.2 Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride Car Scheme – Volunteer Co-ordinator
- 5.4 That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to spend on Rural Transport project 3.1 Call Connect – North of Lincoln expansion pilot
- 5.5 That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to spend on Rural Transport project 3.2 Access to Transport Fund
- 5.6 That Members recommend to Corporate Policy & Resources Committee for approval to amend the Capital Programme for 2017-2018.

## APPENDIX A

### Rural Transport Proposals - Financial Summary:

	Revenue / Capital	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	Notes
Theme 1: Communication and Information	R	5,000	0	0	Spend over 3 years.
Theme 2: Community Transport:					
2.1. Community Car Schemes		0	0	0	Possible future funding requirement to help to establish a new scheme.
2.2 Lincoln Area Dial-a-Ride Car Scheme	R	10,000	10,000	0	
2.3 North Notts and Lincs Community Rail Partnership					
Theme 3: Commercial Opportunities:					
3.1 Call Connect-North of Lincoln Expansion Pilot	C	22,500	0	0	
3.1 Call Connect-North of Lincoln Expansion Pilot	R	45,000	45,000	0	
3.2 Access to Transport Fund	R	100,000	0	0	Funds available over 3 years 17-18 to 19-20-extension subject to balance of remaining funds. To support revenue and capital spend.
Theme 4: Transport Planning		0	0	0	
Theme 5: Total Transport		0	0	0	
<b>Total Costs:</b>		<b>182,500</b>	<b>55,000</b>	<b>0</b>	

<b>Total Capital and Revenue Cost of Rural Transport Proposals</b>	<b>237,500</b>
<i>Revenue</i>	<i>215,000</i>
<i>Capital</i>	<i>22,500</i>

<b>Earmarked Reserve balance -Connectivity Fund</b>	<b>281,500</b>
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<b>Remaining balance of Earmarked Reserve (Connectivity Fund)</b>	<b>44,000</b>
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