

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

CONNECTING RURAL COMMUNITIES – TRANSPORT PROJECT

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To inform and seek the support of Cabinet to the ‘total transport’ pilot which is known as ‘Connecting Rural Communities’. This is a two year funded project aimed at transforming transport within North Lincolnshire.
- 1.2 To provide detail of the four work streams forming the project.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The council has secured £200,000 from the Department for Transport (DfT) to fund a total transport pilot. The project allows local authorities to develop pilots, feasibility studies or any other groundwork deemed necessary. The duration of the project is two years commencing on 1 April 2015. The project has strong support from the Treasury and Cabinet Office.
- 2.2 Total Transport is a term used for, *“the need to work across public policy divides to deliver better outcomes for communities and taxpayers through the sharing of resources and expertise.”* Since the funding was awarded, four work streams have developed (see below). A project plan has been produced. The project is branded under the title of “Connecting Rural Communities”.
- 2.3 A key element of total transport is the need for a number of transport providers to work constructively together. In North Lincolnshire, our key partners are:
 - North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
 - North Lincolnshire and Goole Foundation Trust
 - Bus operators and the Quality Bus Partnership
 - Humber and Wolds Rural Community Council
 - Town and Parish Councils
 - Lincolnshire County Council
- 2.4 In June we held an inaugural meeting with key stakeholders to agree support for the total transport pilot. The Consultant in Public Health that supports the Places Directorate, is working as the transport lead for the

'Healthy Lives Healthy Futures' (HLHF) initiative to ensure that transport is a focal point in discussions and aligned to emerging health policies.

2.5 A summary of progress on each of the four work streams is set out below:

2.6 **Work stream 1 - Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) pilot**

2.6.1 This work stream is the largest element of this project. We want to test the growing demand for transport derived from older people, younger people, and people not eligible for non emergency passenger transport provided by health. This is coupled with a subsidised bus route that doesn't always meet the needs of all our residents. There are also issues with the size of the buses in our more rural areas and the problems this raises. The pilot is to determine whether a DRT model would create a more sustainable and integrated local transport service. Appendix 1 sets out the objectives, outputs and outcomes for the project.

2.6.2 The proposal is for North Lincolnshire to be sub-divided into a number of discrete areas each supported by DRT. Passengers will pre-book the DRT and this can also be booked on the day in question. Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) has operated a DRT scheme for over 10 years and provides support to three other local authorities. Due to their expertise, we are working with LCC to provide expertise and support to the pilot. The DRT model will be based on LCC's 'Call Connect' model. We will use their call centre for the pilot. As well as telephone bookings they provide a 24 hour on-line booking facility.

2.6.3 We are proposing to pilot four areas covering the rural areas of North Lincolnshire. We aim to launch the service in February 2016. The pilot will initially run for 12 months. The rural areas of North Lincolnshire are provisionally divided up into:

- Ferry ward
- Brigg and hinterland to explore cross boundary working with existing 'Call Connect' services – we will be using an existing LCC bus for this area
- Isle of Axholme
- Burton upon Stather and Winterton

2.6.4 We intend supporting the DRT model with commercial bus services and further work is proposed to explore this.

2.7 **Work stream 2 – Integration of Health, Adults, Children's, Voluntary and Community Sector Transport**

2.7.1 The majority of other TTP bids relate to the integration of local authority and non-emergency health transport. The vision is to develop integrated transport within North Lincolnshire that covers both the local authority, health and the voluntary and community sectors. This can potentially be developed in a number of ways and

further work is required to develop this work stream. DRT might go some way to providing solutions.

2.7.2 Transport officers have been involved in discussions linked to the HLHF programme. Transport solutions for the demand and need will support the HLHF programme and other issues in the wider health agenda.

2.8 Work stream 3 – Review of Local Bus Routes

2.8.1 Scunthorpe has a larger proportion of commercial bus routes compared to the other areas of North Lincolnshire. An independent review of the bus service in Scunthorpe and surrounding area is to be commissioned. This is based on changing need in Scunthorpe and to ensure that there is effective public transport to support the Lincolnshire Lakes development. The bus operators are supportive of a review.

2.9 Work stream 4 – Improved Data and Intelligence

2.9.1 A number of councils have developed a range of approaches to aid with transport decision making, including mapping out their transport services by different providers in local areas to identify service gaps. The project provides us an opportunity to use data and information to help with transport service planning and decision making. Mapping out of existing transport on GIS is currently underway.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 That Cabinet notes and supports the ‘Connecting Rural Communities’ project.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

4.1 This project provides an opportunity using DfT support funding to transform transport provision in North Lincolnshire in order to provide improved local services to the public.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

5.1 The council has secured funding of £200,000 from the DfT to progress with a pilot total transport programme. The council is working in partnership with Lincolnshire County Council and with other key partners on this initiative.

6. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

6.1 Not applicable.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

7.1 We have engaged with the stakeholders identified in paragraph 2.3 of the report to take this initiative forward.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That Cabinet supports the 'Connecting Rural Communities' project including progress of the following four work streams:

- Demand Responsive Transport Pilot
- Integration of Health, Adults, Children's, Voluntary and Community Sector Transport Services
- Review of Local Bus Routes
- Data and Intelligence

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Date: 16 October 2015

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None

Work Stream 1 - DRT

Objectives

1. To have a clear understanding of demand and need in North Lincolnshire.
2. To secure efficiency gains both operational and financial for all partner organisations.
3. To improve the quality, accessibility and flexibility of transport delivery in rural areas.
4. Reduce the number of single trips within the area.
5. Consider other ways to integrate the provision of transport within North Lincolnshire.
6. To share knowledge with other total transport pilots.

Outputs

- Reduced subsidised bus route and an increase in proportion of commercial routes
- Streamlined bus network
- Number of 'call connect' buses introduced (currently zero)
- Increase in passenger numbers
- Reduction in the number of single trips.

Outcomes

- Increased choice of when to travel
- Increased accessibility
- Increased coverage
- Supporting independent living for as long as possible
- Support to the well-being agenda