

 <b>Executive – 2 March 2011</b>		<b>Agenda Item No. 16</b>
<b>Title</b>	Discretionary Travel scheme	
<b>For further information about this report please contact</b>	Councillor Bill Gifford <a href="mailto:Bill.Gifford@warwickdc.gov.uk">Bill.Gifford@warwickdc.gov.uk</a>  Emma Millward <a href="mailto:Emma.Millward@warwickdc.gov.uk">Emma.Millward@warwickdc.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Wards of the District directly affected</b>	All	
<b>Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006</b>	No	
<b>Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number</b>	Overview and Scrutiny 25 January 2010	
<b>Background Papers</b>	Working papers of the Task and Finish Group	

<b>Contrary to the policy framework:</b>	No
<b>Contrary to the budgetary framework:</b>	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	Yes
<b>Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)</b>	Yes

<b>Officer/Councillor Approval</b>		
With regard to officer approval all reports <i>must</i> be approved by the report authors relevant Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Service, Finance, Monitoring Officer and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
<b>Officer Approval</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>
Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive	14.02.2011	Bill Hunt
Head of Service		Susie Drummond
CMT	14.02.2011	
Section 151 Officer	14.02.2011	
Monitoring officer	14.02.2011	
Finance	17.02.2011	Jenny Clayton
Portfolio Holder(s)	14.02.2011	Les Caborn
<b>Consultation Undertaken</b>		
This is outlined in the Task and Finish Groups Report.		
<b>Final Decision?</b>		Yes
<b>Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)</b>		

## 1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The report sets out the findings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees Task and Finish Groups investigation to establish whether it was possible to introduce a single community transport scheme for both the elderly and residents with mobility problems where normal public transport was unsuitable to meet their changing travelling needs.

## 2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 The Executive agree the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following their meeting on 25 January 2011 as set out below:
- (1) that any funding for discretionary travel should be used for two additional flexi bus routes, this would be at a cost of between £66,000 and £100,000;
  - (2) recommendation 2 of the Task and Finish Group report be agreed; and
  - (3) recommendation 3 of the Task and Finish Group be amended to include funding for advertising up to the value of £1500.

## 3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 At their meeting on 25 January 2011 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the final report from the Task and Finish Group and decided to make their own recommendations. This was based on the evidence that was within the appendices of the Task and Finish Group report and the information that had been included in the report. The Task and Finish Group report including its appendices is attached as appendix A.
- 3.2 The Committee felt that the Flexibus scheme was the most viable option but that two routes should be funded to ensure maximum coverage. After speaking with Warwickshire County Council the Task and Finish Group established a guide price for the funding of one Flexibus which was £33,000 to £50,000, therefore, the cost for two of these was calculated as shown in 2.1 (1).
- 3.3 In Making their decision for recommendation 2.1 (1) the Committee considered information received from Warwickshire County Council via email that there were no current plans to cut funds for any existing Flexibus routes in place. "The current rounds of savings proposals, to be decided in Mid-February, does not include any Flexibus service [...]At the moment, though, I'm not aware of any detailed plans affecting public transport."
- 3.4 Following the information received in 3.3 above there has been further correspondence which indicates that there could be a possibility of cuts in the future. "We don't know any more and so we cannot rule out the possibility of future cuts affecting our transport budget."
- 3.4 The Committee agreed that the Task and Finish Groups recommendation to undertake discussions with Age UK to ascertain if WDC could assist in the recruitment of volunteer drivers so that the Leamington bus could be fully utilised should go forward to the Executive.
- 3.5 The Committee received a quote drawn up by Warwick District Councils Print Room, attached as appendix B, which set out the cost of providing promotional

materials for the advertising of the current Discretionary Travel Schemes available. After considering this information the Committee agreed that funding should be provided up to the value of £1500, as set out in recommendation 2.1 (3).

- 3.6 The Overview and scrutiny Committee do not have any delegated powers to implement the recommendations they put forward or of the Task and Finish Group. Therefore, the recommendations must be approved by the Executive, before they can be implemented (except where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee make a recommendation for submission to another Committee).

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 An alternative option available to the Executive is to agree the recommendations as set out in the original Task and Finish Groups report.
- 4.2 The Executive can decide not to agree the recommendations but put forward their own recommendations in place of those made by the Task and Finish Group and the Overview and scrutiny Committee.
- 4.3 The Executive can refer the report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee asking for further information to be received.

#### **5. BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 The recommendations put forward by both the Task and Finish Group and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee all have financial implications for the Council and these need to be considered as part of the final decision making process.
- 5.2 Members were aware that there was no budget provision to fund recommendation 2.1 (1). The budgetary implications are set out in appendix C along with further comments received from senior officers.

#### **6. POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 6.1 The work carried out by the Committee helps the Councils to improve in line with its priority to offer value for money to users of our services and to be community focused by putting the needs of our local communities to the fore.

#### **7. BACKGROUND**

- 7.1 A Task and Finish Group of non-executive Members was appointed in February 2010 to scrutinise the Discretionary Travel Scheme available to elderly residents and residents with mobility problems.
- 7.2 The members appointed to the Task and Finish Group were Councillors Barrott (Chairman), Coker, Mrs Falp, Gifford, Mrs Knight, MacKay and Mrs Mellor. Councillors Mrs Higgins and Wilkinson replaced Councillors Mrs Knight and Coker in May 2010.
- 7.3 The group met on eight occasions between March 2010 to September 2010 and invited members of staff as well as external witnesses to attend some of these meetings to help the group gain a better understanding of services available.
- 7.4 A questionnaire was formulated and 2200 copies were sent out around Warwick District with a total of 264 being returned. The group used this information

received along with information received from witnesses to formulate six recommendations.

- 7.5 At their meeting in October 2010 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the draft report from the Task and Finish Group. The referred the recommendations back to the group and asked for further investigation to take place. The group carried out further work and decided that three recommendations would go forward in the final report.