COMMUNITY TRANSPORT INQUIRY
EAST LOTHIAN COUNCIL
WRITTEN SUBMISSION

How can community transport systems be improved?

Response

Within East Lothian, 80% of potential users of community transport are elderly and/or people who have disabilities and transport can play a vital role in supporting them to continue to access local facilities and their communities:

- Adult resource centres
- Elderly Day Centres/Lunch clubs
- Community groups
- Community transport for NHS provision
- Additional Support Needs education/play-scheme

The transport needs to be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable, both today and in the long-term. Therefore we reach the first major stumbling block:

- **Organization/group controlling the transport**
  - Council/Community Council- A fundamental and strategic review of Community Transport is essential and timely especially in view of:
    - The impending integration of adult health and social care
    - The implementation and impact of the Self Directed Support Act 2013
    - The risks associated with the shift from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payments – The Welfare Reform Act 2012
    - The Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 part 5 – Health & Social Care and Children & Families regulated services must operate within this legislation – any change in Transport Provision will have an impact on Direct Care Service Provision.
  - PTA /Volunteer group/Resident group - Dependant on the ability of individuals to find time to understand the system for funding and be prepared to complete the paperwork and act as coordinators/lead member. In the first instance this is the good part, however as time passes, experience shows that individuals struggle to maintain the effort and time, as the funding will require accounts and recorded keeping.
Charity - Preparing to become a charity is a process that takes time and there are a number of things to consider before applying. These include:

- Deciding what kind of organization you would like to be, for example a company, trust, Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organization (SCIO) or an association.
- Deciding who will run your charity. Read Charity Trustee Duties page and guidance for charity trustees for further information.
- Preparing a governing document, for example a constitution, setting out organization’s purposes and how the charity will run.
- Deciding what the charity’s name will be. The Charity cannot be registered whose name is the same or too similar to an existing one, or is misleading or offensive. Please check the Scottish Charity Register before deciding on the charity’s name. More information on names and charity law is available in Changing Your Charity’s Name guidance.

Managing your charity

Before applying for charitable status, it is important for charities to understand the operating and reporting requirements for registered charities.

Help in setting up a charity

While we can advise on the application process and meeting our requirements, we are unable to help you with setting up your charity.

Information and guidance about setting up a charity is available from:

- The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organizations (SCVO).
- You’re local Third Sector Interface, organizations which offer support to voluntary organizations.
- Organizations considering applying for charitable status may also wish to consult a professional adviser. The Law Society of Scotland and the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Scotland may be able to help identify a professional firm with expertise in charity law and accounting.
- HMRC will be able to help you with any questions you may have about tax.
- The Scottish Government’s website has an Enterprising Third Sector Zone which gives details of help and practical support available.

Applying for charitable status

Our How to Apply page provides advice on the charitable status application process.
• **Purchase an appropriate vehicle**

  o Capital spend/Grant/Funding- The money needs to cover the procurement of the vehicle and the future running cost for the life span of the vehicle or way of generating extra funds to cover this.
  o Type of vehicles Low Floor/Size- The vehicles need to have flexibility to cater for the client’s needs and promote use across age ranges. The old style welfare bus is now becoming outdated.

  There is now a need to look more to a service bus type vehicle with front loading, adjustable folding seats and wheelchair access along with tracking for clamping; any vehicle should be compliant with current DDA regulations.

  The reason for low floor front loading as this allows all passengers of all age range and capabilities to enter through the same door. The use of this type of vehicle helps to reducing the stigmatizing of groups/clients due to the vehicle appearance. The move away from rear tail lift will also reduce the risk of a incident due to overloading as wheelchairs get bigger and heavier during boarding.

  The EURO bus show in Birmingham (6-8 Nov 1) highlighted the lack of suitable vehicles currently being made across the vehicle fleet. The main vehicle manufactures concentrating on service bus provision or coach work. The buying of smaller more specialized vehicles is costly and will almost certainly be impacted by shift to self directed travel, as council continue to look into their own spending.

• **The vehicle will require licensing (ie Section 19 etc), which throws up other questions**

  o Maintenance regime? The ability to set up daily walk round check and record system, which links into defect reporting and repair along with regular servicing and MOT checks.
  o Drivers & qualifications (Group D1 or D, MIDAS)? The cost of someone obtaining a D1 or D group licence is approx £1100.
  o Insurance? The requirement to cover the vehicle for the use of all drivers, plus the passenger liability insurance.
  o PVG requirement? Does the driver require holding of a PVG.
  o Volunteer or payment? Drivers who past their driving test prior to 1996 have been given dispensation on licence groups and hold D1 with the 101 coding next to group meaning, they cannot drive a minibus for hire or reward.
• **Process**

  o Booking system- online/dedicated phone line using paper or IT software to schedule the work.
  o It software and licencing for booking systems
  o Training for staff on systems
  o Bank accounts and book keeping
  o Vehicle management – Activity log, defect & fault repair, recovery cover and service/MOT scheduling.

It also means transport helps the community and improves people’s lives - by providing access to jobs and services; by encouraging more active travel choices such as cycling and walking; and by improving accessibility for people who live in socially excluded areas - be that deprived housing estates in our largest cities or isolated rural communities.

Therefore, we capture the other 20% and bring the community together to promote wellbeing across the community and foster better relations across age range. By using the same transport to link into:

  • Community centre’s
  • Leisure Centre’s
  • Activity Groups
  • Local festivals/functions

Local travel planning and Smarter Travel plans - particularly when they include cycling and walking - will play a larger role in helping people to get fit, and in reducing the travel bills of hard-up families.

The recent Listen and Learn Youth Summit highlighted certain areas relating to transport:

  • Both rail and bus fares were high and young people needed more subsidy to be able to use them, particularly post-18

  • Bus services in rural areas were too infrequent, meaning that pupils had to leave after-school activities early or (in the winter) stand in the dark and poor weather for 45 minutes, waiting for the next bus to come

  • There were poor and infrequent services between Urban to rural areas and in some cases none at all meaning be dependent on a family member for a lift to nearest bus stop or walk for miles along b & C Class roads to the bus stop.

  • Buses were not adhering to their advertised timetable, for example, arriving and departing too early.
• The size of bus was often too small for the number of people who want to use the service

• There were not enough jobs locally – both full-time jobs for school-leavers and part-time jobs for those still at school and the need to travel certain distance cut the number available down again

The key element of any community transport function for benefit to the community is the media/communication used to promote the setup and the continued use of the transport between all parties involved. However, the cost of this is seen as an unnecessary burden as the measurement of the expense against its use is hard to rationalise.

The use of the council own website to signpost individuals onto relevant partner or suppliers of transport is one method, which needs backed up by periodic poster leaflet and paper advertisement.

The cost implication of which determines whether the scheme works or fails. The reason being the initial advertisement used during the initial setup of the scheme is very rarely followed up leading to the underutilisation of the scheme. Below are some of the likely signposts that would need this provision.

• Traveline Scotand
• Public Bus Services
  o Commercial Bus routes operated by:
    ▪ First Bus
    ▪ Lothian Buses
  o Supported Bus Services Operated by:
    ▪ Eve
    ▪ First Bus
• Community transport
  o Dial-a-Bus and Dial-a-Ride services.
  o Taxicard scheme
  o The National Entitlement Card (NEC)
  o Elderly and Disabled National Entitlement Card
    ▪ Concessionary rail scheme
  o Young Person's National Entitlement Card (YPNEC)
    ▪ Cheaper travel-If you are 16, 17 or 18 you can get cheaper transport on buses, trains and ferries with your Young Scot NEC Card. You will get:
      • One-third off adult single fares on buses all over Scotland.
• A free Scottish Youth Railcard, giving 50% off weekly or monthly tickets and up to one-third off single or return train journeys in Scotland.
• Two free return ferry journeys to the mainland if you live on an island.
• Rail services operated by:
  ▪ Scotrail
  ▪ East Cost
  ▪ Xcountry
• Car share Clubs
• Tripshare Clubs
• Cycle Routes.com (Scotland Cycle Routes)
• Footpaths
  o Local
  o National

East Lothian Council
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