COMMUNITY TRANSPORT INQUIRY
FINTRY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Lacking knowledge of the existing strategy, we would say that any strategy should be based on accurate information on the extent of all current provision of community transport, and assessment of its pros and cons.

In rural areas, with the reduction in public transport and centralisation of some services, increased demand is inevitable, particularly as elderly people and patients may not be able to drive and long taxi rides would be far too expensive. The introduction of Demand Responsive Transport in our area having proved an excellent substitute for the pre-existing very limited public transport provision, has led to extra services and increased usage. Examples are the prescription collection service developed with full co-operation of local pharmacies (NHS bodies?), and arrangements for pupils attending after-school activities. The flexibility of DRT makes it better than limited public transport, but the limited range has disadvantages. We consider the introduction of DRT very successful and would certainly favour expansion.

Locally there are issues re access to GP surgeries and especially to hospitals. The DRT service serves surgeries well but its limited range severely limits its value for hospital access. In some cases the current NHS patient transport provision to and from the Forth Valley Royal Hospital is very unsatisfactory. Attempts to improve the necessary linkage of DRT with other transport provision to the hospitals (FV Royal and Stirling Community), has not met with much co-operation from them. Financial implications may be a factor. The local Rotary Club has very recently launched ROTARUN with full co-operation of the GP surgeries in recognition of the severe problems of hospital access.

Non-emergency patient transport to GP surgeries can be achieved using DRT, but hospital access has to be by self-drive or relations’/friends’ car. ROTARUN may be useable in the future.

The concessionary fare scheme does operate with our DRT service, and as a high proportion of users are elderly and may need frequent use of the service, this probably encourages use and is an undoubted virtue. ROTARUN is a free charitable service.

Mrs C. A. Roy
p.p. Fintry Community Council
13 April 2013