

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure

DATE 23<sup>rd</sup> February  
2010

CORPORATE DIRECTOR Gordon McIntosh

TITLE OF REPORT Community Transport Scheme

REPORT NUMBER EPI/10/059

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to advise Members on the implementation plans for Community Transport Services within the City to launch on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2010.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee, instructs the Corporate Director for Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure to:

- a) To implement the schemes as set out in the report.
- b) To report back to future committees with progress reports.

### 3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Fixed costs for the fleet operation are met from existing budgets for school and social work transport services. The proposed fares will cover variable costs for the fuel and consumables required for delivering the community transport services. If patronage across all of the services does not meet the costs then the services and fare structures would be reviewed accordingly.

### 4. SERVICE & COMMUNITY IMPACT

A key aim of the Community Plan is to ensure that all citizens have access to a range of transport options that reflect differing needs of age, gender, disability and income. The Single Outcome Agreement also sets a priority of improving sustainable transport options for the City. Outcome 7 requires the delivery of Demand Responsive Transport schemes, such as Community Transport, to address social inequalities. Outcomes 10, 12 and 14 sets out actions for improving sustainable travel options through Demand Responsive Transport.

The Vibrant, Dynamic & Forward Looking document sets out a commitment to work to improve public transport in and to our city and to improve access.

## 5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

As the peak time work undertaken by the passenger fleet is to day centres, which are being reviewed, there will be a period of transition and disruption which may affect the operation of the community transport services once the peak time work transfers away from day centres towards school establishments.

## 6. REPORT

### **Background**

A previous report was submitted to the Enterprise, Planning and Infrastructure Committee on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2009 that discussed plans for introducing Community Transport schemes and on the impact of changes to the TaxiCard scheme. The Committee resolved to note the position.

The previous report highlighted discussions with the Red Cross and Scottish Ambulance Service on providing joint transport services. These discussions are ongoing with a view to attempting to operate shared schedules to increase utilisation and jointly reduce costs.

The TaxiCard scheme will cease to operate from Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2010. There will be some 2500 people who will be displaced onto other modes of transport or who will find other ways to access goods, services and other people.

As outlined in the previous report a model of TaxiCard utilisation has been developed and this has guided plans for the operating areas of Community Transport schemes.

The previous report proposed, as requested by the Civic Forum, a survey of TaxiCard users who had lost entitlement. This has been completed and the Civic Forum has been given a copy of the report. The report highlights the changes in travel patterns as a result of the decision to change entitlement and again has helped to focus the development of Community Transport schemes.

A working group has been set up with the assistance of DAG for the development, implementation and ongoing monitoring of Community Transport schemes.

The group met on the 30<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and considered the detailed options and agreed that these should be brought forward to this committee.

Following the decision to cease TaxiCard further discussions took place with members of the working group. It was agreed that the plans for Community Transport should progress as planned prior to the decision to cease operation of TaxiCard. However it was strongly felt that carers travel for free.

It was also noted that we continue to work on introducing greater potential for connection between all areas in the City in order that passengers can travel Citywide.

## **2.0 Community Transport Schemes**

There are 5 services proposed as set out below:-

### **Fares**

- £3.50 single (£4.00 for single + carer)
- £5.00 return (£5.50 for return + carer)
- 10 pre-paid journeys £20

These fares will be introduced as trial fares for a 3 month period and reviewed regularly thereafter.

### **Operating Costs**

The fleet operations primarily serve day centres. As such the full day operating costs for the vehicles and drivers are charged to the day centres. This allows off-peak work to be undertaken at marginal costs of fuel and consumables.

On an average fuel consumption of 30 miles per gallon, it is estimated that four single journeys or two return trips per vehicle will cover the fuel and consumable costs.

Under the licensing regime we will be obliged to invest any income greater than the operating costs back into the Community Transport services, this can include maintenance or marketing.

Fares will be reviewed in June 2010.

### **Bookings**

All services will be pre-booked by telephone, provided at least 24 hours notice is given and no more than 7 days in advance. Bookings on the day will be accommodated where possible, but people are advised to book in advance.

### **Operating Times:**

Monday – Friday 1000 – 1200 and 1300 – 1420

The vehicles will be available at the above times only, after and before undertaking peak time work for either social work services or education purposes. An hour is provided for a break and other duties, e.g. cleaning the bus.

The finish time of 14:20 allow time for the banking of money and collection of escorts or paperwork for the afternoon transport requirements.

## **Eligibility**

As the services will be operated under a Section 19 Permit, not as a local bus service, the following groups of people are able to use the services:

- (a) Education
- (b) Religion
- (c) Social welfare
- (d) Recreation
- (e) Other activities beneficial to the community

The former Dial a Bus service, which was a registered local bus service was open to the general public, these services will not be.

## **Continuity of Service**

As these services are not registered, there may be occasions where they cannot be delivered, e.g. mechanical failure or staff availability. Should this happen, booked journeys will be cancelled but no replacement service will be offered.

Detailed below are the plans for five Community Transport services. These plans show the operating times and areas.

## **Marketing & Publicity**

One of the key lessons learned from previous services was that word of mouth and community involvement in the services are key. There will be an initial publicity campaign focussing on the eligible client groups followed by ongoing low cost marketing within community centres, doctors, libraries, charities and other stakeholders.

## **Operating Areas**

The operating areas are listed below and shown on the plan. The City Centre area and areas not bounded in the plan will be covered by all services, whichever is available at the appropriate time.

### **Route 1**

Kingswells / Hazlehead / Ashley Queens Cross / Airyhall / Broomhill / Garthdee

### **Route 2**

Northfield / Mastrick / Sheddocksley / Summerhill / ARI / Berryden / Midstocket / Rosemount

### **Route 3**

Dyce / Bucksburn / Woodside / Old Aberdeen / Tillydrone

### **Route 4**

Bridge of Don / Danestone / Tillydrone / Seaton / Old Aberdeen

### **Route 5**

Kincorth / Torry / Ferryhill

## **Future Development of Areas**

Bus service 93 (Peterculter/Garthdee/City Centre) which is supported by Aberdeen City Council, ASDA and Sainsbury's (through development contributions at Garthdee) serves the Lower Deeside area. This service was launched to replace a First Aberdeen service in July 2009.

The available funding will be reviewed in 2010 with a view to establishing whether a community transport scheme would be more cost effective than the current fixed route, local bus service.

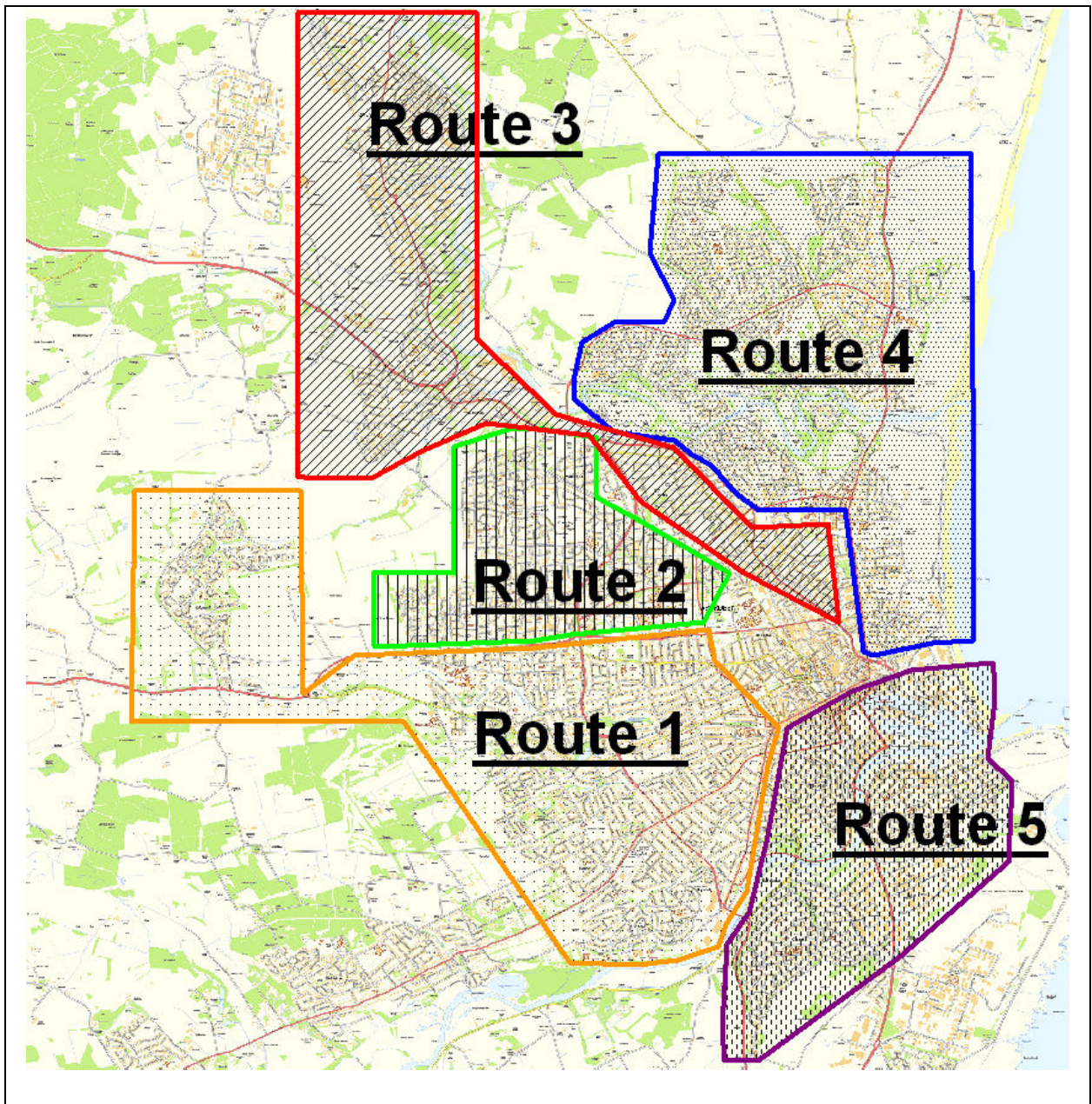
## How the Services will operate

The vehicles will travel door to door and assist passengers onto and off the buses. There is no restriction on journey origin or destination, but we will ask that people travel within flexible times to allow as many people as possible to use the service.

The smaller operating areas will allow for more efficient operation, although there is a natural restriction on cross city journeys by virtue of the operating areas.

Data on TaxiCard and Dial a Bus use has clearly demonstrated that most journeys are made within the same community that people live or to the City Centre. The second most common destinations are neighbouring areas. Cross city journeys are very uncommon, but work with the steering group has provided evidence that many people will want to make them, this will be closely monitored.

## Community Transport Operating Areas



7. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS