

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

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| Decision Maker: | Executive Member for Environment and Transport |
| Date: | 22 January 2013 |
| Title: | Grant to Fawley Parish Council |
| Reference: | 4612 |
| Report From: | Director of Economy, Transport and Environment |

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to recommend that a grant of up to £9,360 be awarded to Fawley Parish Council to enable the purchase of an accessible minibus.
- 1.2 The proposal put forward by Fawley Parish Council offers a self-help response to a local transport need. The parish council has already been successful in obtaining funding from another source and has identified some volunteers who will assist with the implementation of the scheme. This additional grant will ensure that the services which are provided can be available and accessed by the wider community.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. The Government has set up an Armed Forces Community Covenant Scheme to help fund local projects which strengthen the ties of mutual understanding between members of the armed forces community and the wider community in which they live.
- 2.2. The local military unit at Marchwood, in partnership with Fawley Parish Council, has been successful in obtaining a grant of £30,000 from this scheme towards the purchase of a standard, non-accessible, community minibus and the setting up of a Community Minibus scheme.
- 2.3. The Economy, Transport and Environment Department previously provided a letter of support for the application to the Community Covenant Scheme. The letter also indicated that if the Community Minibus scheme progressed then the County Council would be willing to consider a grant which would enable

the purchase of an accessible minibus as opposed to a standard vehicle, as the former would have wider benefit for the local community.

- 2.4. A grant application has now been received from Fawley Parish Council to assist in the purchase of an accessible minibus.

3. Grant Application from Fawley Parish Council

- 3.1. The community bus, which the parish council is proposing to buy with funding from the Community Covenant Scheme, will primarily serve the residential area of Calshot in Fawley Parish. Calshot is seen as a relatively isolated community with little leisure and out of school activities in the immediate vicinity. Whilst it has an hourly bus service during the day this is seen as limiting transport opportunities for local residents and particularly for parents of school children. There are no transport links from Calshot to local services in the evening.
- 3.2. The community bus, when it is not needed in Calshot, will also be used to provide services in the wider community. This will ensure the vehicle is used to its maximum potential and benefits the largest number of people.
- 3.3. The services offered by the community bus will be available to all members of the local community, encouraging both civilian and military communities to develop stronger links. It will give local residents increased freedom of movement to enable them to use community services, with greater ease and lower cost implications, such as pre-school, shopping and leisure facilities, youth clubs and visits to doctors.
- 3.4. Whilst purchasing an accessible minibus will be significantly more expensive than buying a standard minibus, this will have the benefit of providing services which can be equally accessed by all members of the local community.
- 3.5. Fawley Parish Council will manage and maintain the vehicle along with its other pool vehicles. It will also recruit and manage a small team of volunteer drivers, who will be MiDAS trained, to deliver services to the Calshot area as required. Income generated from the use of the vehicle will be reinvested into the vehicle's upkeep. The parish council will be responsible for longer term financial sustainability of the scheme.
- 3.6. The County Council will provide advice and assistance in the setting up of the scheme through the Community Transport team. Assistance will also be available through the countywide recruitment campaign to source volunteer drivers for this new initiative.

4. Grant Award

- 4.1. The cost of purchasing an accessible minibus is estimated at £38,360. From the funding already secured from the Community Covenant Fund £29,000 is

available to assist with this purchase. This leaves a shortfall of some £9,360 to fund. The Parish Council is now requesting a grant to cover this shortfall.

- 4.2. The grant application has been made to the Transport Challenge Fund. This fund is only available to parish and town councils and community organisations. The fund normally provides small scale grants to organisations which will provide a new transport initiative following an assessment of the transport needs in their local community. Initiatives are expected to proactively respond to any existing gaps in service provision.
- 4.3. The County Council previously supported the successful application to the Community Covenant Fund and it is proposed, therefore, that a grant of up to £9,360 be awarded to Fawley Parish Council. This grant will enable the purchase of an accessible minibus, in place of a standard minibus. Ensuring that this new resource, and the transport services which will be provided through it, are accessible to the wider community is consistent with the council's equality agenda of making sure that all residents have an equal opportunity to access key services.
- 4.4. The grant will be funded from the Community Transport Budget. The normal grant terms would apply to this award.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The proposed grant will enable the purchase of an accessible minibus in place of a standard minibus. This will mean that the services provided by the minibus are available to all sections of the community, regardless of their mobility or disability. This will improve the equality of opportunity in accessing local services and activities. It will also strengthen links between the military and civilian communities.
- 5.2. The use of the community minibus will be targeted towards the residential area of Calshot and will give local residents increased freedom of movement to enable them to use community services, with greater ease and lower cost implications, such as pre-school, shopping and leisure facilities, youth clubs and visits to doctors.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That a grant of up to £9,360 be awarded to Fawley Parish Council to enable the purchase of an accessible minibus rather than a standard minibus.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

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| Hampshire safer and more secure for all: | no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Maximising well-being: | yes |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |
| Enhancing our quality of place: | no |
| Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate): | |

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

DocumentLocation

None

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1 The proposals in this report have been developed with due regard to the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the Council's equality objectives. An assessment of the impacts in this service area can be found at [Safe and efficient transport systems in Hampshire](#).

It is considered that the grant award covered by this report will not have impacts requiring further specific actions by the Council above those already established in its existing policies and working procedures. The grant will enable more people to benefit from the transport scheme which is being proposed by Fawley Parish Council.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1. The Community Bus Scheme will improve the community's access to services, and support community cohesion, both of which should have a positive impact on any trends of crime or disorder.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

The Community Bus Scheme will be able to provide group transit journeys thus reducing individual car journeys which may otherwise have taken place.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

As sustainable travel modes of transport become more important in mitigating climate change, the proposal provides a travel option for individuals and groups which is in keeping with the need to reduce carbon emissions.