

**HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL****Report**

<b>Committee:</b>	Environment & Transportation Select Committee
<b>Date:</b>	6 November 2012
<b>Title:</b>	Review of Car and Taxishare Schemes
<b>Reference:</b>	4403
<b>Report From:</b>	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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**1. Purpose of Report**

1.1. To inform and update the Select Committee on the following details regarding Carshare and Taxishare schemes, following implementation of the Bus Subsidy Review approved by the Executive Member for Environment and Transport on 27 July 2011:

- a) The extent and take up of new Carshare and Taxishare schemes
- b) The efficiency of Carshare and Taxishare schemes as part of bus subsidy arrangements

**2. Contextual Information**

2.1. The reduction in Government funding in 2011, especially the reduction of the Rural Bus Subsidy Grant, meant that less money was available to subsidise local bus services.

2.2. A comprehensive Bus Subsidy Review was undertaken with widespread consultation and a detailed Equalities Impact Assessment. A series of Members' workshops were held to help identify criteria for support.

2.3. Bus subsidy contracts were reviewed and re-tendered or renegotiated. The reduced funding meant that it was no longer possible to retain the same level of service as previously provided. In some cases, journeys which had been subsidised were continued without subsidies by bus companies, in others cases the number of journeys or the number of days operated were reduced or evening or Sunday journeys discontinued. To reflect the reduction in funding, the maximum subsidy cost per trip was reduced from £2.50 to £1.67 for conventional bus.

2.4. A stated aim of the review was that communities which had an existing public or community transport service should retain an essential transport link.

Where a bus was not viable, and numbers justified, a Taxishare was considered.

### **3. Contextual Information**

- 3.1. Hampshire County Council has used Taxishare and Carshare services as a way of maintaining transport links for a number of years.
- 3.2. Taxishare and Carshare services operate under Section 11 of the 1985 Transport Act. <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/67> . Taxishares use licensed hackney carriages and Carshares use private hire vehicles. A car or a vehicle up to 8 seats may be used, according to demand. Accessible vehicles are used where possible. The term 'Taxishare' will be used for the remainder of this report. Taxishare services are numbered and are shown in County Council travel guides and on the passenger transport website.
- 3.3. Prospective users first register with the County Council and are then put in touch with the taxi or private hire operator that has won the contract to operate the service. Users must pre-book their journeys, and the operator must submit a return with their invoice indicating the number of people who have used the service and the journeys that they have undertaken.
- 3.4. A Taxishare operates to a published timetable, offers fares similar to local buses and accepts concessionary passes for free travel, within eligible hours. As passengers are required to pre-book, the journey only operates when requested, which saves costs and reduces emissions. Taxishare has a higher cost per trip than a bus but as it only runs when required, the total cost is less than that of a conventional bus service.
- 3.5. Taxishares have been used to replace a local bus or Cango service where demand to travel is low, and timetables vary according to previous usage patterns. These range from one return journey a week to five return journeys a day. Taxishares can also be used for a temporary service, for example if buses are diverted significantly during a road closure, or in the period until a licensed bus service can be implemented.
- 3.6. As noted, the largest vehicle which can be used under the regulations is an 8 seater, so where demand is greater than this a community bus or a conventional bus providing a one or two day a week service may be more appropriate. Lower demand may be better met by a voluntary car scheme.

### **4. Bus Subsidy Review Impact on Taxishare Services**

- 4.1. For the year 2010/2011, the last full year before the Bus Subsidy Review, 20 Taxishares were operated, catering for 28,993 individual passenger trips, at a total cost of £144,322 and a subsidy per passenger trip of £4.98. 25,337 of these trips were made by holders of concessionary passes.
- 4.2. For 2011/2012, which showed a part-year effect of the Review, 32 Taxishares were operated. 30,322 passenger trips were made at total cost of £153,408 and a subsidy per passenger trip of £5.06. 26,389 of these trips were made by concessionary pass holders.

- 4.3. One of the contracts was temporary until a Cango service was diverted and another was found to exceed the capacity of a Taxishare and was replaced by a two day a week minibus service. Excluding these, and allowing for the introduction of some services part way through the year, gives an annual equivalent of 33,444 trips a year, a 15.35% increase on 2010/2011.
- 4.4. Ten Taxishare services were introduced following the Bus Subsidy Review. These continued into 2012/2013 and their part year cost was £18,713 and were used for an average of 533 trips a month, some 19% of the total. The predicted cost of these services for 2012/2013 is £44,622 which gives a predicted subsidy per passenger trip of £5.71 and an average cost per service of £4,462. This is before any passenger growth. Experience to date is that some services will prove popular whilst others will be little used and that the subsidy per passenger trip would be expected to fall.
- 4.5. In terms of the cost savings for the bus services replaced, in some cases only part of a route is covered by a Taxishare, such as Winchfield, which is no longer on the route of the 100 for which a reduced timetable using a conventional bus has been subsidised. Similarly Beaulieu is served by a reduced subsidy timetable on the 112 to Lymington, but a Taxishare is provided for journeys to Hythe.
- 4.6. The Taxishare is intended to provide an essential service for those who do not have access to alternative transport and usually offers a reduced timetable compared to the bus service that it has replaced.
- 4.7. Examples of costs savings. The average cost of a Taxishare contract in 2011/12 was £4,794 compared to the average cost of a bus contract in that year of £76,000. A sample of five services: 10 Camberley, F Stoke Common, C3 Valley Park, 38/138 Southwick and 112 Beaulieu, which were replaced in whole or part by Taxishares, showed overall savings of £250,000 after Taxishare costs of £24,000 and bus costs of £26,000. These Taxishares carry in total an average of 150 journeys a month.

## **5. Conclusions**

- 5.1. Conventional bus use in Hampshire has been rising and has reached a twenty year high. Buses are best suited to busy corridors with high population density and a large number of passengers wishing to travel. Many of our urban networks and inter-urban corridors have seen investment in improved frequencies and new vehicles. In contrast many parts of Hampshire are rural with low population density and high levels of car ownership. Some urban areas are also more difficult to serve by conventional bus.
- 5.2. Taxishares form part of a range of transport solutions.
- 5.3. Where the circumstances are right, Taxishares have proved themselves to be an innovative and cost-effective way to retain an essential transport link and help support independent living for Hampshire residents.

## **6. Recommendation**

- 6.1. Members of the Select Committee are asked to note this report.

**CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**

**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

<b>Hampshire safer and more secure for all:</b>	no
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Maximising well-being:</b>	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
<b>Enhancing our quality of place:</b>	no

**Other Significant Links**

<b>Links to previous Member decisions:</b>		
<u>Title:</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Executive Member – Environment and Transport Bus Subsidy Review  <a href="http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearchmeetings/meetingsitemdocuments.htm?sta=&amp;pref=Y&amp;item_ID=2710&amp;tab=2">http://www3.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings/advsearchmeetings/meetingsitemdocuments.htm?sta=&amp;pref=Y&amp;item_ID=2710&amp;tab=2</a>	2710	27 July 2011
<b>Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives</b>		
<u>Title:</u>		<u>Date</u>
The Transport Act 1985, Section 11 <a href="http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/67">http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1985/67</a>		1985

<b>Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents</b>	
<p>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.)</p>	
<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

## **IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:**

### **1. Equalities Impact Assessment:**

- 1.1. The services described 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 was undertaken as part of the Bus Subsidy Review in July 2011. No adverse impact was identified in terms of race, creed or gender.

<http://hantsfile.it2000.hants.gov.uk/LinkViewer/LinkViewer.aspx?PIDv1=91%2003%20ICM8%20ICMNLSD10%20DOC%5FBIN%5F0160%2026%20A1001001A12A09B04427D1384018%20A12A09B04427D138402%20114%201177>

- 1.2. It is considered that the issues 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.

### **2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

- 2.1. It is considered that providing the services described in this report will have no impact on crime and disorder.

### **3. Climate Change:**

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

Delivering an effective public transport system within available funding levels provides an alternative to the use of the private car. Taxishare services employ small vehicles and only operate when requested.

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

Taxishare services are an effective public transport alternative which match provision to need and minimises carbon emissions.