

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Economy, Transport and Environment
Date:	23 July 2013
Title:	Community Transport Other Purposes Grant Application - Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership
Reference:	5005
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

Contact name: Andrew Wilson

Tel: 01962 846984

Email: andrew.wilson@hants.gov.uk

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this paper is to recommend a grant of £6,500 towards the costs of operating the Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership during 2013/14.
- 1.2. The application put forward by the Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership (CRP) shows that the organisation aims to promote greater use of Hampshire's local rail stations and rail services through co-operative working between local authorities, train operators, businesses and local volunteers for the benefit of the local community. The majority of the operating costs for 2013/14 will be recovered from other sources and therefore a modest grant is requested from the County Council.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. The Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership was formed in 2007 and is one of two CRPs which currently operate in Hampshire. The route covered by this partnership is the Romsey - Salisbury rail service via Chandlers Ford, Eastleigh, Southampton Airport Parkway, and Southampton Central stations.
- 2.2. The Steering Group includes Hampshire County Council, South West Trains, First Great Western Trains, Network Rail, Test Valley Borough Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, Wiltshire Council and Southampton City Council. The Steering Group is supported by the CRP Officer (external to Hampshire County Council) and by a number of volunteer groups at stations on the line.
- 2.3. The Partnership aims to improve travel choices for Hampshire's residents through working together to improve rail services and facilities which will lead to greater use of local rail stations. The CRP encourages co-operative

working between local authorities, train companies, businesses and local volunteers.

- 2.4. Typically, projects undertaken include improving passenger facilities at stations (cycle parking facilities, bus/rail integration schemes, customer café at Romsey station, improved footpaths to stations, clearance of vegetation, community art schemes, station and train promotional events, passenger surveys, planting at stations, local publicity to encourage improvements to rail services and stations, providing links to local tourist attractions e.g. Mottisfont House and Gardens), lobbying for improved services and facilities, running a 'Walks for Health' programme based around rail stations, seeking and delivering funding for the CRP from outside bodies, including Government and local businesses.
- 2.5. The County Council values the work of the CRP as it helps to deliver against a number of the County Council's objectives, e.g. encouraging improved rail services and facilities, promotion of sustainable modes of transport, working in partnership with transport operators and local businesses to add value to the County Council's investment in transport, helping to reduce congestion on the road network, improving our quality of place, encouraging and supporting local volunteer networks, engaging with and empowering local communities.
- 2.6. The County Council owns Chandler's Ford station and it is leased to South West Trains. This station benefits from a number of the projects run by the CRP. The station opened in 2003 and passenger numbers have increased considerably from approximately 155,000 in 2004/05 to 241,000 in 2011/12 (latest available figures).
- 2.7. The County Council has provided a similar level of funding to this CRP for approximately five years.

3. Grant Application for the Three Rivers Partnership

- 3.1. The application received from the partnership states that any grant from Hampshire County Council would be used to assist with the costs of undertaking the following activities:
 - i) the day-to day running of the Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership, working with Interested Parties and the recognised Steering group, submitting funding bids, producing and delivering the CRP Business Plan. A major strand of the latter is engaging with the local community in the promotion and use of the Romsey to Salisbury rail service with a particular emphasis on encouraging volunteer groups, individuals, businesses, scout groups and education establishments in various community activities.
 - ii) In line with the Partnership Business Plan, to publicise rail travel opportunities along the Three Rivers Community rail partnership route through the preparation and publication of regular e-newsletters,

printed travel guides, attending local community groups, meetings and exhibitions. This will seek to encourage greater use of smaller, local stations through the use of volunteer groups and localised publicity, whilst building links with local and regional events and other established and recognised groups.

- iii) The partnership will also continue to bring together local community groups, scouts, schools and excluded groups, by encouraging the use of rail from local and country stations which may be carried out by these groups. It will also continue to encourage the introduction and promotion of bus links to outlying destinations from stations not normally connected to public transport, allowing elderly, young and disabled persons to access visitor attractions.
- iv) Regular station surveys will also be undertaken to measure the success of initiatives and to help determine the future needs and aspirations of users and groups, which in turn is fed back to the relevant train operator or local authority for their consideration.

4. Grant Award

- 4.1. The Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership has requested a grant of £6,500 from the County Council. The grant application shows that the expected running costs of the organisation in 2013/14 is estimated at £28,191 and that the majority of the remaining costs are expected to be covered through contributions from rail companies, local councils and revenue from facilities provided at local stations.
- 4.2. The grant would be funded under the Economy, Environment and Transport Other Purposes Grants Stream. This grant stream is available to voluntary and community organisations who provide a transport service to the wider community. It can be used to support community transport projects or services which benefit the wider community and improve local accessibility.
- 4.3. This grant stream has a budget allocation of £25,000 for 2013/14 of which £6,500 has already been awarded leaving an available budget allocation of £18,500 against which this grant would be paid.
- 4.4. Historically the County Council has funded the Three Rivers Community rail Partnership on the basis that the CRP adds significant value to Hampshire's transport network at a minimal cost and helps the County Council to deliver against a number of its objectives. A further grant of £6,500 is therefore recommended for 2013/14. The Council's normal conditions of grant would apply to this award.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership aims to promote greater use of Hampshire's local rail stations through co-operative working between local

authorities, train companies, local businesses and volunteers. Engaging with the local community represents a key activity of the scheme.

- 5.2. The County Council has previously provided financial support to the partnership. A grant of £6,500 is now proposed to assist with the running costs of the scheme during 2013/14, the majority of which are expected to be covered through contributions from rail companies, local councils and revenue from facilities provided by the partnership at local stations.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1. That a grant of £6,500 be awarded to the Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership to contribute towards its running costs for 2013/14.

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

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	yes
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.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
Hampshire County Council grant application form received from the Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership	Hampshire County Council Passenger Transport Group, Capital House, Winchester.

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. The website contains a summary [assessment of the impacts](#) on *Safe and Efficient Transport Systems in Hampshire*.
- 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. The provision of improved rail station facilities and busier rail stations can improve feelings of personal security, particularly for lone travellers.

3. Climate Change:

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

Increased use of rail services as opposed to the private car helps to reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions from transport.

- 3.2. How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change?

The Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership helps to promote sustainable modes of transport and in this respect plays a role in helping Hampshire residents to adapt to climate change and to the need to mitigate further climate change.