

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: ENVIRONMENT PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Date of Meeting:	Monday 7 October 2013
Report of:	Head of Public Protection and Enforcement
Subject/Title:	Community Transport Association - Partnership Agreement
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr David Topping

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The report seeks authorisation to establish a Partnership Agreement with the Community Transport Association (CTA) to support the development and implementation of community and voluntary sector transport initiatives across Cheshire East. The Partnership Agreement has a value of £19,000 over the term of the agreement, which will end on 30 June 2014.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree the establishment of a partnership arrangement with the Community Transport Association (CTA);
- 2.2 To authorise the Borough Solicitor, or an authorised signatory within Legal, to sign the Partnership Agreement;
- 2.3 To authorise officers to take all necessary action to implement and monitor the Partnership Agreement until 30 June 2014.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The CTA is a national, independent, “not for profit” organisation that has been working with community transport organisations for more than 20 years. They are recognised as the voice of voluntary and community transport in the UK and are uniquely placed to offer a range of support and advice services, training and resources to local community groups in Cheshire East.
- 3.2 Through the Partnership, the Council will benefit from the knowledge, skills and expertise of the CTA project team who will help develop capacity in the community and train local groups to develop effective, efficient transport initiatives with the appropriate safeguards and quality measures in place.
- 3.3 The CTA team have an in-depth understanding of the governance, financial and operating environment of community transport with knowledge of the latest best practice schemes across the UK. They are also the leading training

provider in all aspects of community transport and have developed the CTA Quality Mark which covers five areas of organisational performance, which are: governance, transport operations, personnel, health and safety, and corporate social responsibility.

- 3.4 A Partnership with the CTA supports the Council's ambition to nurture community-led initiatives and empower local people to develop transport schemes which are operated "by the community, for the community". The aim is to improve access to essential services, such as healthcare, shopping, leisure and other destinations that are important to local residents.
- 3.5 The CTA will support the launch and implementation of the Transport & Accessibility Grant Scheme (subject to approval by Cabinet in October). The Partnership will support grant applicants to develop their ideas into robust Business Plans with future viability and sustainability built into the proposals from the outset, as well as appropriate governance, health and safety and other quality marks and safeguarding measures.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All wards.

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 All wards.

6.0 Policy Implications

- 6.1 The aim of the Partnership is to build capacity within the community to develop transport initiatives, which supports the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Transport Plan (LTP) and Ageing Well in Cheshire East Programme.
- 6.2 Initiatives which improve accessibility have wider benefits including reduced isolation and social exclusion, and improved health and wellbeing. Promoting and enabling passenger transport schemes also supports the carbon reduction agenda through sustainable travel choices.

7.0 Financial Implications

- 7.1 The value of the Partnership Agreement with CTA is £19,000 over the term of the partnership, which ends on 30 June 2014. The Partnership Agreement will be funded through the approved base budget for the Transport Service in 2013/14 and for the first quarter of 2014/15.

8.0 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Advice has been sought from Audit and Legal on the relevant criteria that needed to be addressed in order to be able to enter into a partnership and the appropriate form of agreement to govern the partnership arrangement.
- 8.2 The Partnership Agreement defines the roles, responsibilities and liabilities of each partner and set outs the aims and objectives of the partnership. Payments to the CTA under the agreement are expressed as being payable bi-monthly in arrears and the Council can give one months' written notice to terminate should there be a need to end the partnership.
- 8.3 The Partnership Agreement has been drafted by the Council's Legal Services Team and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report (subject to final confirmation on terms and conditions with CTA).

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 To manage the implementation of the Partnership Agreement, bi-monthly meetings will be held to manage and monitor performance to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Partnership are being discharged effectively.
- 9.2 The Partnership will support the development of transport initiatives to ensure that appropriate safeguarding and quality measures (e.g. health and safety, governance and financial management) are all considered and embedded within the organisations ways of working.

10.0 Background

- 10.1 Local communities are often best placed to identify their own transport needs and in some cases have the capacity to develop local solutions, particularly for those who do not have access to public or private transport.
- 10.2 The Council is seeking innovative, creative ideas for community transport initiatives which are operated "by the community, for the community". The types of schemes which may be supported include community bus schemes, village minibuses services, voluntary car schemes or shopmobility services to meet an identified need and enable people to access local services.
- 10.3 To support this ambition, the CTA will provide a range of support, advice, training and resources including:
 - Provision of practical "hands-on" support in a number of business areas:
 - Support to trustees, management committee on governance and sustainability issues
 - Support to treasurers and finance officer on accounting and procurement issues
 - Support to management and operational staff on legal and safety issues

- Provide opportunities for personal development to management, operational staff and volunteers through training courses, e-learning support and the production of materials.
- Provision of a signposting service with telephone and online resources in a wide range of community transport and organisational-related topics.
- Support organisations to help them build an evidence portfolio that is ready for an assessment against the CTA Quality Mark standard.
- Production of a Cheshire East Community Transport Manual for the trustees / management committees and operational staff of the grant award winners. The main sections of the manual will include governance, assessing transport needs, fleet assessments, social impact reporting and business sustainability.

10.4 The resources to be allocated by the partners to the Partnership are:

Partner	Resource	Value
CTA	Staff time – 40 days for providing advice, support, technical assistance, skills development, training and reporting	Up to £15,000 during the term of the partnership (reimbursed by the Council)
	Expenses – CTA Quality Mark registrations, travel and subsistence	Up to £4,000 during the term of the partnership (reimbursed by the Council)
Council	Provision of officer time and budget to support the development of initiatives (e.g. grant scheme)	N/A

10.5 The Agreement will end on 30 June 2014, although the benefits of developing the community transport sector and building capacity within the community will be sustained into the future as an ongoing legacy from the Partnership.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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