

PC063/2627c) Royston & District Community Transport

July 2026

Communication from Royston & District Community Transport

During the past year we have experienced a significant downturn in the use of our wheelchair accessible minibuses. To the extent that they are now standing idle several days per week.

This is no reflection on the standard or quality of service we provide. We believe this is due to the reduction in passenger requests because of the increased use of GP telephone appointments resulting in fewer GP surgery / health centre appointments, and either passengers moving into care homes or long-term hospitalisation as well as an increased number of deaths due to the ageing profile of our passenger base.

As a direct result this downturn in passenger numbers combined with the increased maintenance, insurance and running costs of our two vehicles shows that it is proving no longer economical to provide this bus service option.

At our AGM last week, we agreed to review our strategy and consider disposing of our two current vehicles and providing a volunteer car only type of service.

This would be a major change in our operation and before taking any further action I want to establish if the removal of the wheelchair accessible minibuses would have any adverse effect on our current funding arrangements.

I understand from our 10-year agreement that it includes a "Capital Fund" sum of £5054.95 and this sum is available during the period of the agreement to cover the cost of "retaining or improving vehicles".

The charity is currently looking to replace our ageing, larger minibus with a newer, but smaller wheelchair accessible vehicle.

Will you please advise what action is required from us to allow us to withdraw this capital fund to help us with the purchase cost of a replacement vehicle.

The drop off in demand due to the increase in online appointments has affected both car and bus journeys but the biggest drop in demand has been the bus journeys. So, our thinking is to either cease the bus journeys and dispose of both minibuses or continue to offer a service by replacing both minibuses and sourcing a smaller wheelchair accessible vehicle that will not require the driver to have a D1 licence qualification. We obviously must also ensure that we have adequate funding in place to complete the purchase of a replacement vehicle.

My reason for contacting you and the other funders we have, was to establish if there was a condition in the funding agreement that we had to provide wheelchair accessible transport. So, at present no final decision has been made but we are considering our options.

Conclusion

There are no clauses within the agreement that would make the use of any particular vehicles a condition of the funding. Annual funding is tied to the provision of the service generally and not to the operation of a specific vehicle type.

Proposal for consideration

Melbourn Parish Council to confirm availability of capital funds to the value of **£5,054.95**.

Attached: 1. Breakdown of current fund spend / availability
2. Agreement dated 15 April 2021

S106 funds - Community Transport Scheme Breakdown

(administered on behalf of CCC)

Agreement entered with Royston & District Community Transport (RDCT) for 10 year period

Funds transferred from CCC to MPC to provide transport on behalf of CCC.

Year	Total	Revenue Fund	Capital Fund
2021/22	55,054.95	50,000.00	5,054.95
2021/22	- 5,000.00	- 5,000.00	
2022/23	- 5,000.00	- 5,000.00	
2023/24	- 5,000.00	- 5,000.00	
2024/25	- 5,000.00	- 5,000.00	
2025/26	- 5,000.00	- 5,000.00	
2026/27	- 5,000.00	- 5,000.00	
As of 17/07/26	<u>25,054.95</u>	<u>20,000.00</u>	<u>5,054.95</u>

Revenue fund - to be invoiced by RDCT at £5,000 pa for ten years from start of agreement towards costs of providing the transport scheme. First instalment on signing agreement and annually thereafter on 1st April (RDCT to invoice)

Capital fund - for repairing or replacing vehicles. On application by RDCT (subject to agreement). To be spent within 10 years

Dated

15 April 2021

Community Transport Agreement

Melbourn Parish Council (the Parish Council)

Royston and District Community Transport (RDCT)

PARTIES

- **Melbourn Parish Council (the Parish Council)** of Melbourn Hub, 30 High Street, Melbourn, SG8 6DZ
- **Royston and District Community Transport (RDCT)** of Royston Hospital, London Road, Royston, Herts, SG8 9EN Registered in England & Wales, No. 6744379, and limited by guarantee Registered charity No. 1127052

1. DEFINITIONS

- I. "Annual Payment" means the sum of £5,000 to be paid to RDCT by Melbourn Parish Council from the Revenue Fund on signature of this Agreement and then annually on [1 April] for a period of 10 years. The Annual Payment will be made upon receipt by Melbourn Parish Council of an invoice from RDCT.
- II. "Capital Fund" means the sum of £5,054.95, representing the balance of the Revenue Fund available after distribution of the Annual Payment for 10 years from the date of this Agreement. The Capital Fund may be distributed at any time within 10 years from the date of this Agreement.
- III. "Community Transport Service" means RDCT offers door-to-door transport for people living in Royston and surrounding villages of North & East Hertfordshire and South Cambridgeshire, who are unable to use conventional public transport and do not have the use of a car. Volunteer drivers provide transport using their own cars and the scheme also operates wheelchair-accessible minibuses and Multi-Purpose Vehicles (MPV).
- IV. "Development" means the residential development of 199 dwellings plus 75 Bed Care Home at the land East of New Road, Melbourn
- V. "Community Transport Vehicle Contribution" means a contribution of forty five thousand pounds (£45,000) paid by The master (or keeper) and fellows of Peterhouse in the University of Cambridge to Cambridgeshire County Council in accordance with the provisions of Part VI of the Third Schedule of the Section 106 Agreement for the cost of acquiring a community transport vehicle to enable the provision of a community transport service
- VI. "Revenue Fund" means the sum of £50,000

- VII. "Section 106 agreement" means the agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 dated 21 July 2016 by The master (or keeper) and fellows of Peterhouse in the University of Cambridge in favour of South Cambridgeshire District Council in relation to the planning permission.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The Section 106 agreement provides for a Public Transport Vehicle Contribution to be paid to the County Council which shall be used for the cost of acquiring a community transport vehicle and/or to enable the provision of a community transport service
- 2.2 On 2 October 2019 Cambridgeshire County Council received the sum of £55,054.95 from the owner. This sum will be paid to the Parish Council for the purpose of providing the Community Transport Service
- 2.4 The Parish Council has prepared this Community Transport Agreement to provide a framework for the appropriation of the Public Transport Contribution to RDCT
- 2.5 RDCT is an operator of community transport offering door-to-door transport for people living in Royston and the surrounding villages of North & East Hertfordshire and South Cambridgeshire who are unable to use conventional public transport and do not have the use of a car. Volunteer drivers provide transport using their own cars and the scheme also operates wheelchair-accessible minibuses and Multi-Purpose Vehicles

3. AIMS

- 3.1 This Community Transport Agreement has the following aims:
- a. to procure a 10 year Community Transport Service for the benefit of the Development and the village of Melbourn through an annual payment of £5,000 from the Parish Council to RDCT (i.e. the Revenue Fund)
 - b. to establish a Capital Fund of up to £5,054.95 to be administered by the Parish Council from which RDCT may apply towards the cost of

retaining and or improving vehicles associated with the Community Transport Service (i.e. the Capital Fund)

4. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY TRANSPORT USE

- 4.1 RDCT agrees to make the Community Transport Service available at the times set out at Schedule 1 of this Scheme.

5. FINANCE

- 5.1 The Parish Council agrees to hold the Community Transport Vehicle Contribution as a ring-fenced sum of £55,054.95 in the Parish Council account.
- 5.2 The Parish Council agrees to pay the Annual Payment of £5,000 from the Revenue Fund to RDCT as a contribution towards the cost of running the Community Transport Service for a period of 10 years from the date of this Agreement.
- 5.3 The Parish Council will make the first payment to RDCT on the completion of this Agreement and on the [1 April] for each year thereafter upon receipt of an invoice from RDCT.
- 5.4 The Parish Council agrees to consider any further funding requests received from RDCT over the length of the Agreement and to grant funds from the Capital Fund amount of £5,054.95.

6. MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 RDCT shall:
- a. Continue to offer its services to the residents of Melbourn.
 - b. Continue to advertise for volunteer drivers in Melbourn and surrounding villages.
 - c. Undertake to inform the Parish Council of its intention to cease offering its services or cease trading well in advance of the date, allowing the Parish Council to make other arrangements.
 - d. Will return any funds provided by the Parish Council that are unspent prior to closing down or ceasing services to Melbourn.

- e. Actively advertise the Parish Council's contribution to the scheme.

7. DURATION OF AGREEMENT

- 7.1 The terms of this Community Transport Agreement will last for 10 years commencing from the date of completion of this Agreement.

8. PUBLICITY

- 8.1 The Parish Council and RDCT will have shared responsibility for ensuring that the availability of the Community Transport Service is properly and fully publicised in relevant newsletters and notice boards

9. PRIORITY

- 9.1 The Community Transport Service is operated on a first come first served basis and no priority shall be given to the residents of the Development or to the village of Melbourn

10. FEES

- 10.1 RDCT shall only seek to charge a reasonable fee associated with the use of the Community Transport Service.

SCHEDULE 1. ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMUNITY TRANSPORT SERVICE

1. STANDARD OFFICE OPENING HOURS;

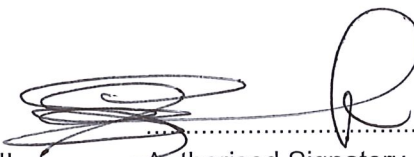
- a. Weekdays: 09:00 - 15.00

2. STANDARD OPERATING HOURS;

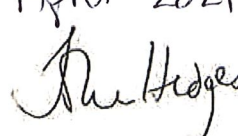
- a) Seven days a week (with prior booking)
- b) Time of day by arrangement with RDCT Booking Office
- c) There are certain days / weeks that the Community Transport Service may not available at these times.
- d) Currently bookings for the Community Transport Service should be made through Telephone Bookings, Out of Hours Answer Machine.
- e) Email enquiries can be made and will be followed up by telephone.
- f) Bookings shall be subject to reasonable terms and conditions of use.

SIGNATORIES

SIGNED by
for and on behalf of
MELBOURN PARISH COUNCIL



Authorised Signatory
G. S. CLARK

Date: 15 April 2021


SIGNED by
for and on behalf of
ROYSTON AND DISTRICT
COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Dr John Hedges TD
Authorised Signatory

Date: 8th April 2021