

## Community Transport Working Group

### Minutes of the Meeting dated 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 7:30pm (Zoom Meeting)

Cllr C Martin (Chair)	Present	KCC Cllr Hook	Apology
Cllr BJ Martin	Apology	KCC Cllr Lehmann	Present
Cllr Saunders	Present	Cllr Eyre	Substitution

Present:

Rob Gibbs (Community Transport and Project Officer)

1. Apologies

An apology was received from Cllr BJ Martin and Cllr Hook. It was noted that Cllr Eyre was substituting for Cllr BJ Martin.

2. Declarations of Interest

None.

3. Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Saunders, seconded by Cllr C Martin, and on being put to the meeting, the minutes of the CT Working Group held on 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024, were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. It was noted that the minutes had been presented to the Full Council on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

4. Funding and Grants

RG provided an update on grant applications. A grant application had been submitted to Bensted's Charity on 5<sup>th</sup> January 2024 towards 50% of the cost of the ticket machine equipment. On 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024, RG was notified that due to the large number of applications received, Bensted's was unable to provide funding. Separately, a number of Swale Borough Councillors had offered funding from their Members Grant allocations. This had raised £1600 and had almost covered the entire cost. Cllr C Martin asked RG to personally thank all Councillors who had contributed.

The ticket machine was due for delivery imminently.

5. Volunteer Drivers

RG reported there were now 8 volunteer drivers. 5 had completed MiDAS Training with the remaining 3 due to attend their practical training on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at Compaid, Paddock Wood.

Cllr C Martin commented that the recruitment of volunteers would be an ongoing campaign. RG replied that advertising had been carried out via social media and with Swale CVS' Volunteer Centre Swale service, which matched potential volunteers with vacancies.

RG would be carrying out route training in the bus with the volunteers on 14<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024. He was also putting together a Handbook for the volunteers to ensure they were aware of what to do in certain situations, such as a mechanical fault with the bus.

Following a discussion regarding the capacity of the minibus (12 seats + 1 wheelchair) it was agreed that RG would check whether it could be requested that passengers in wheelchairs who wished to use the service book in advance to avoid disappointment if more than one passenger in a wheelchair wanted to use the service.

6. Route Registration with KCC and Traffic Commissioner

RG reported the process with KCC was complete and the final stage to register the route with the Traffic Commissioner had been initiated on 20<sup>th</sup> February. The process with the Traffic Commissioner should take 28 days and RG advised he would begin to chase the TC Office during the week commencing 18<sup>th</sup> March. The start date for services had been registered as 2<sup>nd</sup> April.

7. Parish Council Liaison & Community Engagement

RG reported that an exhibition was being held in the Town Hall exhibition space throughout March 2024 detailing the new services. Paper copies of the timetable were available in the Visitor Information Centre.

The bus had been parked in the Market most market days and the next stage would be to try and organise visits to the villages.

Cllr C Martin asked RG to contact Councillors to see if they could assist with promoting at the market on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March.

8. Matters for Report  
Monitoring Usage

In reply to a query from Cllr Saunders, RG advised that the ticket machine should provide statistics regarding the usage of the services.

9. Next Meeting Date

It was agreed to wait until the route registration process had been completed before setting the date for the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 8:05pm