

Meeting	Community Development Committee
Date	7 th July 2026
Report Title	Community Bus
Agenda Reference	10
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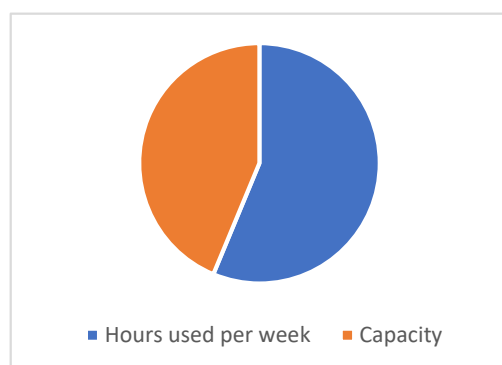
Recommendations:

1. To note the report and costs associated with running the Community Bus.
2. To revise the cost of our mileage charges on external trips and bookings due to fuel costs rising from £0.95p per mile to £1.25p per mile.
3. To look at ways to run a recruitment drive for volunteer drivers – succession planning.
4. To engage new users into the Community Bus service.

Background

The bus is currently timetabled for the following regular trips. Twice a month it is used on a Wednesday for our own CD Community Trips or for a regular group booking.

	Week 1		Week 2		Week 3		Week 4	
Day	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM	AM	PM
Monday	HAVEN 10:00am - 2:00pm			OVER 60'S CLUB 1:10pm - 4:00pm	HAVEN 10:00am - 2:00pm			OVER 60'S CLUB 1:10pm - 4:00pm
Tuesday	SHOPPING 9:00am - 11:00am		SHOPPING 9:00am - 11:00am		SHOPPING 9:00am - 11:00am		SHOPPING 9:00am - 11:00am	
Wednesday	HWPC DAY TRIPS (as required)		MEMORY CAFÉ 10:30am - 1:00pm		PRIVATE HIRE TRIPS (as required)		MEMORY CAFÉ 10:30am - 1:00pm	
Thursday	SHOPPING 8:45am - 11:00am	LUNCH CLUB 10:40am - 2:00pm	SHOPPING 8:45am - 11:00am	LUNCH CLUB 10:40am - 2:00pm	SHOPPING 8:45am - 11:00am	LUNCH CLUB 10:40am - 2:00pm	SHOPPING 8:45am - 11:00am	LUNCH CLUB 10:40am - 2:00pm
Friday		YOUNG AT HEART 1:00pm - 4:30pm		YOUNG AT HEART 1:00pm - 4:30pm		YOUNG AT HEART 1:00pm - 4:30pm		YOUNG AT HEART 1:00pm - 4:30pm



Regular weekly trips are totalling to a 56.25% share of the bus's capacity. Please note this does not include evenings or weekends.

Fare Structure

Last year, we increased the general fare from 50p to £1.00 per journey. This change was well received by passengers, and no complaints were received. Users continue to express their appreciation for the service, which remains a valued community resource.

In addition, the bus is hired out each month to a local group for trips further afield. We have charged 95p per mile for these hires for at least three years. Given the continued rise in fuel and operating costs, it would be prudent to review this rate and consider an increase to bring it



more in line with comparable providers. For example, Swindon Dial-a-Ride has increased its mileage charges twice in the past year, from £1.20 to £1.25, and then to £1.30 per mile.

Repairs/ Maintenance

Over the past 12 months the bus has been in for the following repairs:

- Reversing sensor and beeper
- Tail lift repairs
- MOT

Budgets/ Future Planning

Our expenditure is partially offset by a Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG), which helps to keep fare low. The expected grant this year will be £1,110.00.

Income & Expenditure up until the end of June 2026 is detailed as below:

01/07/2026		Haydon Wick Parish Council					Page 1		
14:05		Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 01/07/2026							
Month No: 3		Cost Centre Report							
		Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent	Transfer to/from EMR
<u>501 Community Transport</u>									
1002	Community Transport Fares	3,939	693	4,004	3,311			17.3%	
1003	Community Transport BSOG	1,140	(1,110)	714	1,824			(155.5%)	
	Community Transport :- Income	<u>5,079</u>	<u>(417)</u>	<u>4,718</u>	<u>5,135</u>			<u>(8.8%)</u>	<u>0</u>
4500	Bus Tax & Insurance	304	911	1,137	226		226	80.1%	
4501	Bus Fuel Costs	1,331	(336)	1,144	1,480		1,480	(29.3%)	
4502	Bus Servicing & Repairs	2,387	0	1,530	1,530	294	1,236	19.2%	
4504	Bus Driver Training	90	0	200	200		200	0.0%	
4505	Bus Admin/Misc	214	0	150	150		150	0.0%	
	Community Transport :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>4,327</u>	<u>575</u>	<u>4,161</u>	<u>3,586</u>	<u>294</u>	<u>3,292</u>	<u>20.9%</u>	<u>0</u>
	Net Income over Expenditure	<u>752</u>	<u>(992)</u>	<u>557</u>	<u>1,549</u>				
	Grand Totals:- Income	5,079	(417)	4,718	5,135			(8.8%)	
	Expenditure	4,327	575	4,161	3,586	294	3,292	20.9%	
	Net Income over Expenditure	<u>752</u>	<u>(992)</u>	<u>557</u>	<u>1,549</u>				
	Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>752</u>	<u>(992)</u>	<u>557</u>	<u>1,549</u>				

The community bus is now 11 years old and has a current mileage of 40,000 miles. We have set aside £10,000 in an earmarked reserve (EMR) specifically for its eventual replacement. Going forward, the budget includes allocating an additional £10,000 annually into this reserve, aiming to build sufficient funds to replace the bus in approximately 3–4 years, based on its expected lifespan. However, this timeline may be brought forward if the vehicle begins to experience frequent mechanical issues or breakdowns.

Repair costs have increased to the issues we had with the tail lift on two occasions.

Administration costs have risen due to a parking fine and a driving awareness course.

Our regular vehicle hires from Dial-a-Ride, led to a **£60 loyalty discount** on a Midas training course this year.



Bus Users

We currently have 120 residents on our contact list, of whom approximately 60 are regular users of the Community Bus service – this has seen a reduction of **25%** since last year - due to the age profile of many of our current passengers, user numbers are gradually declining.

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the service, we need to consider new ways of raising awareness among parishioners and promoting the benefits of the Community Bus. This may involve a targeted publicity campaign or a revised engagement approach to attract new users and encourage greater use of the service.

We may also need to review the current shopping trip schedule. Passenger numbers on some journeys are low, with Thursday trips often carrying only two passengers. As a result, it may be more practical and cost-effective to consider combining some of the shopping trips while continuing to meet the needs of our users.

Community Bus Trips

The monthly community bus trips continue to be very popular, attracting consistent participation from residents.

Recent trips have included Marlborough (11 attendees), Whitehall Garden Centre (12 attendees) and Burnham-on-Sea (10 attendees).

Attendance on the June trip to Burnham-on-Sea was slightly lower than usual due to the number of walking frames requiring storage on the bus, which reduced the available passenger capacity.

Volunteers

The Community Bus service is currently supported by six volunteer drivers, with additional cover provided by the Office & Community Administrator. One of our volunteer drivers is now reaching the age at which he must renew his driving licence and is considering stepping down from his role next year. In addition, we have recently lost one of our long-serving and valued drivers, who decided to leave the service following his full retirement.

To maintain consistent service delivery and prevent disruption to regular routes, the recruitment of at least two additional volunteer drivers is required. Previous recruitment efforts in January through social media campaigns and parish magazine advertisements yielded one new driver. The associated costs for each new volunteer include mandatory Midas Training at £140.00 and DBS Certificate processing at £12.00, representing a total investment of £152.00 per driver for the Parish Council.

Uniform

We are still hoping to provide branded T-shirts for our volunteer drivers, donated by one of the volunteer's businesses (gardening), in line with our other groups.