

Meeting	Community Development Committee
Date	5 th August 2025
Report Title	Community Bus
Agenda Reference	9
Author	Jackie Fawcett, Community & Office Administrator

Recommendations:

1. To look at the pricing structure for the Community Bus to ensure all our costs are met and to consider uplifting the price to £1.00 for a one-way journey and £2.00 for a return trip.
2. To look at ways to recruit volunteer drivers.
3. To consider a volunteer bus driver uniform and if sponsorship is an option.

Community Transport income and expenditure for 2025/2026 – as at end of June 2025:

	Actual Current Mth	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
501 Community Transport							
1002 Community Transport Fares	0	880	3,641	2,761			24.2%
1003 Community Transport BSOG	0	(570)	714	1,284			(79.8%)
Community Transport :- Income	0	310	4,355	4,045			7.1%
4500 Bus Tax & Insurance	0	946	770	(176)		(176)	122.9%
4501 Bus Fuel Costs	0	607	1,122	515		515	54.1%
4502 Bus Servicing & Repairs	0	733	1,020	287		287	71.9%
4504 Bus Driver Training	0	0	450	450		450	0.0%
4505 Bus Admin/Misc	0	0	100	100		100	0.0%
Community Transport :- Indirect Expenditure	0	2,287	3,462	1,175	0	1,175	66.1%
Net Income over Expenditure	0	(1,977)	893	2,870			
Grand Totals:- Income	0	310	4,355	4,045			7.1%
Expenditure	0	2,287	3,462	1,175	0	1,175	66.1%
Net Income over Expenditure	0	(1,977)	893	2,870			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	0	(1,977)	893	2,870			

Highlights:

- Bus Fuel costs are currently being investigated because they are higher than expected.
- Insurance costs were higher than predicted.
- Seeing an increase in Servicing & Repairs, likely due to the increase in mileage.



Grant: 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 £714.00.

Fare Structure: We currently charge £0.50p for a one-way trip / £1.00 for a return. These rates have remained unchanged for a minimum of ten years, indicating the potential need for review.

There have been occasions when the bus has been out of commission due to urgent repairs and it has been necessary to rent a bus from Swindon Dial A Ride (which comes out of our Community Choices budget); so the net income over expenditure may not give a true reflection due to these additional costs.

The bus service is a community service provided by the Parish Council. It is not a profit-driven service - hence why fares have remained low. Residents, at times, have offered to pay more.

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

- Brake pads (Front and Rear)
- Tail lift
- Service / MOT
- New tyres
- Repair to the handle on the sliding door for access

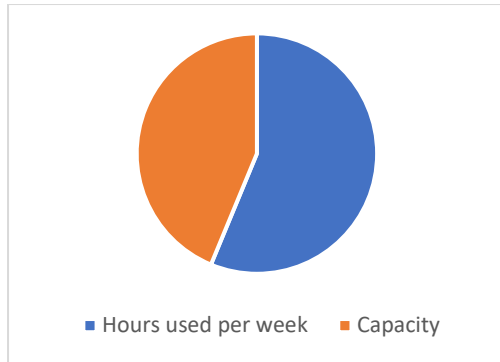
The community bus is now 10 years old and has a current mileage of 35,000 miles. We have set aside £10,000 in an earmarked reserve (EMR) specifically for its eventual replacement. Going forward, the budget includes allocating an additional £10,000 annually into this reserve, aiming to build sufficient funds to replace the bus in approximately 4–5 years, based on its expected lifespan. However, this timeline may be brought forward if the vehicle begins to experience frequent mechanical issues or breakdowns. Increasing the bus fares would provide additional income which we could assign to the EMR.

In October 2023 we applied and was unsuccessful for a £52,200.00 National Lottery grant to fund a bus replacement.

Bus usage

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.

Bus Users

We currently have 120 residents on our contact list and around 85 of those are regular bus users.

Volunteers

The Community Bus service currently operates with six volunteer drivers, supplemented by Jackie from the administrative team who has completed the necessary training. However, operational capacity is significantly reduced as two drivers are currently unavailable due to medical leave for an extended period. This reduction places the service at risk of trip cancellations, which would adversely impact users who rely on these services as essential social connections.

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 HWPC.

Uniform

The provision of branded t-shirts for volunteers would serve dual purposes: fostering team identity and belonging among volunteers while enhancing the professional appearance and visual recognition of the council's community services. One of our volunteers has offered to sponsor the purchase of a uniform. A Haydon Wick logo polo shirt with his company logo (gardening and handyman/ repair works). Would the Council allow him to advertise his company on the items – or potentially as a separate marketing campaign?