

Item 7

TAXI VOUCHER SCHEME FOR SURREY HEATH
SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL'S LOCAL COMMITTEE IN
SURREY HEATH

2nd December 2004

KEY ISSUE:

To evaluate the Surrey Heath Taxi Voucher Scheme and consider its future.

SUMMARY:

The Surrey Heath Taxi Voucher Scheme (Pilot) commenced on 1st June 2004 and will run for one year. This report outlines what has been achieved so far.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Surrey Heath Local Committee notes the report and consider an allocation from Members Allocations towards the running of the scheme in 05 / 06.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1. The scheme provides 164 books of £2 taxi vouchers, each to the value of £154, for those people who qualify and who live within the Borough of Surrey Heath.
2. Within the 164 books, 28 are ring-fenced for people with a Learning Disability and these are funded with monies from Adults and Community Care Learning Disabilities Team and 18 books are ring fenced for older people from the rural areas and these are funded by the Local Committee.

ANALYSIS AND COMMENTARY

3. The generic scheme is funded in the following way –

SHAW PCT Partnership Grant	£10,000
Surrey Heath Local Committee	£2,800
Surrey Heath Borough Council	£ 3,000
SCC Adults and Community Care	£ 4,500
SCC Transport Grant	£4,000

4. Voluntary Services Surrey Heath carries out administration of the scheme. Administrative costs of the Pilot have been approximately 10% plus some one-off start-up costs e.g. for bar-code scanner etc. The scheme has been an excellent example of partnership working between agencies.

5. People were invited to apply for vouchers and assessed according to the following criteria:

- Age
- Living alone and elderly/disabled
- Being a carer for a relative
- Registered disabled (physical and/or sensory disability)
- Being wheelchair dependent

Additionally, applicants were asked to give the reasons why they found accessing the current range of transport difficult. In most cases giving full details of illnesses and disabilities that affected their ability to get out and about.

6. Successful applicants were given £154 worth of £2 taxi vouchers. These can be used to pay or part-pay for taxi journeys with certain, approved companies licensed by the Borough Council. The taxi drivers take vouchers to the Cash Office at Surrey Heath Borough Council for reimbursement. Voluntary Services Surrey Heath manage the administration of the scheme, reimbursing the Borough Council for monies paid out and bar-coding reading vouchers onto the database of members details. The audit trail for the vouchers is clear.

7. At the end of the year the data from the bar-code scanner will be used to fully evaluate the scheme and gain data on journey distances / costs, frequency of use etc.

8. All the vouchers have been issued and there is currently a waiting list of 150.

BREAKDOWN OF VOUCHERS ISSUED

	Number of vouchers
Elderly 65+ (born 1939 or before)	114
Elderly 90+ (born 1914 or before)	19
Rural Elderly (living in Bagshot, Lightwater, Chobham, Bisley, West End)	49
Carer	22
Living alone (all categories)	79
Physically Disabled Under 65	22
Registered Blind	21
Registered Physically Disabled	70

9. There are a few points to note –
- In the table, some people appear in more than one category (e.g. living alone and physically disabled)
 - In some cases we are supporting two people in a household, both husband and wife or carer and cared-for. However, each household only gets one book
 - Some people have a dual disability (both blind and physically disabled)
 - 13 members of the generic scheme have come through the care management route including one from the Frimley Park Hospital Team which was part of his discharge package. However, a total of 107 scheme members are known to the Surrey Heath Social Care Team.
 - Oldest members of the scheme are 95 years old (x 3) and the youngest is 20
 - The scheme for people with a Learning Disability operates slightly differently and all recipients of the vouchers are referred by their Care Manager. Consequently, they are not included in the table
 - Not included in the table are two members who have mental illness, both under 65, one of whom has disabled children

CONSULTATION

10. Stakeholder events held by SHAW PCT have identified Transport as a top priority in the area. Development of a Taxi Voucher Scheme is included in the NW Joint Carers Strategy that was drawn up as a result of a consultation exercise with carers.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11. Additional funding will be needed if the scheme is going to continue into 05 / 06.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

12. None.

CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

13. None.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

14. All requests are assessed using the same criteria.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Surrey Heath Local Committee notes the report and considers an allocation from Members Allocations towards the running of the scheme in 05 / 06.

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BACKGROUND PAPERS: **None**

Number of Annexes: **None**