

19 FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY TRANSPORT INITIATIVES (AN96-2004)

Dundee City Council submitted a detailed bid to the Scottish Executive in late January to the Community Transport Initiatives Fund. The quality of the bid is reflected in the award being by far and away the highest per capita grant of the group major cities.

The Scottish Executive confirmed on 17th February that we have been awarded £306,650 over the next three years to develop community transport in the city.

Within Dundee there are areas where the young, old and mobility impaired face economic and or physical barriers to transport to access social, recreational and health facilities. It has been estimated that nearly 30% of mainstream bus users change buses for their trip end. This is particularly difficult when a person is encumbered. On our taxicard scheme, over 25% of journeys are used for medical appointments. This then reduces the amount of trips available for social and recreational purposes. Hospital appointments which require the patient transfer service often involves extended route diversions and thus long travel and waiting periods. Community groups find it difficult to access specialised transport for evening functions adding to the social isolation felt in areas.

By purchasing special accessible vehicles we can extend the Dundee Partnership "Sheltered" bus service to the remaining SIP's areas in the city and in years 2 and 3 develop and grow the service by the time of day and client group. By year 3 we would have a business plan in place with new partners from the Health Services and voluntary sector which can then provide the revenue streams to allow the project to continue and grow without the initial level of revenue support required to "kick start" the service. A Community Transport Officer (hosted in our Community Regeneration Section) would over financial years 2004/05 and 2005/06 prepare an action plan to identify all physical resources in the public and private sector and prepare a business plan to engage a Partnership Transport Brokerage to maximise availability of and access to vehicles in the "Partnership" group (eg Council Departments, Voluntary Sector, Health Service). In addition to identifying current community need, this officer will bring forward a community travel aspiration document which will focus on wishes as opposed to needs. It is vital that communities wishes and desires are met and that people's needs are not used as a base line for service delivery.