

**MATTERS ARISING UPDATE SHEET**  
**FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING ON**  
**18 APRIL 2024**

<b>Updates</b>		
<b>Minute Item Number</b>	<b>Member Query Raised</b>	<b>Cabinet Member/Officer Response (generally no more than a paragraph or so is required)</b>
3 – Resolution 1	The Terms of Reference for the Transport Working Group, including the aims and objectives of the Group and indicative timescales.	<p>The ToRs for the Group are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i) Help market the Buzzabout and Katch pilots so that they are as successful as possible.</li> <li>ii) Monitor performance and understand the data flowing from the DRT pilots.</li> <li>iii) Explore assessment of social value of these services.</li> <li>iv) Develop the Council’s ambitions for rural transport moving forward, including the commissioning of an expert to produce some options.</li> <li>v) Report to Cabinet and make recommendations.</li> </ul> <p>The Group is Chaired by Cllr Clery and will be cross party. Meetings are scheduled every 2 months, supported by an officer working group. Monthly reports will be provided to Cabinet.</p>
	The social value of East Suffolk Council providing on-demand public transport e.g. Katch/Buzz About.	<p>Buzzabout and Katch are being used by residents to access i) connecting journeys (for example drop offs at Bus and rail stations), ii) various shopping areas (for example Buzzabout drop offs at North Quay retail park, M&amp;S, Aldi, Pets at home), iii) various health services (for example drop offs at dental practices, opticians and GP surgeries), iv) social/leisure activities (for example drop offs at hair salons, v) leisure centre, café’s and pubs/restaurants) and also vi) a care home.</p> <p>Both financial and non-financial benefits will be captured via the operator and user surveys to try to understand the true value that these services provide in reducing social isolation and loneliness and improving mental health and wellbeing to those who use them, as well as estimating the reduction in carbon emissions as compared to single occupancy car journeys.</p>

		<p>To this end ESC is working with Suffolk Office of Data Analysts (SODA) to measure the social value of the Katch service to residents. SODA have the capacity to conduct research with Katch passengers and compare the service to other existing services in the UK.</p> <p>Officers have begun investigating a number of existing social value tools to assess their usefulness for measuring the impact of the DRT pilots.</p>
	<p>How the on-demand services, including the app, will be marketed/relaunched.</p>	<p>A Katch marketing team is in place and the team have recently refreshed the marketing plan. An external marketing professional has been commissioned to support officers and the Coastal Accessible Transport Services (CATS) Manager to ensure that social media and other marketing/comms tools are fully exploited. This will include advice on social media messaging, articles and blogs as well as the content and look of the Katch website, particularly on mobile devices. A Communities officer is building relationships with the two High Schools in the Katch area to promote the availability of the service to young people.</p> <p>The existing Buzzabout marketing plan is scheduled to be reviewed next, to coincide with a refreshed marketing push following re-procurement of the service is at the end of August.</p> <p>We currently do not use an app, but should one become available then the Marketing team would of course ensure that it is widely advertised.</p>
	<p>How it is intended to attract more volunteer drivers for on-demand services.</p>	<p>This is not an issue for the Katch and Buzzabout services as they employ paid drivers.</p> <p>More widely ESC has been working with several key local VCFSE organisations that are seeking volunteers, including Citizens Advice and Homestart, and developed a short animation to encourage people to volunteer which can be used in a whole range of settings as part of a wider volunteering campaign. Similar campaigns could be undertaken with the on-demand services that do rely on volunteers across the district. In addition, through the Community Partnership Board, the Communities Team have worked with Community Action Suffolk to develop a programme of work encouraging volunteering, promoting the benefits of volunteering, supporting and upskilling the organisations that host and manage volunteers and maximising the volunteering</p>

		<p>experience. Further funding has been allocated to continue this work for the rest of this financial year.</p>
	<p>The wider impact of the loss of public transport on a community such as car movements and air quality etc.</p>	<p>Transport for the North has undertaken research to understand how issues with the transport system leads some people to be socially excluded (called transport related social exclusion or TRSE).</p> <p>Their online tool indicates that in East Suffolk, 93,269 (37.4%) residents live in neighbourhoods with a nationally high risk of TRSE, compared with 18% of residents across England. This area ranks 43 out of 296 Local Authority Districts for the overall level of TRSE risk. Underlying this, East Suffolk ranks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access challenges: 35 out of 296</li> <li>• Vulnerability challenges: 155 out of 296</li> </ul> <p>The risk level for East Suffolk varies between the different elements of TRSE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment: 39 out of 296</li> <li>• Education: 44 out of 296</li> <li>• Health: 51 out of 296</li> <li>• Basic services: 130 out of 296</li> </ul> <p>The risk level also varies across different neighbourhoods in East Suffolk. This varies from 2% to 68% of the maximum risk level for any neighbourhood in England.</p> <p>If Katch did not operate, as there is no other transport to carry people between Framlingham and Snape, we would assume that the passengers travelling the 2,655 journeys made on Katch would find other transport means to get to their destination, whether that is by car or taxi. Alternatively, they would remain isolated in their town/village.</p> <p>Last year's Environmental Protection team's air quality report stated that generally, the air quality within East Suffolk is good. The main source of emissions within East Suffolk is road traffic, which means that the pollutants of concern are nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) and particulate matter.</p>
Resolution 2	<p>That the operators of East Suffolk's on-demand public transport projects Katch/Buzz About be encouraged to use vehicles that are as green</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council, who operated the Katch service for 18 months up until December 2022, used two electric buses on the route. They discovered that in the winter the maximum distance the buses could travel on electric power was 80 miles and therefore there was always a bus on charge. When East Suffolk Council took over the operation and appointed Coastal Accessible Transport Services (CATS) to run</p>

	<p>as they realistically can be given the cost limitations.</p>	<p>the service, we knew that practically and financially their existing diesel minibus would be the best option. An electric bus costs double the price of a diesel bus. CATS ensure that their buses are regularly serviced and meet the required emission levels. If the Katch bus is off the road for any reason, we know that the replacement bus CATS use is of equivalent standard. If, after the Katch and Buzzabout trials end, there is a rollout to a wider service ESC could look then at whether electric or other alternative fuel vehicles are a viable option. If they prove not to be, we can continue to monitor improvements in technology and make the change when it makes sense.</p>
<p>Resolution 3</p>	<p>That Planning Officers be asked to encourage developers to include the provision of public transport at the earliest stage of new developments as possible.</p>	<p>Both Local Plans contain policies that expect new development to enable and support travel by public transport where this is feasible. In many cases, this is achieved through the location of major new development in locations where there is access to existing public transport networks, however it must also be acknowledged that as a rural district public transport services are very limited (or don't exist) in many parts of the district, however development in those locations would bring benefits such as supporting the vitality of existing communities. Public transport facility improvements are delivered as part of new development and may include improved access to existing bus stops, new bus stops and shelters, real time passenger information screens, improved raised kerbs and footway connections. New public transport provision, i.e. new / extended bus routes servicing a development, would usually only be feasible as part of the largest new developments, such as Brightwell Lakes (2000 homes). In such a site, early private bus provision can be made available in order to support early residents. At Brightwell Lakes an initial developer funded service is required between the development and Ipswich Train Station from 350 home occupations. Longer term public bus transport provision passing through major housing sites or even stopping at new bus stops beside development sites depends up on the bus companies identifying a business case for the additional route and extensions to timetables. Experience has shown there is bus company reluctance to impact existing routes prior to enough of a customer population living on the site. Early bus service provision can be subsidised through developer contributions on the largest housing and employment sites.</p>

		Local Plan policy requires a travel plan for developments of over 80 dwellings, which could include measures to encourage bus use such as discounts on bus tickets for new residents.
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