

Initial Outcome Proposal to the East Suffolk Community Partnership Board - FY2020/21

(Stage 1 Proposal)

1. Key outcome(s)

A one-year pilot testing the viability of a sustainable transport solution trialling two 8-seater wheelchair accessible electric passenger vehicles operating as shared taxis (registered as Taxi-buses serving fixed stopping points, charging passengers in line with local bus fares and bookable via an App or telephone).

The service will be available on demand 7 Days a week 06.30 to 22.30 Monday through to Saturday and 09.00 to 19.00 on Sundays.

The objective of the pilot is to build confidence amongst rural communities towards the concept of taxi sharing to improve transport connectivity for rural communities.

The Pilot is viable for trialling

- a) Electric vehicles (mileage/range)
- b) Booking via an App
- c) Evaluating usage by young people

2. How has the need been identified?

Suffolk County Council Passenger Transport Officers supported public Rural Transport Conversations across the county during March 2019. The workshops identified key themes:

People want to get “out and about” – they do not want services coming to them. Being able to get “out and about” is a sign of a healthy and well-balanced life.

Reduce rural isolation.

What transport is out there? People are not always aware of what is already on their doorstep.

People want to know about all the transport options available to them.

People want flexibility and choice. People want to get to the larger supermarkets, leisure centres and cinemas.

People like the “extra care” that some transport operators provide, and some people are willing to pay extra for this extra service.

People are willing to share transport and share taxis.

Suffolk County identified an opportunity to partner with rural taxi operators to trial the viability of shared taxis operating as taxi-buses.

Surveys on local transport needs carried out by Framlingham Town Council identified a demand

for access to the Rail Station at Campsea Ashe. This route is suited to trialling electric vehicles on a DRT taxi-bus service.

The eight Community Partnership workshops in October/November 2019 identified Transport as a shared priority. The workshops identified many dimensions to the transport priority – for example connectivity, green vehicles, community transport and alternative forms of transport provision

3. Who will benefit from the outcomes?

Residents of Campsea Ashe, Framlingham and Wickham Market for connections to bus and rail services for onward travel.

Residents needing access to education, medical facilities, social activities, or work.

Visitors and tourists to the area.

All age demographics.

4. How will the outcomes(s) be sustained after the funding period (if appropriate)?

The subsidy for the Pilot will reduce as capacity increases. The 8-seater vehicles will have a zero subsidy at a capacity of over 4 passengers. Rural communities will need to build up confidence towards the concept of sharing taxis, this will be supported by the low-cost bus fare and the environmental solution of travelling by electric vehicle.

5. Name of Project/activity that will deliver the outcome(s)

Katch



6. Brief description of the project / activity that will deliver the outcome(s).

Environment

The Council will support this one-year transport pilot through the provision of two Renault ZE electric 8-seater wheelchair accessible vehicles. This is in line with the Suffolk County Council pledge to work towards making the county of Suffolk carbon neutral by 2030. Working with other organisations and communities to aim for a carbon neutral Suffolk at the earliest opportunity. To reinforce the strong Greenest County ambition.

Developing and supporting Suffolk Taxi operators

The Council recognises the essential role of taxis in the delivery of rural transport solutions. This pilot is designed to capacity build the business of taxi operators to support their sustainability through the shared taxi-bus model. The development of taxi-bus services will widely improve rural transport connection opportunities for any age demographic.

Promoting new modes of rural transport

The objective of the pilot is to build confidence amongst rural communities towards the concept of taxi sharing whilst paying bus fare rates. This will initially require fare subsidies whilst the service builds. When a capacity of four passengers to a maximum of eight sharing is achieved the taxi-bus service can continue as a standalone service. This will support the development of countywide subsidy free and sustainable rural taxi-bus services.

Project / activity START DATE (01/2021):

END DATE (01/2022):

7. Who is involved?

Who is involved in developing this outcome proposal?

Suffolk County Council

Who will deliver the project/activity?

Cars Smart - taxis

East Suffolk Community Partnerships Board
Member supporting the project: Paul West

Project / activity lead:

Name: Susan Davey

Organisation: Suffolk County Council

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8. Give information about match funding here:

Source of match funding:	Funding confirmed?	Amount (£)
Framlingham, Wickham Market and Villages Community Partnership	N	£3,000
Suffolk County Council	Y	£62,000

Total project / activity cost	£105,000
Total of confirmed match funding	£62,000
Total amount of Strategic funding required	£40,000

9. Identify where the Community Partnership Board Strategic Budget will be spent:

Description of activity or item (by who and by when where appropriate)	Cost (£)
Bus fare subsidies	£40,000

10. How will the project / activity be monitored, and outcomes reported (including project risks)?

The service operator will maintain adequate records and monitoring systems to measure the effectiveness of the service and provide monitoring and evaluation data agreed with Suffolk County Council.

The Operator will be required to claim fares subsidies through submitting passenger data along with invoices in line with the Suffolk County Council Passenger Transport monitoring periods. Monitoring data will include:

- Number of Single journeys and fares taken
- Number of Return journeys and fares taken
- Multi occupancy journeys (how many passengers on any one journey)
- Number of wheelchair users
- Passenger miles
- Dead miles
- Pick up / Drop off points

- Peak demand periods
- Journeys not met

The fares subsidy available for the full one-year pilot is currently set at £40,000. The Council and the Operator will monitor data and claims to ensure the service remains within budget and sustainable.

During the trial period the Transport Task Group will be updated regularly to help assess the potential for this innovative new transport model to be rolled out in other areas.

Performance will also be reported on a quarterly basis to the Community Partnership Board in the usual way.

Community Partnership Board Member Declaration:
I confirm that I support this proposal:
Name: Paul West
Date: 24/11/20