

Decision Maker: **Adult and Community Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee**

Date: 30th November 2011

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: **TAXICARD UPDATE**

Contact Officer: Silvio Giannotta, Commissioning Officer, Adult and Community Services
Tel: 020 8461 7722 E-mail: silvio.giannotta@bromley.gov.uk

Chief Officer: Lorna Blackwood, Assistant Director Commissioning & Partnerships, Adult and Community Services

Ward: Boroughwide

1. Reason for report

1.1 Following a report that went to Adult and Community Services PDS Committee in March 2011, this report provides an update on a half year review of the Bromley Taxicard scheme and the financial implications.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1 To note the half year financial position of the Bromley Taxicard scheme.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Existing policy.
 2. BBB Priority: Supporting Independence.
-

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: Estimated cost £157k
 2. Ongoing costs: Recurring cost. £157k
 3. Budget head/performance centre: Commissioning and Partnerships Division / TfL Taxicard funding
 4. Total current budget for this head: £81k LBB , £153k TfL
 5. Source of funding: ACS Portfolio / TfL Taxicard funding
-

Staff

1. Number of staff (current and additional): Part time admin resource in LBB to process applications for the Taxicard scheme
 2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours: 18 hours per week
-

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: No statutory requirement or Government guidance.
 2. Call-in: Call-in is applicable
-

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): There are currently 1,400 Bromley Taxicard members
-

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A.
2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

- 3.1 The Taxicard scheme is a subsidised door-to-door transport service for Londoners with serious mobility impairments and to whom public transport is not usually accessible. Financed by 32 participating London Boroughs and Transport for London (TfL), the scheme increases independence and mobility of disabled and older people by providing subsidised trips in licensed taxis or private hire vehicles.
- 3.2 Administered by London Councils Transport and Environment Committee, the 2011/12 combined Taxicard budget is £234k which includes an annual administration charge of £6,700 payable to London Councils.
- 3.3 Due to concerns over significant projected overspends in 2010/11, the department introduced a number of cost saving measures designed to ensure growth of the Bromley Taxicard scheme was contained within the overall budget available. These included;
- Increasing the minimum member charge from £2 to £2.50 per trip
 - Reducing the maximum LBB subsidy from £9.30 to £8.30 per trip
 - Ending double swiping – a facility allowing members to use two trip subsidies together in a single journey, providing the option of taking fewer but longer trips.

These measures were implemented on the 1st January 2011 and resulted in an end of financial year underspend of £1,000, incurring no additional costs to the Council.

- 3.4 The report to members in March 2011, reintroduced the double swiping facility, as it was recognised this was a popular facility among Bromley Taxicard members giving them greater flexibility in using their trip allowance. However as TfL were no longer prepared to underwrite individual borough overspends, officers were asked to closely monitor journey trends over the initial 6 months and take action if necessary to avoid potential overspends.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The recommendations from this report support the Council's Building a Better Bromley 2020 Vision of Supporting Independence; whereby particularly older people and vulnerable adults, are supported to lead active, healthy and independent lives.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 During the initial six months of 2011/12, a total of 9,459 trips have been made by Bromley members, a 9% reduction compared to the same period last year. This follows a similar pattern across other London boroughs where only 2 of the 32 boroughs have seen a growth in trips made. Of the remaining 30 boroughs, the reduction in trips ranged from 0.5% to 53%.
- 5.2 This financial year to date, a total of 18.5% of trips made by Bromley members were double swiped trips, a proportional increase from 2010/11 when the amount of double swiped trips was 16.4%.

5.3 Based on the journey trends over the past six months, the estimate cost for the scheme in 2011/12 has been outlined below:

	2011/12 £'000
Budget	234
Estimated cost of scheme (total trips * max borough subsidy £8.30)	157
Admin	<u>7</u>
Net underspend	<u>-70</u>

As TfL did not agree to any sharing of underspends in 2011/12 this money will be refunded to TfL. London Councils officers are discussing with TfL how any variations to budgets will be managed for 2012/13.

5.4 Following a decision by the London Councils Transport and Environment Committee, the TfL funding allocation awarded for the Bromley Taxicard is set to rise over the coming years. Set out below are the amount Bromley will receive, the contribution has been calculated using a formula based on the number of residents over 65, active Taxicard Members and the number of people in receipt of Higher Rate Mobility Component of the Disability Living Allowance.

- 2012/13 = £222k
- 2013/14 = £337k
- 2014/15 = £454k

5.5 Prior to finalising the TfL allocation each year, it is intended to rerun the calculation with the latest statistics. Boroughs will be advised of any changes before they set their budgets and will need to bear in mind whether they will receive more or less funding from TfL each year and set their own budgets and scheme parameters accordingly.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Legal Implications Personnel Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	Changes to the Taxicard Scheme and TfL Taxicard Funding Redistribution presented to the Adult and Community Services Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee (02 November 2010) Taxicard Update – Current Position presented to the Adult and Community Services Policy Development Committee (29 March 2011)