COMMUNITY TRANSPORT POLICY

Policy Reference No. POL/154
File No. HCC05/392
Strategic Objective 3.1 Foster socially connected and supported communities
Adopted by Council 08/09/2003
Re-Adopted 13/03/2018
Date for Review March 2023
Responsible Officer Manager Health and Community Wellbeing
Department Health and Community Wellbeing
Community Transport Policy

1 POLICY STATEMENT

1.1 Hume City Council is committed to supporting residents to remain independent and connected with their community. Council provides a community transport service to eligible older residents, people with disabilities and other transport disadvantaged residents to achieve this end.

1.2 Council’s community transport service includes providing services to and from social and community activities, events and settings, as well as offering a community bus hire to not-for-profit organisations and community groups. The services provided by Council aim to supplement, not replace, existing public and commercial services.

2 PURPOSE

2.1 The purpose of this policy is to guide Council in relation to the management of Council’s Community Transport Service which encompass both community bus and community vehicle hire services. Currently, Council manages a fleet of 7 buses including a large (19 seater) bus and 6 mini-buses (11-12 seater). The policy describes:

- The scope of this policy
- Underpinning objectives; and,
- Policy implementation.

2.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with Council’s Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) for Program and Community Transportation Bus Use (9.02) which provides greater detail on conditions of use, service eligibility, risk and emergency management procedures.

3 SCOPE

3.1 This policy is applicable to all staff, community groups and not-for-profit organisations involved in the delivering Community Transport Services or operating community bus hire vehicles.

4 OBJECTIVE

4.1 Council provides a Community Transport Service to offer an affordable and accessible service for those in the Hume community who may not otherwise be able to participate in community life.

4.2 Priority access to Council’s Community Transport Services is given to clients in receipt of Council aged and disability services, community members who experience restrictions to mobility, are frail or otherwise transport disadvantaged.

4.3 The service is delivered in a way that complements transport services provided by other stakeholders and agencies with view to improve the overall transport system in the municipality.

5 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Council’s Community Transport Services aims to provide services to those residents who may otherwise be unable to use public or private transport as a result of one or more of the following factors:

- Physical or general health limitations (e.g. disability, frail age)
- Limited finances

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c) Lack of carer support

d) Socially or geographically isolated

e) A lack of transport alternatives

5.2 The service provides transport to Council aged and disability programs, as well as to events, facilitates and amenities such as Senior Citizens Centres and shopping centres.

5.3 A minimal fee toward the service is requested from all passengers using the service. The fee is reviewed and adjusted annually. These fees are discussed and agreed with clients before the service is delivered. Fees for the service are principles-based and seek to ensure those that can contribute toward the cost of their care do so, whilst protecting those who are financially vulnerable.

5.4 Priority use of Council vehicles is given at all times to Council’s own programs. These include:

5.4.1 Community Transport Shopping Shuttles
5.4.2 Transport to Senior Citizens Centres
5.4.3 Transport to centre-based meals programs
5.4.4 Leisure centres transport
5.4.5 Transport to planned activity groups (PAGs)
5.4.6 Community outings to local events and community facilities.

5.5 When not being used by Council, the community buses may be hired by locally based not-for-profit organisations and community groups.

5.6 Use of the community vehicles requires agreement by the hirer to comply with Council’s ‘Conditions of Hire and Use’, payment by the hirer of Council adopted fees and charges, and approval by Council Administration. All drivers of Council’s buses are required to possess a valid Victorian drivers license which must be carried at all times.

5.7 The CEO or nominee is delegated with the authority to deal with and make decisions pertaining to special requests and those uses of Council vehicles which are not explicitly covered in this Policy.

5.8 Council’s Community Services Directorate, in particular Community Support Services, has responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy.

6 DEFINITIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

6.1 Community Transport: a low-cost, accessible service for those in the community who may otherwise not be able to access the community.

6.2 Locally based: pertains to organisations and community groups that conduct the majority of their activities in the municipal area and/or for the primary benefit of the Hume City community.

6.3 Not-for-profit: incorporated associations whose primary objective is to service the community, rather than to profit from the delivery of services or supports.

6.4 Community bus service: refers to a range of services delivered by Council for which buses are utilised including; Community Transport Shopping Shuttles, Transport to Senior Citizens Centres, transport to centre-based meals programs, leisure centres transport, transport to planned activity groups (PAGs), community outings to local events and community facilities.

7 RELATED DOCUMENTS
7.1 Where appropriate, list the related documents and attach to the policy. These may include:

7.1.1 Local Government Act 1989
7.1.2 Hume City Council Standard Operating Procedure: Program and Community Transportation Bus Use (9.02)
7.1.3 Bus Safety Act 2009
7.1.4 Bus Safety Regulations 2010 (Vic)
7.1.5 Hume City Council Plan 2017-2021

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