

Clowne and District Community Transport (CDCT) seeks partner(s) for collaborative partnership and/or possible merger

Introduction

Clowne and District Community Transport (CDCT) are a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. (Charity No. 1055035 Company No. 3181507). As part of the mainstream public transport system it specializes in accessible transport for individuals and groups who have difficulties in using public transport. CDCT services are provided within the Bolsover District Council area together with Bassetlaw, Chesterfield, Rotherham, Mansfield, Eckington and Killamarsh. The operational area can be seen via the link:

http://www.derbyshirect.com/images/Clowne%20Community%20Transport%20area_tcm34-138444.pdf

The Board of Clowne and District Community Transport has decided that the time is now appropriate for them to explore and consider what opportunities may exist for the organisation to:

- Develop a strategic alliance with another like minded charity, social enterprise or similar type community focused body
- Explore a possible merger or other collaborative partnership working

In making this decision, the Board have commissioned Nottingham based [SEEM](#) to help facilitate this exploration and invite interested parties to submit an Expression of Interest. Please see below for further details on this process.

Background to CDCT

Established over 25 years ago, CDCT has an excellent reputation within the community both locally and regionally. The organisation prides itself on providing reliable, affordable and high quality accessible door to door transportation with a dedicated team of highly trained and professional drivers, staff and volunteers. The team truly understand the value of service, making a difference in people's lives and quite literally, going that extra mile.

A range of other activities provided by CDCT include walking groups, social groups, day trips and theatre trips together with luncheon clubs and holidays meaning that CDCT have become a community anchor for many in Clowne and surrounding areas.

CDCT also has qualified trainers who provide the following training:

- D and D1 training
- MiDAS Driver training
- MiDAS PATS training
- Five Steps to Safety
- Fire Warden

Looking to the future

The Board recognise that as the future of public funding is uncertain, now is an opportune time to investigate how CDCT could further develop its services and provide additional social cohesion and impact to the community either in partnership or as part of another organisation. Its decision to explore this now is founded on a position of strength rather than weakness with CDCT possessing a range of lucrative contract arrangements, assets, reserves and a team of motivated staff and volunteers.

Julian Millar, Chair of the Board stated, ' *We are keen to understand and investigate how a merger or other forms of collaborative working could make better use of our charitable funds and property whilst providing better services for our beneficiaries. We are open to approaches from a range of organisations that share our values, ethos and ambitions and have taken this step to fully test the interest of potential partners in an open and transparent way that potentially offers the best opportunities for our users, staff and the community*'

Key Information

CDCT operations include:

1. Contract arrangements on behalf of Derbyshire County Council, catering for the transport needs for a range of schools and day centres
2. Regular Group transport bookings
3. Occasional Group transport bookings
4. Transport for individuals (for activities outlined above)

Full details of these contracts and their values will be made available at a later stage of the process (see later). The charity has a reserves policy which ensures that the organisation maintains a sound financial platform from which to operate. CDCT's financial position meets and exceeds that policy currently.

Vehicles:

10 accessible minibuses, ranging from 8 to 24 seat capacity

Staff:

Administration – 4
Operational – 8 drivers, 2 passenger assistants
Volunteer drivers – 29
Volunteer passenger assistants – 20

The business operates from rented accommodation at:

UNIT 10, 10 CRESWELL ROAD
CLOWNE
CHESTERFIELD
S43 4PW

Website: http://www.derbyshirect.com/find_a_service/clowne/

Mission and Aspirations

The Board understands that the creation and delivery of a sustainable business model is paramount to the future of the service. But it also believes that the provision of transportation services to the community forms just part of the organization's purpose and would be interested to hear from organisations that share their ethos and mission to:

- Increase social inclusion and enhance social activity/cohesion
- Improve physical and mental well-being
- Alleviate loneliness
- Increase capacity for other voluntary and community groups
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to develop through training, experience, skills, knowledge and support with possible prospects for future employment
- Maximise involvement of local people
- Offer equality of opportunity to access services, facilities and activities
- Provide local travel solutions satisfying rural transport needs, tackling issues of geographical isolation
- Encourage greater mobility and promote new and existing friendships

Next steps

If your organisation would like to explore ways in which it could develop a collaborative partnership or consider a strategic merger with Clowne and District Community Transport, the Board has set out a process that commences with an initial Expression of Interest (EOI)

The EOI is your opportunity to provide details in confidence of your organization's interest and set out where you perceive there to be areas of possible compatibility and opportunity together with challenges and risks. Please remember that this is just the start of a process that allows you and CDCT to explore the possibilities of closer ties or merger.

The Board of CDCT will then examine the level of interest and at this stage and invite a limited number of organisations to make firmer proposals to the CDCT Project Board. Organisations selected will have access in confidence to more detailed information that will help inform a more detailed proposition.

It is envisaged that any preferred partner(s) would then undertake a process of due diligence from both sides which depending on the nature of the arrangement could involve specialist legal representation.

Throughout the early stages of the process neither CDCT nor your organisation are under any obligation to proceed and if ultimately CDCT do not believe any suitable partnership has been found they are at liberty to terminate discussions at any time.

Timescales

To request an EOI, please send an email to SEEM at info@seem.uk.net with the subject Clowne and District Community Transport EOI.

The Board of CDCT has asked that all EOI's are returned back to SEEM at the same email address by **7th April 2015 5pm**.

Applications received after this date will not be considered.

Please refer all queries regarding the process to SEEM not CDCT.

Thank you.

