

# Urgent Decision to be made by the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health on 15 September 2017

## Public Consultation on Proposed Adult Transport Policy

### Recommendation

That the Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care and Health approves the commencement of a consultation exercise to inform the proposed amendment of the existing adult transport arrangements.

### 1.0. Background and Rationale

- 1.1. The existing Adult Transport Policy describes how transport will generally be provided for customers whose care and support needs are being met by the County Council. It sets a distinct set of criteria, which Social Care Assessors will use to determine whether an individual should be provided with local authority assisted transport as part of a care and support plan.
- 1.2. Assisted Transport is arranged or provided by the County Council using taxis, minibuses and volunteer drivers, for people whose care and support needs are met by the local authority. It helps people who need support to access day opportunities, respite care, leisure services, employment and training opportunities and other activities in the community.
- 1.3. This policy applies to all adults aged 18 years and over that access care and support provided directly or commissioned by Adult Social Care and/or are in receipt of direct payments in any of the following categories:
  - Older People Services
  - Physical Disability and Sensory Services
  - Mental Health Services
  - Learning Disability Services
- 1.4. This policy does not cover travel assistance for customers under the age of 25 who need assistance to travel to and from education establishments.
- 1.5. The Adults Transport Policy will replace the council's existing informal policies to provide transport routinely for customers who have been assessed as having certain social care needs that are eligible for funding from the council. The policy will introduce eligibility criteria for transport which take account of the national social care eligibility criteria introduced by the Care Act 2014.
- 1.6. The aim of the policy is to introduce a fair and consistent way of offering transport and meeting the needs of those who need the service the most. By introducing eligibility criteria, the policy aims to empower customers and promote independence. The proposed changes will also help to contribute

towards savings in the costs of providing this service.

- 1.7. It is intended to ensure that people travel as independently and safely as possible. It seeks to promote independent travel through the use of commonly available transport, such as public transport; private vehicle or a vehicle provided through the Motability<sup>1</sup> Scheme; and by encouraging walking, or mobilising with the use of aids either independently or with support.
- 1.8. This policy introduces a systematic approach to meeting the transport needs of eligible customers with the aim of moving away from the routine use of assisted transport. During social care assessments and Care and Support planning, all relevant transport options will be considered and assisted transport will be offered as a last resort where appropriate to needs and circumstances.
- 1.9. The process of obtaining local feedback has been undertaken via stakeholder engagement with relevant professionals, third sector partners and customer representation.

## **2.0. Proposed Consultation**

- 2.1. We are seeking permission to undertake a public consultation on the proposed Adult Transport Policy. The specific proposals we will be consulting on are:

### Proposal 1

Eligibility for transport will be based on an initial social care assessment and considered through the annual review.

This is in accordance with the Care Act 2014 and associated Regulations and statutory guidance which provide the legal framework for the assessment of social care and support needs and for determining eligibility for adult social care support from the Council with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2015.

This proposal is also in accordance with The National Assistance Act (section 29) and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act (section 2) together requiring local authorities to arrange various welfare services – including providing or assisting with facilities for travel – where they are satisfied that it is necessary to do so to meet the needs of disabled people.

### Proposal 2

The policy sets out clear eligibility criteria which specify the grounds on which transport may be provided and the grounds on which it will not usually be provided.

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<sup>1</sup> Motability is a Scheme in the United Kingdom which is intended to enable disabled people, their families and their carers to lease a new car, scooter or powered wheelchair, using their government-funded mobility allowance.

Transport may be provided where:

- For specific health and safety reasons specialised transport arrangements may be necessary.
- A customer is unable to access services without supervision or support.
- Where applicable, the lower rate of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment is fully utilised to support the customer's transport needs to and from community activities, and the customer has re-applied for a higher rate of benefit entitlement where appropriate.
- A customer has no access to transport and cannot mobilise, use assisted mobility (wheelchair/aids) or use public transport, either independently or with support, in line with this transport policy.
- A customer cannot attend their nearest community activity including college or day opportunity because there is no placement available or their culturally specific needs cannot be met and all other options have been explored and exhausted. This may be on a temporary basis until an appropriate place is found nearer to home.

Transport will not be provided where the following options are available:

- Where a customer is assessed as able to mobilise safely to their destination, with or without mobility aids, either independently or with support from family, friends, support worker, volunteer etc. to get to a local community activity. Where a customer can use public transport, voluntary transport, or similar services either independently or with support (family, friends, carer, support worker etc.) to get to and from community activities.
- Where a customer receives the higher rate mobility element of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment, the customer will be required to fully utilise the benefit to access transport options.
- Where a customer has access to a private car, including a car leased through the Motability scheme, then they will be required to travel to the community activity independently using that vehicle.
- Where a customer uses their own vehicle or Motability car, no petrol costs or other expenses will be considered for funding by the department.
- Where a customer chooses to attend community, social or recreational, or education facilities which are not the nearest available recourse to meet their assessed need, the customer will be expected to travel independently or meet any additional cost of transport considered necessary.

### Proposal 3

Entitlement to assisted transport does not automatically mean that the customer will have a requirement to be escorted on their journey. This will need to be considered as part of the initial social care assessment and considered through the annual review.

## Proposal 4

For existing customers who will no longer be entitled to assisted transport under the Policy, their circumstances will be considered on an individual basis. A transitional period of up to one month may be offered to support them to travel independently or to make use of alternative arrangements following their re-assessment/annual review.

- 2.2. We will use a range of consultation methods, including on-line survey accessed via Ask Warwickshire. Paper survey is also available and will be delivered to existing day opportunity providers for distribution; face to face consultation events are to be held at a number of building based day opportunities. All current users of Assisted Transport will receive an accessible version of the survey and policy proposal by post for completion and return in the business reply envelope provided.
- 2.3. If approved, the proposed implementation date of the policy for new customers will be 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018. For existing customers receiving county council travel assistance, the policy will apply at the time of their next reassessment or review after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.
- 2.4. Costs relating to the consultation will be met within current People Group Strategic Commissioning Service budgets.
- 2.5. The Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) for this proposed policy will be updated within the context of the consultation process and outcome.

### **3.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps**

- 3.1 The table below identifies the key milestones that will ensure a timely delivery of the Adult Transport policy:

<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Portfolio for Adult Social Care and Health consultation approval	September 2017
Consultation period	Oct/Nov 2017
Collate & analyse responses, prepare draft consultation report	November 2017
Cabinet Report – Adult Transport Policy for approval	January 2018
Effective date of Adult Transport Policy	April 2018

## 4.0 Financial Implications.

The costs of the consultation will be covered within existing People Group Strategic Commissioning Service budget.

This activity relates to the One Organisational Plan reference PG-SCS-07

### Background papers

None

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This report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

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