



## London Borough of Enfield

<b>Report Title:</b>	Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy
<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care, Councillor Alev Cazimoglu
<b>Date of Report:</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> March 2024
<b>Cabinet Member:</b>	Cabinet Member for Health & Social Care, Councillor Alev Cazimoglu
<b>Directors:</b>	Doug Wilson, Director of Health and Adult Social Care Tony Theodoulou, Executive Director of People
<b>Report Author:</b>	Christopher Reddin, Service Development Manager, Learning Disabilities and Autism
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	All
<b>Key Decision Number</b>	KD 5585
<b>Classification:</b>	Part 1
<b>Reason for exemption</b>	N/a

### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide a proposal to the lead Cabinet Member to approve a new Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy to replace the previous Adult Social Care Transport Policy agreed 2016.

### Recommendations

- I. Note the consultation process followed and outcomes as detailed within the Consultation Report as attached in Appendix 1
- II. Approve the new Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy as attached in Appendix 2
- III. Agree the implementation of this policy from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024

## **Background**

2. The Local Authority has a duty to assess an adult where it appears they may have needs for care and support under s.9 Care Act (2014) and the Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2015 set out a minimum threshold for adult care and support needs which Local Authorities must meet. In addition, Local Authorities can decide to meet needs not deemed to be eligible should they chose to. In considering whether an adult with care and support needs has eligible needs, local authorities must consider whether the following three conditions are met:
  - Condition 1: The adult's needs arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness
  - Condition 2: As a result of the adult's needs, the adult is unable to achieve 2 or more of the outcomes set out in the regulations
  - Condition 3: As a consequence, there is, or there is likely to be, a significant impact on the adult's wellbeing
3. Where the 3 conditions are met, the Council has a duty to meet needs which are not being met elsewhere, including where the adult requires travel assistance to meet those needs.
4. The decision to agree the new Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy is a key decision under the Council's constitution as it affects adults with eligible needs living in two or more wards of the Council.

## **Summary of proposed Travel Assistance Policy**

5. The proposed changes outlined in the draft Travel Assistance Policy (Appendix 2) apply to those adults who have been assessed, in accordance with the Council's statutory duties under the Care Act 2014, as eligible for support from Adult Social Care and where the adult requires travel assistance to meet eligible needs.
6. The policy introduces several changes to the existing policy including new terminology, new travel assistance principles, a new process for deciding how travel assistance needs will be met and expanded travel assistance options which are discussed below.
7. It is proposed that the term 'Travel Assistance' be adopted within the new policy instead of 'Transport', the reasons for this being that this approach aligns with the Council's Getting to School policy which sets out how eligible children are supported to get to their school or setting and acknowledges that the form of travel assistance may vary depending on the adult's individual circumstances. The term 'Transport' is not therefore considered reflective of the various travel assistance options.
8. The proposed policy is underpinned by the following principles:
  - (I) Promote the wellbeing of the service user and their carer/s
  - (II) Promote a healthy and sustainable approach to travel assistance

- (III) Promote the most independent approach to travel assistance
  - (IV) Utilise the most cost-effective travel options (including the use of public transport)
9. A new proposes for agreeing how travel assistance needs will be met is proposed. This will include referral to the Travel Brokerage Team to work with the adult, their carer or representative and professionals involved to identify the most appropriate and cost-effective form of travel assistance based on the adult's circumstances (the travel assistance process is set out in appendix 2 of the draft policy document).
10. The proposed policy also includes expanded travel assistance options that will be used to identify the most appropriate and cost-effective form of travel assistance based on the adult's circumstances (the options are set out in appendix 1 of the draft policy document):
- (I) A travel assistance payment to enable the adult to pay towards;
    - mileage
    - vehicle servicing
    - taxi travel (with an escort if required)
    - public transport travel costs for the adult and/or their carer where appropriate
  - (II) Independent Travel Training
  - (III) Transport provided by service providers
  - (IV) Council minibus transport (only for people to get to the following Council run day services; Formont, New Options, Community Link Edmonton, and Community Link Enfield)
  - (V) Taxi travel, personal assistants and escorts
  - (VI) Driving and the Blue Badge
  - (VII) Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment
  - (VIII) Dial-a-Ride
  - (IX) London Taxicard Scheme
  - (X) Assistive Technology
  - (XI) Public transport

### **Draft Travel Assistance Policy Consultation**

11. It was considered necessary for the Council to consult on the policy as there is an existing policy which was consulted on previously, and changes proposed are not insignificant.
12. A pre-consultation reference group, comprised of two Voluntary and Community Sector organisations, reviewed the proposed policy and draft consultation documents ahead of the consultation period.
13. A public consultation took place between 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024 to enable Adult Social Care service users, carers and residents as well as Voluntary and Community Sector organisations the opportunity to understand the proposals and provide feedback on the draft policy.
14. A copy of the draft policy, an easy read summary, two case studies and a 'You said, we did' document highlighting key changes to the policy made following

feedback from the pre-consultation reference group were published on the Enfield Council 'Have Your Say' website on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 together with the option to complete a standard online questionnaire or an easy read online questionnaire.

15. The Council sent two sets of letters to people with a current community care package, an easy read set and a standard set. The first set was sent to 789 people with learning disabilities and contained an easy read letter, an easy read draft policy summary, a carer questionnaire, an easy read questionnaire, and a freepost return envelope. The second set was sent to 2,239 people and contained a letter, a draft policy, a questionnaire, a carers questionnaire and a reply-paid envelope.
16. Respondents were asked to read the draft policy documents and complete the questionnaire. Respondents were also able to give written feedback on any points regarding the proposed policy through the questionnaire and a dedicated email address was set up for anyone who had questions or who needed further support to participate in the consultation.
17. Respondents were notified of five consultation engagement events via the consultation letter (details of which were also published online) which they could attend to share views, comments and suggestions on the proposals. The details of those events are listed below:

<b>Venue</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>
Park Avenue Resource Centre	20 November 2023	2pm to 3pm
Park Avenue Resource Centre	23 November 2023	5:30pm to 6:30pm
Park Avenue Resource Centre	27 November 2023	10:30am to 11:30am
Enfield Town Library	1 December 2023	2pm to 4pm
Edmonton Green Library	4 December 2023	10am to 12pm

18. There were four different means of responding to the consultation, these were:
  - I. The online questionnaires; in standard format, easy read format and a standard format carers version
  - II. Hard copies of the questionnaire; in standard format, easy read format and a standard format carers version
  - III. Face to face at one of the five consultation events
  - IV. Email to the dedicated email address

### **Summary of Consultation Responses**

19. In total, 450 questionnaire responses were received, 405 of which were standard format and 45 were easy read format. In addition, there were 16 interactions at our engagement events.
20. An analysis of the consultation responses has been undertaken and a detailed consultation report has been produced. This has been attached for

consideration (appendix 1). A summary of the key findings from the consultation questionnaires is set out below;

- 93% of respondents state that it is important there are a wide variety of travel assistance options available to service users.
- 73% of respondents agree that a Travel Broker should support a service user, their carer/representative and professionals involved to identify the most appropriate and cost-effective travel assistance option.
- 53% of carers who responded are confident that the Council's approach, as detailed in the Policy, will support their friend or family member to be more independent.
- 69% responded 'a great deal' or 'to some extent' when asked whether the draft policy clearly lays out the Council's approach to travel assistance for Adult Social Care service users
- 76% of respondents agree that we should implement the proposed policy

## **Options**

**Option 1** Do nothing and therefore retain the existing Transport Policy which was agreed by Cabinet in 2016.

**Option 2.** Agree the new Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy to replace the existing Adult Social Care Transport Policy from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

## **Preferred Option and Reasons For Preferred Option**

21. The preferred option for the Council is option 2; to agree the new consulted Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. This will enable Adult Social Care to have a clear and consistent approach to meeting its Care Act duties where an adult requires travel assistance to meet eligible needs.
22. The policy will apply to all new requests for travel assistance, and for those eligible adults in receipt of travel assistance, this will be reviewed as part of the adult's annual support plan review to ensure that the support in place is the most appropriate and cost-effective option.
23. The new process will utilise the expertise of the Travel Broker who will work with the adult, their carer/representative, and professionals to identify the most appropriate and cost-effective option from an updated and extended list of options. This now includes a Travel Assistance Payment which will enable eligible adults and their carers to organise travel assistance in line with the personalisation agenda, providing greater choice and control as to how eligible needs are met.

## **Relevance to Council Plans and Strategies**

24. The Enfield Council Plan 2023 to 2026, 'Investing in Enfield', sets out how we will deliver positive outcomes for our communities. Priority two is for strong, healthy and safe communities and includes the Council's aim to protect vulnerable adults from harm and deliver robust early help and social care services. The draft policy sets out the Council's commitment to support service users to live as independently as they can for as long as they can within their

local community, and this policy will support us to work with service users to promote their independence.

### **Financial Implications**

25. The new policy provides expanded options for meeting eligible needs without proposing additional Adult Social Care expenditure. One of these options is the Travel Assistance Payment, which offers a rate of 45p/mile and up to £350 for vehicle servicing costs, aligning with the Personal Travel Payment option which supports eligible children to get to their school or setting safely, promoting independence and wellbeing under the Getting to School policy.
26. For instance, consider a 15-mile round trip journey. The annual cost under the Travel Assistance Payment option, including vehicle servicing costs, is calculated at £2,109.73. In contrast, the average annual cost of the same journey, obtained from quotes from three taxi firms, is £8,342.40.
27. The difference in annual cost between the Travel Assistance Payment and taxi services for the specified journey is significant, amounting to £6,232.67. This substantial variance highlights the considerable cost savings associated with the proposed policy change, potentially resulting in significant budget efficiencies for Adult Social Care services.
28. Additional benchmarking against our own internal transport service will be conducted shortly. Cost reductions will depend on the needs and circumstances of clients, their willingness to use the travel assistance provision, and the uptake of the new scheme. Any efficiency will most likely be used to offset demographic pressures.

### **Legal Implications**

29. The Care Act 2014 provides the statutory framework for determining how local authorities provide social care in England. Local authorities have a duty under the Act to meet an adults eligible care and support needs. When considering whether an adult has eligible needs, local authorities must assess (1) whether the adults needs arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness, (2) as a result of the adult's needs the adult is unable to achieve two or more outcomes specified in the Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2015 and, (3) as a consequence of being unable to achieve these outcomes there is, or there is likely to be, a significant impact on the adult's wellbeing. Making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport is an eligibility outcome referred to in the regulations above. Thus, transport related assistance can be an eligible need that the council is required to meet.
30. With regard to the formulation of the travel assistance policy, whilst there is no statutory duty to consult, because a consultation was carried out for the previous transport policy, this has probably created a 'promise' in public law to consult again on any new policy. Thus, the council has appropriately carried out a consultation for the new travel assistance policy. Broadly, the general principles for conducting a consultation are that they must be fair, transparent, informative and should last for a proportionate amount of time and published in

a timely fashion. This report explains the lawful steps the council has taken to comply with those requirements.

31. In developing the new travel assistance policy, the council must also have regard to its public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010. A full Equality Act impact assessment has been carried out.

### **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

32. Appropriate travel assistance enables people with illness or disability to access the services and activities they need. Central to this policy are the principles which set out how the Council will promote healthy, sustainable, and independent approaches to travel, including options such as use of public transport. Adult Social Care will support eligible adults to make use of universal transport networks where possible through concessionary travel schemes, independent travel training and travel assistance payments where considered the most appropriate and cost-effective option.
33. Supporting people to develop the skills and confidence necessary to travel independently on public transport helps prepare them for an independent adult life and reduces dependence on other, less environmentally friendly travel options. However, a range of travel options will be necessary as people in need of support may require additional assistance and/or adapted vehicles based upon individual need the risks associated with support arrangements.
34. This policy may result in additional traffic where travel assistance payments are considered appropriate, and where this is utilised for mileage, however, this risk is mitigated by the overall policy aims to support independent travel via sustainable options. Furthermore, where vehicle travel is a necessity, options to achieve transport efficiency will be explored to reduce the number of trips/miles where this is possible.

### **Equalities Implications**

35. A full Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed and is available in Appendix 3. The proposed policy supports the facilitation of care and support arrangements for adults with Care Act eligible needs in line with the Council's statutory duties under the Care Act (2014). There are no anticipated negative impacts from an equality perspective identified for any of the protected characteristics.
36. The EqIA identified the need for mitigating action to be taken to facilitate service user engagement with the consultation process which informed the consultation approach and design.

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**Appendices**

1. Consultation Report
2. Draft Adult Social Care Travel Assistance Policy
3. Equality Impact Assessment

**Background Papers**

None