



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot
Neath Port Talbot Council

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL
Social Care, Health & Well-being Cabinet Board**

17th October 2019

Report of the Head of Adult Services – Ms A. Thomas

Matter for Decision

Wards Affected: All wards

ASSISTED TRANSPORT POLICY

Purpose of the Report:

To inform Members of the outcome of the public consultation on the Adult Services Assisted Transport Policy ('the Policy') [see Appendices 1 – 2] and seek approval to implement the Policy.

Executive Summary:

The proposed revised Assisted Transport Policy places greater emphasis on an individual, where practicable, making their own transport arrangements to and from a service which has been identified under an assessment of need, and clarifies that transport to/from a destination outside of an eligible assessed need is the responsibility of the individual. This contributes to promoting individuals' independence and sustainability of services.

Background:

On 7th March 2019 the Social Care, Health & Well-being Cabinet

Board approved a 90 day public consultation of the Policy (see Background Papers).

The Policy set out the Council's proposal that when undertaking an assessment or reassessment of individuals' need for transport following identification of an assessed social care need, emphasis will be placed on the person's strengths and capabilities, and focus on solutions that enable them to do things for themselves rather than become dependent. The assessment (or reassessment) will aim to establish whether it is safe and reasonable to expect a person, or their representative, to make transport arrangements. In doing so, all transport options will be examined and the outcomes will be identified and evidenced.

Set against a background of increasing demand for our services and economic pressures requiring budgetary savings, the provision of good quality and responsive adult social care support remains a priority of the Council. However, in doing so it is necessary to review what services are provided and how we deliver them.

The Council also has a responsibility to ensure that public funds are spent efficiently and effectively. In doing this, the way that services are identified to meet individual needs should be done in as transparent and equitable a way as possible.

A range of engagement and consultation activities took place between 8th April and 8th July 2019 to help inform the Policy, and consisted of:

- Overarching public consultation
- Stakeholder consultation, including linking with existing partner groups
- Formal written responses

The purpose of this was to:

- Ensure the consultation was available to as many residents and stakeholders as possible

- Ensure the consultation documents were available in appropriate formats
- Provide a mechanism for people to contribute their views on the Policy
- Find out whether people agreed or disagreed with the proposals and the reasons why
- Provide a mechanism for people to make comments and suggestions
- Enable people to suggest alternative proposals

In light of the consultation responses, it is proposed that amendments be made which:

- Sets out that we will assess what transport related resources and strengths a person has, and start with the presumption that these will be used where available. This does not prevent a carer simply refusing to assist by driving a service user to a service, and this may be reasonable on their part if, as a carer they need the respite from many hours per week looking after their relative.
- Assists us in working with carers to look at all possibilities and establish what is reasonable in each case
- Retains the ability to refer to Motability situations in which we feel that a vehicle is not being used primarily for the benefit of the person entitled, or to consider as a matter of financial abuse misuse of benefits to which the person in need is entitled

It should be noted that the essence of the original policy remains intact, i.e. it sets out the Council's proposal that each individual will receive an assessment of transport needs taking account of strengths, resources and abilities. The aim remains to increase independence where possible by promoting alternative transport methods.

Financial Impacts:

The Adult Services Assisted Transport Policy has been developed on the basis of the Directorate's budgetary savings for 2019-20.

It is not expected that implementation of this policy will likely incur any additional expenditure, nor will any additional income flows likely be received as a consequence.

Integrated Impact Assessment:

A first stage impact assessment has been undertaken to assist the Council in discharging its legislative duties (under the Equality Act 2010, the Welsh Language Standards (No.1) Regulations 2015, the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The first stage impact assessment has indicated that a more in-depth assessment was required.

An overview of the Integrated Impact Assessment has been included below in summary form only and it is essential that Members read the Integrated Impact Assessment, which is attached to the report at Appendix 3 for the purposes of the meeting.

It is concluded that overall the draft policy will have a neutral impact on protected characteristics. The policy sets out the Council's proposal that each individual will receive a transport needs assessment taking account of strengths, resources and abilities. The aim remains to increase independence where possible by promoting alternative transport methods. It will also ensure long term sustainability of services in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

The proposed revised Assisted Transport Policy places greater emphasis on an individual, where practicable, making their own transport arrangements to and from a service which has been identified under an assessment of need, and clarifies that transport to/from a destination outside of an eligible assessed need is the responsibility of the individual. This contributes to promoting individuals' independence, as well as long term sustainability of services in line with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

Valleys Communities Impacts:

No implications.

Workforce Impacts:

No implications.

Legal Impacts:

The draft policy has been developed in line with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014, Regulations and Codes of Practice that set out the Council's duty to assess an individual's need for care and support, as well as the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) Act 2015 which includes responsibility for ensuring sustainability of services.

Risk Management Impacts:

Failure to implement the policy will require equivalent financial savings to be made by other means.

Consultation:

On 7th March 2019 Members approved a 90 day public consultation in respect of the Policy. During this period, 8th April to 8th July 2019, a number of consultation and engagement activities took place. The outcome of the activity is detailed in Appendix 4, and has helped confirm the content of the final Officer draft of the Policy which is the subject of this report.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Members grant permission for Officers to implement the Adult Services Assisted Transport Policy attached as Appendix 1 and 2 to this report.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

To take into account the strengths and transport resources available to individuals and, where applicable, their carers when undertaking an assessment or reassessment of individuals' needs. This will ensure independent travel is promoted wherever possible, that a sustainable range of good quality adult social care services are available to meet the needs of the most vulnerable citizens of Neath Port Talbot, and contribute towards the budgetary savings identified in the Council's Forward Financial Plan.

Implementation of Decision:

The decision is proposed for implementation after the three day call in period.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Adult Services Assisted Transport Policy.

Appendix 2 – Easy Read Policy Document.

Appendix 3 – Integrated Impact Assessment.

Appendix 4 – Consultation Report.

List of Background Papers:

Revised Assisted Transport Policy permission to consult:

<http://modern.gov.neath-porttalbot.gov.uk/documents/s45473/Transport%20Policy%20Committee%20Report%207th%20March%202019%20002.pdf>

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