

CABINET MEMBER FOR ADULT SOCIAL CARE
23rd July, 2012

Minute No. 19

Janine Moorcroft, Service Manager, Adult Community Services, presented a report on proposals for a review of Transport Services to achieve £219,817.82 savings towards the target of £615,000.00 for Day Care and Transport Services.

The Council provided transport services for customers from their home to their chosen Day Centre. Transport was provided using a mixture of in-house vehicles and contracted private providers with customers contributing £1 per day towards the cost. The actual cost was £39.10 per week for in-house provision and considerably more for private hire taxis.

Consultation with customers would take place on:-

- Review of Transport Eligibility Criteria
It was anticipated that the adoption of the new criteria would reduce eligible customers by 75 as customers in receipt of Mobility Allowance were expected to use the funds or their mobility vehicle to travel to Day Care Services

It was proposed that the criteria would apply whether the Service was provided in-house or commissioned externally. Commissioned services that were currently arranged and provided transport would be reviewed and consulted in line with the principles set out in the report.

- Utilise In-House Transport Services
The unit cost of in-house transport was calculated at £39.10 per week per customer which demonstrated cost effectiveness against private providers. It was proposed that capacity created within NAS transport as a result of the new eligibility criteria be utilised by eligible customers using more expensive private providers. An initial review indicated that 47 customers would transfer from private providers to NAS transport.
- Review current arrangements with other travel providers
- Review arrangements with independent sector day service
At present the 1 external day care provider contracted 3 NAS transport service buses to take customers from their home to the Day Service utilising funding provided by the local authority as part of the contract. It was proposed that arrangement cease and the 3 buses used by the Day Service be used to transport customers accessing in-house services using more expensive private providers.

It was proposed that a 12 weeks consultation exercise be undertaken with all stakeholders commencing on 23rd July to 15th October, 2012.

Discussion ensued on the report with the following comments made:-

- Had parents of young Service users been asked if they were prepared to pay more?

- The new criteria meant that only those in a wheelchair would be transported – not taking into consideration whether the Service user could read, write, cross a road safely
- Traffic congestion if more cars were used to deliver clients
- Those in receipt of low rate Mobility Allowance would still be provided with transport
- Families had to bear some of the responsibility of getting them to the Day Centre
- A Social Care Assessment did not take into account Mobility Allowance
- No. 5 of the Eligibility Criteria be amended to read “the customer is in receipt of the higher rate mobility component of Disability Living Allowance”
- That the note on No. 6 of the Eligibility Criteria be amended to read “it will not be acceptable for family members or carers to claim priority over the use of such vehicles – to be addressed on an individual basis”
- No. 7 of the Eligibility Criteria be amended to read “the customer has a family member or friend who is able to provide regular transport”
- “If able to access public transport should do so” be added to the consultation
- The £1 charge for transport was reviewed annually but had remained the same for a number of years – include in the consultation
- A Corporate review of transport was also taking place

Resolved:- (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the 12 weeks consultation programme with customers, as set out in the report and amended at the meeting, be approved.

(3) That a further report be submitted outlining the longer term strategy for Transport Services.

(4) That upon completion of the consultation, a report be submitted to Cabinet for consideration.