

Public Consultation on Proposed Adult Transport Policy

Date: 20/09/2017

What is this Consultation about?

Warwickshire County Council is consulting on a proposed new Transport Policy for Adult Social Care customers. The Policy will replace the existing informal policies to provide transport routinely for customers who have been assessed as having certain social care needs which are eligible for funding from the Warwickshire 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.

The consultation period runs from 20th September to 15th November 2017. All consultation responses will be analysed and a report will be published and presented to Warwickshire County Council for a final decision in January 2018.

The proposed policy is planned for implementation on 1st April 2018.

Why is Warwickshire County Council consulting?

We are seeking views on the proposed policy from current transport customers and their carers; day services customers and their carers; children and young people in transition to adult services and their carers; children leaving care and transitions teams; Warwickshire County Council staff and the general public. The consultation will be used to inform the final version of the policy.

Why is Warwickshire County Council introducing an Adult Transport Policy?

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.

Why have a transport policy?

The purpose of having a policy is to provide a fair and consistent approach to the provision of transport support for customers, which also fits with Warwickshire County Council's strategic aims and outcomes for Adult Social Care. The 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.

Assisted Transport is transport arranged or provided by Warwickshire County Council using taxis, minibuses and volunteer drivers, for people whose care and support needs are met by the Council. It helps people who need support to access day opportunities, respite care, leisure services, employment and training opportunities and other activities in the community.

The policy applies to all adults aged 18 years and above who 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's Services
- Physical Disability and Sensory Services
- Mental Health Services
- Learning Disability Services

This policy does not cover travel assistance for customers under the age of 25 who need assistance to travel to and from education establishments, for which more details can be found in the Home to School / College Transport Policy.

What are the key proposals in the policy?

The key aim of the proposed policy is 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 and private or motability vehicle, and by encouraging walking, or mobilising with the use of aids, either independently or with support. 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.

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 1st 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 require 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.

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 mobility element of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment is being 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 a day opportunity because there is no placement available or their culturally specific need 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.

Proposed implementation of the policy

If approved, the proposed implementation date for new customers will be 1st April 2018.

For existing customers receiving Warwickshire County Council travel assistance the Policy apply at the time of their next reassessment or review after 1st April 2018.

How can I take part in the consultation?

You can take part in the public consultation in the following ways:

- **Online** – by completing the consultation survey at: <https://askwarks.wordpress.com/> and can be accessed by PC, laptop, tablet or smartphone.
- **In person** – by attending the public consultation events listed below
- **In writing** – by emailing AdultTransportConsultation@warwickshire.gov.uk or by completing and returning the survey (or the user friendly survey) at the end of this document to:

Musa Bhayat
Integrated Disability Commissioner
Strategic Commissioning
People Group
Warwickshire County Council
Saltisford Business Park
Building 2, Ansell Way
Warwick
CV34 4UL

- **Paper based survey** - You can pick up a paper based survey at your local day centre.

Information you provide in any additional correspondence to our surveys and consultations, including personal information, may be disclosed in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998. If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, including your contact details, please tell us why, but be aware that, under the Freedom of Information Act, we cannot always guarantee confidentiality.

Please visit www.warwickshire.gov.uk/ask to access the following documents which provide further clarification on the proposals:

- Draft Policy

Public Consultation Events

Public consultation events will take place at the following venues:

Individual Support Solutions (ISS), Powell House, Church Street, Nuneaton CV11 4DS (24th October, 1pm – 3pm)

Avon Support, Western Rd, Stratford-upon-Avon CV37 0AH, (12th October 1.30pm – 3.30pm)

Caldwell Grange, Donnithorne Avenue, Nuneaton CV11 4QJ (3rd October 1.30pm – 3.30pm)

Individual Support Solutions (ISS) Rugby 37 Albert St, Rugby CV21 2SG, (17th October 10am – 12noon)

Satkaar Asian Elders Day Care Services, 17a-17b Queensway Trading Estate, Queensway, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, CV31 3LZ, (6th October 11am – 1pm)

The closing date for responses to the consultation is 15th November 2017.

Following the consultation all results will be analysed and included in a report to Warwickshire County Council's Cabinet to assist them in making a decision.