

Stoke-On-Trent City Council

Adult Social Care Assisted Transport Policy

People: Adults and Neighbourhoods
Adult Social Care

Version: 1

Approved: 25th April 2013

What is Assisted Transport?

Assisted Transport is a transport service provided to people who cannot use public transport independently due to disability or health problems and have no reasonable access to private transport.

It is provided through taxis, minibuses and volunteer drivers.

It helps people to access; day opportunities, respite care, leisure services, employment and training opportunities.

Adult Social Care may provide transport to people over 18 years old who are assessed as eligible for adult social care services.

Why have a policy?

The policy is in relation to Assisted Transport Services provided to people to access adult social care services for which they have an eligible need.

The reason for the policy is to make sure that:

- Adult Social Care Assisted Transport services are provided in a way that reflects local and national policy
- Assisted Transport is provided in an equal and fair way
- Assisted Transport is provided in a way that promotes independence
- Transport provided is the most cost effective way to meet a person's need
- It is clear who is eligible to receive Assisted Transport from Adult Social Care

Legal responsibilities

The following legislation, policies and guidance have been taken into account:

- *Prioritising need in the context of Putting People First: A whole system approach to eligibility for social care: Guidance on Eligibility Criteria for Adult Social Care, England 2010*
- *National Health Service and Community Care Act (1990)*
- *Section 29 of National Assistance Act (1948)*
- *Section 2 (1) of the Chronically Sick and Disabled Person's Act (1970)*
- *Carers Equal Opportunities Act (2004).*

- *Fairer charging policies for home care and other non-residential social services: guidance for Councils with Social Services Responsibilities (September 2003) Updated October 2012.*

We have also looked at the following local policies and strategies;

- *Achieving Personalised Services (2009)*
- *Mandate for Change (2011)*
- *Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Adult Social Care, Fair Access to Care Policy*
- *Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Adult Social Care, Carers Strategy*

These mean that when people ask for help with transport from Adult Social Care:

Adult Social Care has a **duty to assess** what services people need and if these services need to be provided by Adult Social Care.

If a person has an eligible need for an adult social care service then we have a duty to assess whether they have a need for transport. If the assessment shows that a person is unable to get to that service unless transport is provided then we have a duty to provide it or arrange it.

Key principles

Adult Social Care has 12 key expectations about how transport should be delivered. For more information about each of these principles please see appendix one.

1. Assisted transport should be provided based on a person's assessed need for transport.
2. Any transport provided should help people to be as independent as possible.
3. Where we provide or arrange transport it will form part of the person's overall personal budget (service package agreement).
4. People will be expected to access services that meet their needs close to where they live.
5. If people can travel independently for example by;
 - Walking
 - Using public transport
 - With help from other people
 - Using assisted mobility

Then they will be expected to do so

Assisted mobility is where a person is supported with an aide, adaptation, mobility vehicle.

Part of the assessment will be to check it is reasonable to expect them to do so.

6. Where appropriate the transport solution should include a Reablement/ enablement element to support the individual to greater independence.

Reablement/ Enablement – this means helping someone learn new skills or gain confidence to do things on their own or with less support.

7. If the person has access to a mobility vehicle then it is expected that they use it to get to services.

Part of the assessment will be to check it is reasonable to expect them to do so.

8. Transport provided should be the most cost effective or be the best value way of meeting the person's needs.
9. If people are eligible for free travel (i.e. free bus pass) they will be expected to use this to help them attend services.

Part of the assessment will be to check it is reasonable to expect them to do so.

10. When assessing a person's need for transport we will take into consideration any mobility aides or mobility related support people get to see if this can be used to help meet a person's transport needs.
11. When assessing a person's need for transport, the needs of their carer(s) must also be taken into account. The solution should not put unreasonable expectations on the carer.
12. Where transport is paid for by Adult Social Care a charge may be applied.

A person will need to have a Fairer Charging Assessment. This means we will look at each person's finances to see if they can afford to pay towards the cost of their service. No one will pay more than they can afford.

The Process

There are five stages to the transport process

Stage one – Assessing eligible needs and support planning

If a person contacts us for help and shows a presenting need, we will first assess whether or not they qualify for a Community Care Assessment. S/he will be eligible if they are;

- Living in Stoke-On-Trent permanently
- Aged over 18
- In a situation that shows they need our help

If a person doesn't qualify for an assessment they will then be signposted to other services that could help.

If a person does qualify for an assessment this does not necessarily mean that they will definitely receive support from us.

A Community Care Assessment will be completed to identify any eligible needs.

Using the Fair Access to Care Services policy, the person's needs will be assessed as low, moderate, substantial or critical.

We will provide services to people who have needs assessed as being above the threshold, which is currently set at critical or substantial only.

If a person has low or moderate needs the assessor will provide them with information and advice.

If a person is assessed as eligible for adult social care services the assessor will develop a support plan with the person and begin to identify services that would meet their eligible needs.

Stage two – Determining the need for transport

An assessor will look at the following elements when determining a person's need for transport. Where required referrals will be made to other relevant professionals to form part of this assessment (for example, health colleagues, occupational Health).

Access to transport

- Does the person have access to a mobility vehicle that they drive or a relative drives on their behalf?
- Is there a reason why this can't be used to meet their transport needs?

Ability to travel

- What is the person's disability/health need/ mental health needs?
- Is the person mobile?
- Is the person susceptible to falls?
- Could the person travel independently, or with support, or following a rehabilitation/ reablement/ enablement service?
- Has an OT assessment or assessment by a relevant professional been conducted?
- Has the positive risk enablement policy been referred to?
- Is there a risk to others?
- Are there any barriers to independent travel?

The travel required to get to a particular service

- How far is the service?
- Is it the closest service to the individual that meets the person's needs?
- Is there parking near to the service?

- How long would it take to get there (on foot, bus, car)?
- Is it easily accessible by public transport? Does it contain numerous bus changes? Are the buses regular? Is there a bus stop near the service?

Available support

- Is the person eligible for a free bus pass? Could this be used? Can they apply for a companionship pass?
- Are there restrictions associated with the concessionary pass that would restrict its use to get to services?
- Do they have a mobility related support that could be used to assist with their transport need?
- Could they be supported to apply for a benefit for which they may be eligible?
- Do they have a carer/ relative/ support person who could assist with their transport needs (have the carers needs also been taken into account?).

Stage three – Deciding the best way of meeting a person's need for transport

The assessor will apply the key principles to the information they have collected, throughout the entire assessment to decide the best solution that meets the persons need for transport.

The transport solution may be provided in part or in full by Adult Social Care.

It may be determined that the person is required to arrange or provide his or her own transport. Where this is the case it will be clearly identified in the support plan and will be reviewed at the time the services are reviewed.

Transport solutions could include:

- Using public transport either independently or with support*
- Using a mobility vehicle or a private car either independently or with support*
- Attending a short term intensive Reablement/ enablement service to learn travel training and orientation skills (or to arrange a travel solution)
- Local authority provided mini-bus service
- Taxi service/ volunteer drivers
- Commissioned provider solution (i.e. contracted day service provider)
- Direct Payments

**Support* – this could include support from a relative or friend or a Personal Assistant/support worker. It may involve the use of a companion bus pass.

Where appropriate the transport solution agreed should include a short term reablement/ enablement service to support the individual to gain greater independence. In order to assess the appropriateness of this service referrals to relevant professionals should be included. In addition the positive risk enablement policy should be referred to and implemented as required.

Stage four - Arranging the transport services and agreeing the cost

Arranging the services

The assessor will arrange any transport services that the local authority will fund. For the local authority minibus service, volunteer drivers, taxis arranged by the local authority, and transport provided by a contracted provider, the assessor should make a referral to the Care Brokerage Team to find out which of these services would be the most cost effective way of meeting the person's needs as agreed in the support plan.

Where a person is assessed as able to provide part or all of their transport service, the assessor will support people to arrange the transport service if required.

Agreeing the cost

For a service that is part or fully funded by the local authority it will become part of a person's overall personal budget.

A person will be required to have a Fairer Charging Assessment. This means we will look at a person's finances to see if they can afford to make a contribution to the cost of their service.

No one will be expected to pay more than they can afford towards the cost of their service.

If a person has already had a Fairer Charging Assessment they will not need to have another unless it is part of an annual review or their circumstances change.

If a person has already had a Fairer Charging Assessment and cannot afford to contribute to their services or are already contributing the maximum they can afford they will not need to contribute to their transport service (unless their circumstances change).

Stage five – Review the service

The assessor will meet with the person approximately 6 weeks after they've had the service to see how the services are working.

Following this the service will be reviewed at least every 12 months.

Where it is identified that assisted transport is no longer the best way to meet a person's needs for transport then they will be supported over a limited period of time while the new transport solution is arranged.

Transition – Transport to education

The eligibility for transport for education can be found on the internet.

stoke.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/education/schools-and-nurseries/travelling-to-school/

Once responsibility to provide transport passes to adult social care then the person will be assessed in accordance with this policy.

What can people do if they are unhappy?

If a person is unhappy with any decision made to withdraw, refuse or reduce a transport service, a service user has a right to appeal the decision.

Refusal of services

If a person has been assessed as able to make their own transport arrangements but declines to do so and as a result is unable to attend the service for which they have an assessed eligible need **this will be viewed as the person declining services.**

Where a person has declined a service which they are eligible for, the assessor will evaluate whether the person has the capacity to make this decision.

If the decision is being made on behalf of another person, the assessor will check whether they feel the decision is being made in the best interest of the person who is eligible for the services.

Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults

Adult Social Care is committed to making appropriate Adult protection referrals where the abuse of a vulnerable adult is recognised. For more information on Safeguarding of Vulnerable Adults please refer to the relevant web pages at www.stoke.gov.uk

Purchasing Adult Social Care Services

Currently Local Authority provided transport is not available to buy if you have not been assessed as having a need for transport.

Direct payments cannot be used to purchase council provided services.

Appendix 1 – Further Guidance on Key Principles

Further Guidance	
1.	<p>Assisted Transport should be provided to people based on a person's assessed need for transport.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Social Care does not have a duty to meet a person's general need for transport. • A transport solution will be provided to a person if they are assessed as having no other means of accessing a service without transport being provided by the local authority. • If a person is living in a residential or nursing setting that is commissioned and funded by Adult Social Care, transport services will be provided in accordance with the contract in place with that provider. • There is no charge for people who have an assessed need for transport to travel to and from respite services. Access to any services attended during a respite service will be assessed on an individual basis in accordance with this policy. Where there is a need for transport this will either be arranged/ provided by the contracted provider or the local authority. • If a person needs support to access services which are paid for by other agencies then Adult Social Care will signpost to these agencies for help. • Where transport to and from a service is included as part of a contracted providers service the local authority will not provide the transport solution unless the transport service offered does not meet the person's needs. • Adult Social Care funded transport may be provided for a person when a person's eligible needs for a service have been met by a third party organisation (for example a community service or non-contracted organisation). • The policy does not apply for transport within a service (for example if someone travels whilst at their day service they would not be charged for repeat journeys – this would be classed as part of the day service and not as a separate transport service).
<p>Transport solutions should help people to be as independent as possible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Social Care should promote and support people to maintain their independence as far as possible. • People will make their own transport arrangements where it is possible for them to do so. • If a transport solution is required, the solution that maximises a person's independence should be chosen. • Where a transport solution promotes a person's independence but is not the most cost effective solution this will be considered on an individual basis. 	
2.	<p>Where transport is provided to someone it will form part of their overall personal budget (service package agreement).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport is a service in its own right and should be reviewed to ensure that it is

<p>the most suitable service to meet a person's need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport will form part of the annual review.
<p>3. People will be expected to access the services that meet their needs that are close to where they live</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service should be the closest service that best meets the person's eligible needs. • If a person chooses to attend a service that meets their needs that is not in a reasonable distance to where they live it will be expected that the person meets any additional cost of transport. • If there is no service within a person's local community that meets their eligible needs, transport will be considered. • If a person is already attending a service that is not close to where they live, the impact of a person changing to a different service must be assessed.
<p>4. If people can travel independently: either using public transport, walking, or using assisted mobility* or with help from others it is expected that they do so (provided the circumstances are reasonable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport will not normally be provided for people to get to local community services, (for example day service, work placements) if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A person can walk or use assisted mobility either independently or with help from others and it is reasonable for them to do so - A person can use public transport or voluntary transport schemes whether independently or with support and it is reasonable for them to do so • Assisted transport will be considered if an individual has no access to transport and cannot walk, use assisted mobility or use public transport either on their own or with support from others. • People's mental health and wellbeing should also been taken into account when considering the person's ability to undertake independent travel. • Assessors should refer to the positive risk enablement policy and implement as appropriate when considering the person's ability to undertake independent travel. • Assessors should make referrals to the relevant professional when considering the person's ability to undertake independent travel (for example, Occupational Therapy). • If a person could access transport with support but has no support available this will considered as part of the assessment. • The assessor should consider if a person has or would be eligible for a companion bus pass.
<p>5. Where appropriate the transport solution agreed should include a reablement/enablement element to support the individual to greater independence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of the assessment of whether someone can travel independently should

<p>include whether a person could benefit from a reablement/ enablement service. This may include whether a person could learn travel skills (road safety) so that they can travel independently or would benefit from confidence building.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to assess the appropriateness of this service referrals to relevant professionals should be included. In addition the positive risk enablement policy should be referred to and implemented as required. • Where a transport solution promotes a person's independence but is not the most cost effective solution this will be considered on an individual basis.
<p>6. If people have access to a mobility vehicle it is expected that this is used to support people to access their services (provided the circumstances are reasonable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of the assessment will be to determine whether it is reasonable to expect the service user to use their vehicle to travel to the location of the service or activity. • If a person has access to a mobility vehicle which they do not normally drive themselves, the assessment will determine whether it is reasonable to expect the carer to drive the service user to the location of the service or activity. • If a person has access to a private vehicle this will also be considered as part of the assessment. • If a person uses their own or a relative's/ Carer's vehicle petrol costs will not be considered.
<p>7. Transport provided should be the most cost effective or best value way of meeting the person's needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All travel solutions should be considered to ensure that the most cost effective solution is provided; this may include the provision of shared transport where possible and feasible. • Use of taxis and volunteer drivers should be the last option explored as a transport solution and where it is provided for people this should be regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains the most effective solution to meet a person's needs. • Where a transport solution promotes a person's independence but is not the most cost effective solution this will be considered on an individual basis.
<p>8. If people are eligible for free travel they will be expected to use this to assist them to attend services (where it is reasonable to expect)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If a person is eligible for free travel, part of the assessment will determine whether or not it is appropriate for them to use this to access their service. • If a person is eligible for a free bus pass, support will be provided to help an individual apply if needed. • The constraints/ restrictions of free travel passes must be taken into account during the assessment (i.e. cannot use prior to 9.30am).
<p>9. When assessing a person's need for transport we will take into consideration any mobility aides or mobility related support people get to see if this can be</p>

used to help meet a person's transport needs.

- Receipt of the Mobility related benefits/ support does not mean people will not be eligible to receive assisted transport from the local authority.
- Additional support received from benefits specifically for transport or mobility needs will be considered as part of the assessment.
- Assistance with transport will be considered if the assessor feels it would not be reasonable to expect the individual to provide their own transport due to the nature of the person's needs, location of the service or the level of carer support needed.

10. When assessing a person's need for transport, the needs of their carer(s) must be taken into account, and the solution agreed should not put unreasonable expectations on to the carer.

- Carers' needs should also be taken into account throughout the assessment and a carer should be offered an individual Carer's Assessment in order for the assessor to fully take their needs into account.
- Carers have the right to request an individual carers assessment and should be informed of their right to do so.
- If a carer is an important part of a person's transport solution a contingency arrangement should be made for emergencies. if the carer becomes unwell or unable to care or transport the person for a particular reason.

11. Where transport is provided a charge may be applied, which will be included in the overall charge associated with a person's personal budget.

- A person will be required to have a Fairer Charging assessment. This means we will look at each person's finances to see if they can afford to make a contribution to the cost of their service.
- No one will be expected to pay more than they can afford towards the cost of their service.
- If a person has already had a Fairer Charging Assessment they will not need to have another unless it is part of an annual review or their circumstances change.
- If a person has already had a Fairer Charging Assessment and cannot afford to contribute to their services or are already contributing the maximum they can afford they will not need to contribute to their transport service (unless their circumstances change).