

Integrated Adult Social Care and Health

Adult Social Care Transport Policy

POLICY INFORMATION SHEET	
Name of Document	Adult Social Care Transport Policy
Author	Phil Purvis, Senior Manager, Policy Co-ordination (Adults and Health)
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Approved By	Charlotte Walton
Approver's Signature	
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Related document(s)	Adult Social Care – Non-Residential Charging Policy Adult Social Care – Direct Payments Policy
Superseded document(s)	This Transport Policy supersedes the previous Transport Policy
Responsible officer(s)	Paula Snow, Senior Manager
Any other relevant information	

ADULT SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT POLICY

CONTENTS

Main Headings and key sections

- 1. INTRODUCTION**
 - 1.1 Purpose of the Policy
 - 1.2 Principles for the Policy
 - 1.4 Aim of the Policy

- 2. SCOPE OF THE POLICY**
 - 2.1 Scope and Application

- 3. ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND ELIGIBILITY**
 - 3.1 The Care Act Duty
 - 3.2 Assessing Need
 - 3.3 Eligibility for Care and Support
 - 3.5 Care Planning
 - 3.6 Assessment and Eligibility

- 4. CHARGING FOR SERVICES**
 - 4.1 The power to Charge
 - 4.2 Charging Policy for Non- residential Care and Support

- 5. TRANSPORT OPTIONS**
 - 5.1 Information Links

- 6. REVIEW AND RE-ASSESSMENT**
 - 6.2 Arrangements for Review

- 7. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS**
 - 7.1 Process for dis-satisfaction over Assessment or Service

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to make sure that the Council has a fair and consistent approach to the provision of transport for people whose care and support needs are met by the Council. It helps people who have been assessed as having eligible needs under the Care Act 2014 and require support in meeting their identified needs through the provision of transport. Examples may include attending day opportunities, leisure services and other activities in the community which are part of an individual's care and support plan.

1.2 The aim of the Policy is to reflect national and local priorities and is based on the following principles:

- ❖ Promoting independence and enablement
- ❖ Maximising choice and control
- ❖ Respecting personal dignity
- ❖ Improving the quality of life
- ❖ Supporting health and wellbeing
- ❖ Accessing local and universal services
- ❖ Ensuring safety
- ❖ Promoting person-centred and personalised outcomes

1.3 It is important to make a vital distinction between transport itself being an eligible need as assessed under the Care Act (rarely the case) and transport being a provision to meet an assessed need (commonly the case), since the Council's duty differs in these respects.

1.4 This Policy aims to promote independent travel through the signposting to and use of commonly available forms of transport such as public and community transport. During the needs assessment all relevant transport options will be explored and considered and any offer by the Council to provide transport will be made only where there are no suitable alternative transport options available or in those rare instances where transport itself is identified as an eligible need as assessed under the Care Act (as further detailed in section 3.9). Where transport does need to be provided by the Council, whether through the Council providing transport directly or through, arranging a bespoke service, it will be appropriate to individual needs and circumstances, whilst providing value for money.

2. THE SCOPE OF THIS POLICY

2.1 This policy applies to all adults aged 18 years and over who have been assessed as having eligible needs and offered care and support provided directly, or otherwise arranged, by Cheshire West and Chester Council and/or are in receipt of a direct payment.

2.2 The Transport Policy should also be considered in conjunction with the Council's following policies:

- ❖ Care and Support - Meeting Your Needs Policy
- ❖ Direct Payments Policy
- ❖ Charging Policy - Non-residential Care

3. ASSESSMENT OF NEED AND ELIGIBILITY FOR SUPPORT

3.1 From 1 April 2015, the Care Act placed a duty on local authorities to help improve the independence and wellbeing of vulnerable adults by providing or arranging services that prevent or delay the need for ongoing care and support.

3.2 The Care Act also places a duty on local authorities to carry out an assessment in order to determine if an adult is eligible for care and support. This is called a needs led assessment. The aim of the assessment is to get a full picture of the person and their circumstances.

3.3 Eligibility for care and support is judged against a national set of criteria, set in legislation, which state the minimum threshold for eligibility. Where the person has eligible care needs and wants the local authority to help to meet them, the authority will discuss these with the person or their nominated advocate or representative and agree a care and support plan.

3.4 Only where those needs meet the minimum national eligibility criteria for adult social care will the local authority be required to provide care or support to meet the statutory duty. Otherwise the Council will suggest or signpost to other available options.

3.5 The care and support planning process is there to help decide the best way to meet the person's identified needs. It considers the nature of the needs, the outcomes the person hopes to achieve, what they can do for themselves or with such support as they already have and what additional support may be available in their local community. Any carer or other person who the individual asks to be involved can be part of that discussion.

3.6 Transport itself is rarely assessed and identified within care and support plans as an eligible need, rather it is more commonly a provision to meet an eligible need. In these common instances the Council may (but is not required to) use its discretion over the 'provision' of transport to meet eligible needs. Assisted transport will generally only be provided to people where, following an assessment, it is determined that this is necessary because the person has no other travel option available (as outlined in section 3.8 of this policy) and such 'provision' will enable the individual to achieve against the outcomes set out in the care and support plan.

3.7 The Care and Support Statutory Guidance states at paragraph 6.106:

“Local Authorities should consider the adult’s ability to get around in the community safely and consider their ability to use such facilities as public transport, shops, or recreational facilities when considering the impact on their wellbeing”.

3.8 The decision to provide assistance with transport will follow a full assessment of needs, including mobility and the risks associated with accessible support and services in the community as part of the care and support planning process. The need for transport (including the reasons why commonly available public or community transport cannot meet needs), and purpose of transport should be clearly stated in an individual’s care and support plan.

3.9 In order to request an assessment please contact the Cheshire West and Chester Community Access Team on 0300 123 7034 or on line at accesswest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk.

4. CHARGING FOR SERVICES

4.1 Section 14 of the Care Act empowers local authorities to charge adults for care and support where they have needs identified under sections 18 to 20 of the Act. Those sections contain the statutory duty and powers of the local authority to meet needs for care and support for both vulnerable adults and carers.

4.2 The Council has agreed a comprehensive policy for charging all service users who receive care and support services. This includes transport. The Council’s Charging Policy describes the principles and processes used by the Council when assessing a service user’s contribution to the cost of all non-residential care and support services.

4.3 For a full copy of the council’s Charging Policy for Non-residential Care, please refer to the Council’s website. In case of difficulty, please contact the Council’s Advice and Contact Team on 0300 123 7034 or on line at accesswest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk.

4.4 Where the Council signposts service users to community transport or a public bus when other personal forms of transport are not available, individuals will be charged a fare for using this form of transport which they are required to pay directly to the service provider. These charges are not subject to financial assessment and the full cost levied by the transport provider is to be paid by the individual.

4.5 If the only alternative is for the Council to directly provide transport to meet an eligible need, or in the rare instances that transport itself is the need which the Council has a duty to meet, then any charges that it reasonably levies for doing so would be subject to financial assessment in accordance with the Care Act.

5. TRANSPORT OPTIONS

5.1 Information on transport services commonly available in the community can be found by using the following links:

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/public-transport/community-transport.aspx>

<https://www.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/residents/transport-and-roads/public-transport/public-transport.aspx>

5.2 The Council, in exercising its discretion to provide transport to meet an individual's assessed care and support needs will look at a range of factors such as:

- ❖ whether the person can reach the destination safely, with or without mobility aids, either independently or with help from family, friends, volunteers or support workers
- ❖ whether public, community or voluntary transport can be used either independently or with support to get to and from community activities
- ❖ whether the service user chooses to attend a service which is not the nearest available resource to meet their assessed needs

5.3 Where transport is assessed as an eligible need in its own right, the reason should be stated clearly within the care and support plan, along with the support outcomes which are to be achieved and the cost of the transport. This information will be recorded on the service users electronic care record.

6. REVIEW AND RE-ASSESSMENT

6.1 Local authorities have a duty to review the care and support plan to make sure that the individual's needs are continuing to be met. If there are changes in circumstances the local authority must carry out another assessment of need. The person or someone acting on their behalf, can also request a review of the care and support plan.

6.2 Where transport is provided (either through the Council's obligation to directly meet an assessed transport need or provided at its discretion as a provision to meet other eligible care and support needs) the service will be subject to review as part of the individual's care and support plan. This will focus on the user's assets, strengths and changes in circumstances and identify any potential to develop road safety and orientation skills so that they can travel independently and safely. An assessment of risk should be undertaken of the user's ability to undertake independent travel and an appropriate transport package agreed.

7. APPEALS AND COMPLAINTS

7.1 Any service user or carer who is not satisfied with the outcome of an assessment, review or re-assessment should in the first instance contact the allocated social care worker to discuss the reasons for their dis-satisfaction. It is good practice for the social care worker to share a copy of the individual's

assessment and support plan, which can then be discussed with the service user, if they are unhappy with the contents.

7.2 If the dispute is not resolved, the matter would escalate to the practice, team and senior manager (usually in that order).

7.3 If the complaint is about the quality, reliability and standards of a service provider the matter should be raised firstly with the Council's Transport Commissioning Team.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

Adult Social Care Community Access Team

Telephone: 0300 123 7034; email:

accesswest@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk

Social Care Transport Commissioning Team:

Telephone: 01244 973039; email:

asctransport@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk