

Tameside MBC Adult Social Care

**Transport and Travel Policy (Draft#1)
2024 -2027**



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Council has a fair and consistent approach to the provision of transport to people whose care and support needs are met by the Council. People with assessed needs and their carers have the right to have their views taken into account by the Council when it is assessing and considering provision of travel assistance or services. [The Care Act 2014](#), together with the [Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#) provides the Legal Framework for making eligibility decisions. Transport for those eligible can be directly commissioned or individually purchased from a direct payment in the most cost effective way
- 1.2 To meet the changing needs in the borough the Council is developing a modern, flexible, financially sustainable asset based approach that will support people and their carers to remain independent and enabled to lead fulfilling lives. Travel is a necessary aspect of everyday life and central to this policy is the aim that people live and travel as independently and safely as possible.
- 1.3 We want to encourage use of the most sustainable and suitable travel and transport options, such as travel training to enable people to use public transport, walking or mobilising with the use of aids, either independently or with support, utilising concessionary travel and vehicle sharing with others.
- 1.4 The Policy aligns with the following Adult Social Care priorities:
 - Review and update all information so that it is accessible and up to date
 - Ensure services are available that help people stay independent and confident in their community
 - Provide access to a range of high-quality services to meet needs when people draw on care and support, offering choice and control.
 - Improve how we work with other services so that people experience better joined-up care and support.
 - Make sure the people providing care and support are well trained and understand people's needs.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 The Adult Social Care Transport and Travel Policy applies to the following people who access support provided directly or commissioned by the Council:
 - People who have an assessed eligible social care need for transport and travel support
 - People aged over 18 and not in full time education; and
 - People who are an ordinary resident in Tameside
- 2.2 The Policy will apply to transport and travel options provided or arranged by the Council to ensure:
 - Support with transport and travel is provided in a fair and equitable way, for people with assessed eligible needs.

- Eligibility for transport and travel support for people over 18 years of age, who are not in full time education is identified through the social care needs assessment process.
 - The independence and inclusion of the person is promoted by encouraging and supporting a range of transport and travel options including independent travel and the use of concessionary travel passes.
 - Efficient use of resources.
 - The reduction in air pollution and encourage the use of sustainable resources by promoting the use of public transport and shared travel where possible.
- 2.3 The over-riding principle of this policy is that the decision to provide transport and travel support is based on needs, risks and person-centred outcomes and on promoting independence.
- 2.4 It is expected that people who can travel to a community activity, either independently or with assistance from family, friends or support providers will do so.
- 2.5 The Council will only provide assisted transport to help meet an assessed need following a Care Act assessment. Support provided will be appropriate for that need and arranged in the most cost-effective way.
- 2.6 People who qualify for concessionary travel (free bus travel) will be expected to apply for and use this when appropriate to meet their needs. The constraints of concessionary travel (i.e. no free travel before 9.30am) will be taken into account during the assessment.

3. ELIGIBILITY

- 3.1 The needs assessment process will consider what support, if any, is needed in relation to transport and travel in order to meet an assessed eligible social care need. In order to identify this, the Council will ask the questions in the checklist below, to assist with the decision-making process:

How far is the support or service from where you live?

People will be required to access support and community services based nearest to where they live. To promote local inclusion, it is not generally appropriate to arrange a community service outside of a person's local area, unless it is not possible to meet their assessed need in that area. The perception of a local area can be different for people who live in rural areas compared to those who live in towns and cities. But broadly, people will be expected to access support and community services based nearest to where they live, as long as they are appropriate to meet the assessed, eligible needs.

Can you share travel arrangements with another person accessing that service?

Promotion of transport sharing is promoted to support sustainable travel.

Can you walk or cycle, use a wheelchair, walking aid to the service?

Being able to walk might mean by walking alone or with the assistance from someone else, for example, using a buddying scheme or assistance from family, friends or a carer.

Do you arrange your own travel from an independent source and meet the cost of travel from any mobility allowance awarded to you?

A person who receives a benefit for example, the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) or Personal Independence Payment (PIP), to facilitate their mobility needs, may consider using this to access support and services.

The actual amount will depend on the person's needs and requirements. During the needs assessment, consideration will be given to other critical demands placed on the allowance, and if it is reasonable for either a contribution or full costs of any agreed transport support to be funded by the benefit or if this would leave the person without the means to manage their situation.

If the person is not in receipt of any mobility allowance, support can be provided to make an application and a referral to the Welfare Rights Service will be made.

Can you use your own transport?

If the person has their own motor vehicle, a vehicle obtained through the Motability scheme, a specially adapted vehicle or some other vehicle, it is expected that this would be available for use. We would not expect family members to claim priority over the use of mobility vehicles for their own use.

Can you use public transport?

This might be travelling independently or with assistance from someone else for example, a buddying scheme, family, friends or a carer.

Do you have a concessionary bus pass? If not, could you be assisted to apply for one?

Where a person can use public transport or community transport either independently or with support, part of the support planning process may involve investing resources in the short term, to support people to be able to use these options, for example through travel training to support them to develop their skills around independent travel.

People who qualify for concessionary travel will be expected to apply for and use this, to meet the costs of travel to community services or activities that meet their social care needs. The constraints of concessionary travel (i.e. no free travel before 9.30am) will be taken into consideration during the assessment.

If you cannot currently use public transport, could you do so following a period of reassurance, support, enablement and travel training?

The Council can provide support to adults who wish to travel independently.

Can you access transport with a carer, family member or friend?

Where it is identified that a carer will provide travel assistance, the Council will ensure any impact of this solution has been appropriately considered in the carer's assessment.

What will happen if, on occasion, your friends or carer are unable to provide travel assistance, what are your contingencies?

Alternative arrangements should be detailed in a contingency plan to cover periods where they are unable to assist.

Do you live in a residential/nursing care home, supported accommodation or some other supported housing setting?

Where people are living in settings funded by the Council there is an expectation that the cost of the placement will meet the full range of support needs, including travel to and from community activities, unless assessed as otherwise.

Should another agency be providing the transport?

A person may be eligible for funding for their transport from another agency or organisation, for example to attend a service to meet an assessed health need.

- 3.2 It should be noted that, although a person may attend a specific community service/activity to meet their assessed needs, they will not be eligible automatically for transport and travel support to and from the service/activity.

4. POSITIVE RISK MANAGEMENT AND SAFEGUARDING

- 4.1 In order to make a safe and fair decision the Council will consider the risks involved in accessing one of the transport options, and whether there are actions that can be put in place to ensure the option selected is safe and reasonable.

- 4.2 To determine the risks involved in getting out and about or with travel arrangements, the following factors will be considered as part of the social care assessment of need:

- Does the person have a disability, frailty, or a physical health issue? Is there any reason to doubt the person's ability to make safe decisions regarding their travel arrangements?
- Can the person travel independently and is it safe for them to do so?
- Are there any barriers to independent travel? Can these barriers be resolved?
- What public transport is available to the person? How can they access public transport safely? Do they need support to use public transport?

- Is there a risk to other people, if considering shared travel?
- 4.3 The assessment process should consider whether providing travel assistance will either reduce their independence or increase their dependence on support.

5. SUPPORT PLANNING

- 5.1 Where there is more than one service or support being accessed, or accessed on more than one day, there may be more than one solution or option available. Each day, service or journey may require different arrangements or no arrangements at all. Each journey will be considered separately, as part of the person's support plan.
- 5.2 Support planning will consider the impact the travel arrangements will have on the sustainability of the plan and on family carers. This will be considered through assessment of the person's and their carer's needs. Determining the best way to meet the eligible need will be addressed at the support planning stage.
- 5.3 Transport and travel support may be partially or wholly provided or arranged by the Council and will include consideration of the following:
- Promoting independence and inclusion, and not increasing a person's dependence on others.
 - How the support or services that can help the person meet their eligible needs will be accessed.
 - The clear identification of travel support including a contingency plan in cases of unforeseen changes.
 - Ensuring people and their family carers are aware of options for transport and travel support and that these are reflected in their support plans.
 - The need to provide passenger assistance, where required due to health and safety reasons.
 - The support plan will have regard to the sustainability of the caring role.
 - Making good and effective use of the resources available.
 - Always using the nearest appropriate and available resource to meet the person's assessed needs before considering any other resource. Or alternatively provide the sufficient funding that would be made available for the transport to the person's home with the option for the person to top up their funding to make up the difference. This may increase their contribution to their care and support package.

6. PROCESS

- 6.1 The best way to meet any eligible transport and travel need will be determined and agreed with the person at the support planning stage. This may be partially or wholly provided or arranged by the Council.

- 6.2 Transport and travel support may be provided on a temporary basis and reviewed when the person's situation changes or at least within 6 months.
- 6.3 Transport and travel needs will be included as part of the regular assessment and support planning reviews.
- 6.4 Once support is in place, the responsibility of cancelling the service due to illness or holidays, falls to the person or a person acting on their behalf. They must inform the Council giving as much notice as possible, preferably at least 48 hours, to enable the contract to be cancelled and costs not to be incurred.
- 6.5 Where identified, the Council will offer funded transport and travel support in the following order
 - (i) Independent travel training
 - (ii) Assistance with using public transport
 - (iii) Provision of transport by family/carers
 - (iv) Use of community volunteer car and driver schemes
 - (v) Use of the Council's internal transport fleet where an escort is required
 - (vi) Where all other options have been explored and discounted, a Personal Transport Budget offer will be made as a Direct Payment.

7. CHARGING FOR SERVICES

- 7.1 [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.
- 7.2 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 person's contribution to the cost of care and support services.
- 7.3 For a full copy of the Council's Charging Policy please refer to the Council's website on the following link [insert link].
- 7.4 Where the Council signposts individuals to community or public transport, individuals will be charged as per the service providers charges. These charges are not subject to financial assessment and the full cost levied by the transport provider is to be paid by the individual.
- 7.5 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, any charges that it reasonably levies for doing so would be subject to financial assessment in accordance with the Care Act.

8. PEOPLE WITH NO ELIGIBLE NEED FOR TRANSPORT

- 8.1 Where a person is not eligible for the provision of Council funded and arranged transport and travel support, as an assessed need, they should be signposted to any community groups or public transport offers that would be relevant in supporting them such as:

[Miles for smiles](#) - Community transport scheme run by volunteers for the residents of Tameside, who use their own vehicles to support people to and from health and wellbeing appointments.

[Ring and Ride](#) - Ring & Ride provide accessible, low-cost transport to disabled people and older people with walking difficulties.

9. APPEALS

- 9.1 The assessment for an eligible social care need, including any assessed need for support with transport and travel, will be carried out by qualified Assessor/Social Worker with the person and/or their family/carer representative.
- 9.2 In cases where agreement cannot be reached the matter will be referred to the Service Unit Manager for the locality the person lives in, who will attempt to resolve the issue. If the person/their representative remains dissatisfied with the Council's decision they can make a complaint under the [Adult Social Care Complaints Procedure](#).