

ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES TRANSPORT POLICY – SUMMARY

Suffolk County Council (SCC) is consulting on a proposed new Transport Policy for Adult Social Care (ACS). This will replace the existing policy to provide transport routinely for people who have been assessed as having certain social care needs which are eligible for funding from the Council. The policy will clarify eligibility criteria for assistance with transport to take account of the national social care eligibility criteria introduced by the Care Act 2014.

The policy applies to all adults aged 18 years and above who access care and support from Adult Community Services in Suffolk.

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

Aims of the policy

The purpose of the policy is to introduce a fair and consistent way of offering assistance with transport to meet the needs of those who require the service the most, in line with the Care Act. The policy aims to empower people to develop their skills and promote independence to use resources already available to them.

What are the key proposals in the policy?

The key proposals are to assist people travel as independently and safely as possible. The policy seeks to promote independent travel and develop a person's skills to use commonly available sources of transport. It proposes a greater emphasis on using resources which are already available and on skills development e.g. travel training.

The policy introduces a consistent approach to meeting transport needs of eligible people with the aim of moving away from the routine use of assistance with transport where other means of transport could be safely and appropriately used. It is expected that SCC will only fund transport to meet eligible needs where no other options are available.

During social care assessments and Care and Support planning, all relevant transport options will be considered, and assistance with transport will be offered when no other options are considered suitable to meet the person's eligible needs and circumstances.

Eligibility and determining the need for transport

The policy sets out clear eligibility criteria explaining the circumstances in which transport may be provided. This approach is consistent with SCC's Supporting Lives, Connecting Communities framework and includes guidance for the three tiers of support:

Tier 1 – ‘Help to help yourself’

Tier 2 – ‘Help when you need it’

Tier 3 – ‘Ongoing support for those who need it’

The Care Act 2014 promotes a strengths-based approach in adult social care. The new policy will support this and requires practitioners to consider a person’s own strengths and capabilities and what support might be available from their wider support network, or within the community, to help a person meet the outcomes they want to achieve.

Proposed implementation of the policy

If approved, the proposed implementation date is 1st May 2020.

For people currently receiving Suffolk County Council travel assistance, the policy will apply at the time of their next reassessment or review after 1st May 2020. Any changes will be introduced after an individual review has taken place and will be based on their new Care and Support plan.

What Happens Next

The outcome of the consultation will be published, and the policy will be reviewed taking into consideration the consultation feedback.

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