

# ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES TRANSPORT POLICY MARCH 2020

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**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

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<b>Review and Approval Role</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>
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**Adult and Community Services Transport Policy**

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1. The Care Act 2014 and associated Regulations and Statutory Guidance provide the legal framework for the assessment of social care and support needs and for determining eligibility for adult social care support.

1.2. The Care and Support Statutory Guidance states [para 6.105], in relation to assessing an adult's eligibility for care and support, that *'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. Local authorities do not have responsibility for the provision of NHS services such as patient transport, however they should consider needs for support when the adult is attending healthcare appointments.'*

1.3. Furthermore the Statutory Guidance promotes a strengths-based approach in adult social care: *'As part of this person-centred, outcomes-focused approach, the Act requires that social workers and care professionals 'consider the person's own strengths and capabilities, and what support might be available from their wider support network or within the community to help' in considering 'what else other than the provision of care and support might assist the person in meeting the outcomes they want to achieve'.*

## **2. Eligibility and determining the need for transport**

2.1. The Care and Support (Eligibility Criteria) Regulations 2015 set national eligibility criteria to determine whether an adult with care and support needs will be entitled to support from a local authority. One of the outcomes which the regulations state that the council must consider when deciding if an adult is eligible for support relates to "making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport."

2.2 When an adult is assessed under the Care Act for the first time, or their existing care and support is reviewed, the assessor will consider with the adult (and anyone else they wish to be involved in the assessment) their needs in relation to transport. It is possible that needs may change over time, and outside of regular reviews, and an adult can request a review at any time if they feel that their needs have changed and may no longer be met by their current provision.

2.3 Supporting Lives Connecting Communities (SLCC) is Suffolk's Operational Framework. It offers three levels of engagement: Help to Help Yourself (Tier 1), Help When You Need It, Immediate short-term support (Tier 2) and Ongoing Support for those who need it (Tier 3). SLCC is a flexible rather than strictly sequential process; People who are receiving support under Tier 3 can still be supported with a Tier 1 or 2 offer.

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2.4. The SLCC Framework is based on key principles including: prevention, reablement, personalisation, integration, community responses; promoting wellbeing, proportionality, empowerment, protection, partnership and accountability. The Signs of Safety and Wellbeing approach, a solution-focused and strengths-based approach to collaborative working with people is used throughout the SLCC tiers and underpins all our conversations with people.

2.5. Carers supporting with transport will have their own needs and rights considered during the assessment process.

2.6. This policy describes how a decision to provide assistance with transport, using SLCC operational framework as either a Tier 2 (short term) or Tier 3 (longer term) transport offer will usually follow a full Care Act 2014 assessment of needs (except in cases of urgency). This will include where appropriate an assessment of the adult's mobility and the risks associated with accessing support and services in the community as part of the care and support planning process. The need for, and purpose of, transport should be clearly stated on an adult's care and support plan.

2.7. Everyone whose needs are met by Suffolk County Council will receive a personal budget as part of the care and support plan. The personal budget gives the person clear information about the money allocated to meet the needs identified in the assessment and recorded in the plan. The social care practitioner should share an indicative amount with the person, and anybody else involved, at the start of care and support planning, with the final amount of the personal budget confirmed through this process. The detail of how the person will use their personal budget will be in the care and support plan, including any transport assistance if this was agreed.

2.8. Following that assessment people who are receiving care and support as either a commissioned service or a direct payment under Tier 3 may be offered a Tier 1 or 2 transport offer if this is assessed as meeting their needs.

### **3. Tier 1 'Help to help yourself: information, advice and support**

3.1 The social care practitioner will ensure that the person requesting information or assistance with transport directly, or via their legal representative, and the person's family, carer, will be provided at this stage with the appropriate information and advice on transport solutions, existing community responses and needs assessments. This will be provided in the appropriate format to meet the adult's individual communication or information needs.

3.2. This section of the policy applies mainly **when people have access to existing transport**

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3.3. Adults will not normally be eligible for assisted transport as a Tier 2 or Tier 3 transport offer if:

a. **They have a vehicle which they drive themselves.** There will be an assessment of whether it is possible and reasonable to expect that the adult will use the vehicle to meet the transport needs arising from the care and support plan. Where an adult uses their own vehicle, no petrol costs or other expenses will usually be paid by the Council. Please see Section 7 of this policy for more details on Motability vehicles.

b. **They have a vehicle of which they are not normally the driver.** There will be an assessment of whether the usual driver(s) are able and willing to help the adult travel to the care service or activity, and whether it would be appropriate to review who drives the adult's vehicle if the usual driver(s) are unable to support the adult's transport needs fully.

c. **Where it is identified that a family or informal carer will provide transport,** it is important that the practitioner is able to demonstrate that the impact of this has been appropriately considered in an assessment of the carer's own needs. Where carers or friends have been identified as being able to provide transport, alternative arrangements should be detailed in the contingency plan as part of assessment and support planning for the adult to cover periods where they are unable to do so.

d. **They are in receipt of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment.** Where an adult receives the mobility component of these benefits, they will be required to use that element of the benefit in full to meet their transport needs. If the mobility component of the benefit does not fully cover the cost of their transport needs (due to factors such as distance from services, the nature of the disability, wheelchair type or carer support requirements) the practitioner will include the relevant proportion of transport costs in the support plan cost.

e. **They live in a registered care home,** the care home will support transport needs as part of the contract to provide care to the adult. Where there is unmet need in relation to transport arising from exceptional circumstances, the practitioner will review with the adult with care and support needs and the care home provider whether any changes are required to the existing arrangements.

#### **4. Tier 2 'Help when you need it'**

4.1. If the adult has an identified transport need, they will have an **assessment of mobility and ability to travel independently** as part of their needs' assessment under the Care Act. This mobility assessment will be included in all cases by the adult social care practitioners. This will involve assessing aspects such as:

- The adult's ability to walk outside independently
- Requirement for wheelchair or walking aid

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- Risk of falling without support
- Ability to bear weight to transfer
- Ability to get in and out of property
- Ability to get in and out of vehicle
- Risk of fall or self-harm due to uncontrollable movements
- Ability to use stairs, manage gradients, steepness of stairs in home, safety, energy levels
- Any barriers to independent travel
- Risks to others

4.2. Where appropriate, the adult social care practitioner will make appropriate referrals to occupational therapists, physiotherapists or other relevant professionals.

4.3. In line with the Care Act prevention duty and SLCC, an assessment of needs must also promote the adult's wellbeing and ability to live an independent and fulfilling life in their community and also consider physical, mental and social reasons that enable or prevent the adult from travelling independently. These may include:

- Extent of the mobility problems identified above
- Availability of family, friends, carers, networks or volunteers to assist with access to transport
- Communication difficulties (e.g. ability to order a taxi or use public transport)
- Psychological factors (lack of confidence, agoraphobia)
- Experience or risk of harassment
- Any other factors affecting personal safety
- The adult's potential to learn road safety and orientation skills so that they can travel independently, thus maximising their skills and autonomy

4.4. Geographical isolation may be a factor in an adult's ability to access services outside the home. The availability of alternative, accessible and affordable means of transport must be considered when assessing an individual's ability to travel independently.

4.5. An outcome of the **assessment of mobility and ability to travel independently** may be the need to explore ability and skills in more detail. In this case the social care practitioner will make a referral to the Independent Travel Training service. The Independent Travel Training service will work with the person to further assess their ability to travel independently and if this is considered a possibility will offer individual person-centred travel training.

4.6. This training is aimed at helping people learn to confidently and independently use public transport. For more information please see contact RM Transport Travel Training via email: [TransportTravelTraining@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:TransportTravelTraining@suffolk.gov.uk).

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For further information on travel and transport please see:

<https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/localoffer.page?localofferchannelnew=9>

4.7. If someone has received travel training and has been assessed as being able to travel independently 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. Please also see Section 7 when in receipt of the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance or Personal Independence Payment

4.8. Community Transport will be considered as an option as part of a Tier 2 transport offer. Suffolk County Council provides an affordable provision called Connecting Communities, designed to help people who might not have access to a regular bus service travel around Suffolk county. This service should be considered as an option when considering a Tier 2 transport offer. For more information on this service see: <https://communities.suffolkonboard.com/> .

Suffolk Infolink is further resource which provides transport options: <https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/home.page>

## **5. Tier 3 ‘Ongoing support for those who need it’**

### **Meeting a need for support with transport**

5.1. Once needs have been assessed and a Tier 1 or 2 transport offer cannot meet those needs, the adult social care practitioner will need to discuss with the adult and those supporting them in the assessment or during the review of the care and support plan (e.g. family, friends) how best to support the adult to meet their transport needs.

5.2. Where an adult cannot attend their nearest community activity because there is no availability, or the nearest opportunity would not meet the adult's assessed needs, the practitioner may request resources to support with meeting transport costs. However, where a person chooses to attend community activities or a day centre that is not the nearest, and the nearest service is available to meet their assessed eligible need, any additional cost of any transport considered necessary will be met by the person.

5.3 Where it is identified that a carer will provide transport, the social care practitioner will record the impact of this has been appropriately considered in the carer's assessment. Where it is concluded that the carer cannot provide transport because it would place an unreasonable demand on them, then the assessment may lead to transport being provided or arranged by the Council.

5.4. A needs assessment or the review of a care and support plan for an adult with care and support needs must consider if carers are “willing and able” to continue in their caring role when a person's needs are being met by a carer.

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5.5. The social care practitioner will consider whether the geographical isolation may be a factor in an adult's ability to access services outside the home as per point number 4.4.

5.6. There is no single definition of what 'reasonable distance/ time' is to access services or activities that meet assessed eligible needs. A practitioner should be able, having information about an adult's needs and the transport options available, to define "reasonable" for that adult, using a person-centred approach. It will be for each adult to decide how far they are willing to travel in order to extend their choice. A balance then needs to be achieved between distance, value for money and choice. In addition, the time taken to travel to the service destination or the cost of alternative means of transport should also be taken into account by the practitioner, as these may be barriers to needs being met.

Lee has volunteered at a local charity shop on a Tuesday every week for four years. Lee's autism means that establishing positive relationships and feeling confident within different environmental settings in the local community, may take a long time. Routine is very important to Lee who spends all weekend looking forward to his Tuesdays in the shop. Lee lives alone with his mother in a rural location 5 miles away from the charity shop. Lee's mother is at work in the daytime, five days of the week and there are no family or friends that are able to transport Lee to his charity shop. There is also no public transport available to Lee. Lee was assessed four years ago as having eligible needs in relation to support with transport costs and since that time Lee pays £20 per week for a taxi out of his personal budget. Lee and his mother are about to move house and his new home will be 15 miles away from the charity shop. The costs of the taxi to meet his assessed eligible need will increase to £47 per week, an increase of £27. Lee asks for a review in order for his personal budget to be increased as his situation has now changed, and he is very anxious about the move. During the review process the ACS practitioner assesses Lee's transport needs and agrees the £27 per week increase. At Lee's new home there is a variety of public transport options available, so at the same time the ACS practitioner makes a referral to the Independent Travel Training service who agree they will work with Lee after he has moved to assess his ability and build his skills to travel independently.

5.7. There may be a need for periodic transport support for individuals in times of illness of themselves or their carer, or in relation to family circumstances or care/provider services, and a flexible approach will be taken in these situations. A review of the care and support plan may be appropriate in such cases, or this issue may be dealt with as part of contingency planning in the original care and support plan.

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5.8. The Council may pay unpaid carers (family or friends) a mileage payment for them to provide the transport where this is assessed to be the most suitable and cost-effective way of meeting the assessed need.

5.9. Once the adult is assessed as requiring transport, the social care practitioner will investigate community, family and network solutions. Where a Tier 1 or Tier 2 transport offer will not meet assessed need and a purchased option is required, consideration should be given to using a direct payment.

5.10. Where the adult already has in place a direct payment for other services, then the Council should offer a direct payment to seek a transport solution as this will give increased flexibility and personalisation, before seeking a commissioned service solution.

5.11. If a Tier 1 or Tier 2 transport offer is not appropriate and where a direct payment is not appropriate, it will be necessary to make a request to the Council's Passenger Transport Team to make the necessary arrangements, having regard to the assessed needs. Transport quotes will be arranged through the Transport Team. Once arrangements have been made, these will be communicated to the practitioner, who will inform the adult.

5.12. Every situation will be different. Practitioners will explore different solutions with the adult to find the best and most cost-effective solution.

Some examples of individual solutions are in the boxes below:

i. Ben is an adult living in supported living accommodation. Ben does have a Motability car however due to the unavailability of his paid carers who usually drive the vehicle for him, Ben asked the Council to have extra support by funding a taxi transport to and from his day centre three days a week. This solution proved to be the most cost effective for meeting Ben's need to access his activities, as the funded taxi cost just over £30 per week, which was less than paying new carers for their time to drive him. Ben's assessor is going to discuss with Ben whether continuing to use Ben's mobility component of DLA / PIP to lease a mobility vehicle is the best use of his PIP as the Motability car is now rarely used and there may be more cost-effective options.

ii. Mary lives at home with her parents and has a Motability scheme car, but her parents are not always available to drive her to her day centre. Mary asked the Council for extra help with transport by funding a taxi. In addition to Mary's Care Act needs assessment, a carer assessment was undertaken for Mary's parents. This identified the parents' own needs and their desire to continue accessing work. Although Mary had a car available to her, her carers were not always able to support her transport needs, and so the Council considered whether it was most appropriate and cost effective to provide a support worker to drive her to her day centre on some days when her parents were not available, or to fund an alternative solution, e.g. a wheelchair accessible taxi.

## **6. Community transport**

6.1. As mentioned above, Suffolk County Council provides an inexpensive service called Connecting Communities, designed to help people who might not have access to a regular bus service. The service can be accessed at <https://communities.suffolkonboard.com/> .

iii. Barsha is 88 and has visual and mobility problems. She lives with her daughter and son-in-law, who are both retired and in their sixties. Barsha's daughter and son-in-law are finding Barsha's needs restrictive, as she cannot be left alone for long, and needs to go with them when they go out. To help them cope, Barsha has a care package consisting of one day per week at a day centre. Barsha prefers to only attend in the afternoon, as that is when her friends attend.

Barsha's daughter and son-in-law are happy to drop her off at the day care centre before lunch but have found that having to go and pick her up eats into their one free afternoon. The practitioner, in addition to assessing Barsha's needs, carried out carer assessments for her daughter and son-in-law. The Council was able to fund a taxi to take Barsha home in the afternoon, to help meet the needs of the whole family and at the same time support Barsha's daughter and son-in-law to have a break from the caring role and accessing the activities that matter to them.

Suffolk Infolink is further resource which provides transport options: <https://infolink.suffolk.gov.uk/kb5/suffolk/infolink/home.page>

## **7. Use of Motability Scheme Vehicles**

7.1. If an adult customer has access to a vehicle funded through the national Motability Scheme it is Council policy that this vehicle must be used in accordance with the terms of the scheme, which requires the vehicle to be used "for the benefit of" the person whose mobility benefits fund the lease.

While it is not a requirement that every journey undertaken in the vehicle must involve the adult as driver or passenger, the journey must be of benefit to them. As such, it is expected that the Motability vehicle will be used to meet the adult's travel needs wherever it is reasonable and possible to do so.

7.2. Where the adult is reliant on a relative or other carer to drive a Motability vehicle, the practitioner will consider the carer's own needs for assessment, consider the impact of providing daily transport on the carer or their health alongside with needs for respite and including enabling them to work/access work.

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7.3. In some cases, for example where an adult's circumstances change, it may be appropriate for the practitioner to discuss with them whether it would be more appropriate for them to end a Motability lease early and revert to receiving the mobility component of their DLA/ PIP in cash, if this better meets their changed circumstances and/or gives greater independence and flexibility.

7.4. If an adult, their appointee or carer makes the decision that the Motability vehicle will not be used to meet the travel needs of the adult or for their benefit the practitioner will need to remind the adult (or their appointee, if their benefits are managed by a third party) of the scheme rules. The practitioner must then consider whether the Motability Scheme administrators and DWP should be advised of the situation so that they can determine whether the adult is complying with the terms of their lease.

7.5. For more information about the Motability Scheme see <https://www.motability.co.uk/>

## **8. Transport for medical appointments**

8.1. The NHS Hospital Travel Costs Scheme may cover some of the adult's travel costs for attending hospital appointments. Hence, at times when an adult with care and support needs is requesting help for the costs of travel to hospital and other secondary NHS service medical appointments to be included in the allocated personal budget, the social care practitioner should firstly check if the person is eligible for the NHS healthcare travel scheme.

Details of the scheme can be found here <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/help-with-health-costs/healthcare-travel-costs-scheme-htcs/>

Further advice about eligibility for this scheme can be sought from the Welfare Rights Helpline (01473-264545).

iv. Patel has epilepsy and has to attend an appointment at the neurology department for further tests within the hospital. Patel meets the eligibility criteria for the NHS Low Income Scheme and is able to apply to the NHS Hospital Travel Costs Scheme. (In most instances you will be expected to pay for your travel and claim back the costs within 3 months. The NHS organisation handling your claim will normally base any refund on the basis of what would have been the cheapest suitable mode of transport for your circumstances).

8.2. Travelling to primary care medical appointments, for example with the General Practitioners and dentists, do not fall within the NHS scheme and the practitioner will need to discuss with the adult their needs in accessing community healthcare when assessing or reviewing eligible support for transport needs in line with all sections of this policy.

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v. Bob has a routine dental appointment at his dental practice. Bob cannot claim help with transport costs from the NHS Hospital Travel Costs Scheme.

See also <https://www.nhs.uk/common-health-questions/nhs-services-and-treatments/how-do-i-organise-transport-to-and-from-hospital/>

8.3. There are a number of other organisations such as Age UK that might support people to attend GP or hospital appointments too: <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/services/in-your-area/transport/#>

## **9. Education transport**

9.1. Travel to a school or college for students with an Education Health Care Plan, SEND or mobility difficulties is assessed against the Council's School and Post 16 Travel policies.

9.2 Adults who have Education Health and Care (EHC) plans which involve travel to school or college to meet their special education needs will have travel needs considered and included in this plan. Travel to opportunities that fall outside their EHC plan will be assessed under the Care Act and are covered by this policy.

9.3. Full details about the education transport provided can be found in the Suffolk County Council Post-16 Travel policy:

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/content/downloadstream/8154/32554/2018+Post-16+Travel+Policy.pdf> and at <https://www.suffolkonboard.com/school-travel/send-transport/travel-training-a-step-towards-independence/>

## **10. Charging for Transport**

10.1. Where transport is provided by the Council, the charging policy will apply, and the adult will be subject to a financial assessment. The mobility component of an adult's benefits (e.g. DLA or PIP) is disregarded for the purpose of financial assessment.

## **11. Reviews**

11.1. Requests for a review of support for transport needs or charges should be directed to:

The team responsible for coordinating the care and support plan for the adult customer or, where this is not clear, through Customer First, Email: [customer.first@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:customer.first@suffolk.gov.uk) Telephone: 0808 800 4005

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11.2 If a review of current care and support results in a reduction in the adult's personal budget it would be expected that the Council would discuss with the adult (and anyone who assists them with managing their finances) a suitable notice period for implementation of any reduction in funding to allow the adult to make the necessary changes to their travel plans and budgeting.

## **12. Refusal of Services**

12.1. 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.

12.2. Where a person has declined a service, the practitioner will assess and record an assessment of the customer's mental capacity to make that decision.

12.3 Where the person has the mental capacity to understand that the decision to refuse transport is effectively a refusal of a service, the practitioner will confirm this in writing that this is the case, alerting them to the opportunity to change their decision and inviting them to contact the practitioner (or Customer First) if they do so.

12.4. If the person is assessed to lack the capacity to understand and make the decision about transport the practitioner must ensure that a decision on this issue is made in the best interest of the adult by the relevant decision maker (i.e. the Council or, if they have an attorney or deputy for Health and Welfare, the attorney or deputy.)

## **13. Review of the Policy**

13.1. The policy reflects the current position and will be reviewed as required to meet changes in local or national policy or legislation.

## Appendix 1 (for internal staff only)

### Recording on LAS for Transport Brokerage Requests & CPLI's

The Transport Team are set up and visible on LAS and ContrOCC. The team is picking up from ACS social care practitioners all transport brokerage requests.

As a social care practitioner, you will still need to complete the Transport Order Form and send to the Public Transport Team when a customer requires a transport service.

The form can be found here:

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/scctransportorder/form/>

You will then need to add the Service within the Care & Support Plan as below, when the service provisioning wizard pops up you must tick the 'Send to Placement and Brokerage' box. As a minimum you should specify the progress of the Transport Order Form (including the reference number issued when the form is submitted beginning with ST0...), that a transport service is required and the Budget Responsible Team. The Transport Team will then follow the brokerage process.

Whilst the Transport Team will always try and assist please remember it is very likely that any urgent or short term transport requirements will need to be provisioned locally and brokered by your local Business & Finance Team. In these instances please contact the team on 01473 265065.

A Guide called **Transport Services** can also be found here: [Finance user guides | Suffolk Learning](#)

[Draft: What needs to happen? (whether by you,...)]

**Search for Services**

By Service Type Folder

Search the available services by completing the fields below. Only services that are active and have availability will be displayed.

Send to Placement and Brokerage? ☒

Placement and Brokerage info

TOF sent 20/08/18 to Transport Team

Service Type Folder

Service Type Folder

Service Type

Service Duration

Financial Return Subcategory

Proposed Dates

Start

End

Decision To Supply

23-Aug-2018

Budget Responsible Team

FCST North

Main Beneficiary

Reason for Service

Reset Send to Placement and Brokerage Cancel Printable View

**Other Details**

Important Information

Comments

Care Support Tasks Required

Access/Transport/Health & Safety Issues

Practitioner

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