

Health and Adult Social Services

**ASSISTED TRANSPORT POLICY  
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**



Northamptonshire  
County Council

## **Introduction**

This draft policy has been developed using feedback from the Fairer Charging consultation this year and with help from our customers. We need your help to tell us if we have missed anything and the potential impact it may have on your circumstances.

## **AIMS**

The aims of this draft Policy are as follows:

- Support and funding to enable lifelong mobility and independent living
- Educational campaigns to promote maximum independent mobility, developing of social capital and safety for older people and people living with disabilities.

In achieving these aims, HASS will:

- Promote and encourage the use of commonly available transport options such as public transport, walking or mobilising the use of aids either independently or with a support, people using their own vehicle, utilizing transport assistance costs and concessionary travel.
- Ensure that locally based services are available and responsive to the needs of local people. It is no longer appropriate to arrange a service outside of a person's local area, unless it is not possible to meet their assessed need in that area.
- Commission transport needs from responsible agencies for a person who is eligible for funding;

## **SCOPE**

This policy only allows the direct provision of the following transport arrangements:

- Internal car fleets organised by the County Council
- Internal minibus fleets organised by the County Council
- Taxi services organised and arranged through the County Council's transport team.

The above transport arrangements will only apply in the following three circumstances:

- Day opportunities
- Respite centres
- One-off exceptional arrangements

If customers are assessed with eligible needs and assisted transport is their only transportation method, the cost of the transport will form part of their overall service package and will be assessed under the Fairer Contributions Guidance.

Customers who choose to purchase transport as part of their personal budgets will be charged against their eligible needs under the Fairer Contributions Guidance.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

*“Health and Adult Social Services is committed to supporting and enabling the lifelong mobility of its customers to lead safe and independent lives”.*

### **Health and Adult Social Services Commitments for Assisted Transport**

The following general guidance is to be used when identifying the need for assisted transport:

- Where a person is able to walk, use assisted mobility (motorised scooter, wheelchair/aids) either independently or with support from family, friends or support worker, volunteer etc to get to a **local** community service including college and it is reasonable for them to do so, transport will not normally be provided;
- Where a person can use public transport, voluntary transport or Dial a Ride either independently or with support (family, friend, carer, support worker etc) to get to and from community activities including college, transport will not normally be provided.
- Part of the person’s assessment and review will identify their potential to learn road safety and orientation skills so that they can travel independently to and from community activities, including college. Where it is reasonable for them to do so, transport will not normally be provided.
- Where a person cannot attend their nearest community activity including college because there is no suitable placement available then the provision of transport will be considered.
- If there is no local services to meet a person’s assessed needs then transport to the nearest appropriate service will be considered.
- Where a person chooses to attend community activities or college outside of their identified locality and a local service is available to meet their assessed need, then the individual will become responsible for meeting the whole cost of the transport required;

- Where a person receives a benefit to facilitate their mobility needs (e.g. Disability Living Allowance where this includes a mobility element), this should be fully utilised to support their transport needs to and from community activities including college. Consideration will be given to supporting transport for a person where they can justify why this benefit cannot be used.
- Where people live in settings where their care is funded by HASS (e.g. residential care, supported living schemes), the cost of the placement will meet their full range of support needs to include transport to community activities and college;
- Where people contribute towards the provision of a shared community vehicle, there is an expectation that this would be used to transport them to community activities including college;
- Where it is identified in a carer's assessment that not providing transport would place unreasonable responsibility on a carer then assisted transport will be considered.
- Where a person has a private or motability car, it will be expected that this vehicle will be used to access community activities including college. Where a person uses their own vehicle or motability car no petrol costs or other expenses will be met by the County Council.
- Where a person has no access to transport and cannot walk, use assisted mobility (wheelchair/aids) or use public transport, either independently or with support to access a support arrangement/service that meets an assessed need, then assisted transport will be considered.
- In all other circumstances, provided all transport options have been considered, and have been evidenced and recorded, assisted transport will be considered.
- All current and future transport arrangements will be subject to a minimum of an annual review and if a person's needs change then a re-assessment will be undertaken.
- HASS accepts that exceptional circumstances can arise which would merit HASS funding exceptional assisted transport, and in these circumstances, any assisted transport would have to be authorised by the appropriate budget holder.
- The County Council Complaints Procedure outlines access to the Complaints and Commendations process, and explains the process for complaining about decisions made by the County Council.
- Where there is a reference to college, this refers to a college placement that is linked to day activities. Full-time education remains the responsibility of Children's Services;

## **HOW WILL WE ASSESS ASSISTED TRANSPORT NEEDS?**

The following steps will be considered and recorded in assessing assisted transport needs:

- Can the person travel independently (own transport, public transport, walk or other independent means)?
- Is the person able to access transport provided by other means (family, friends, paid, support worker)? If so, is this a reasonable distance to travel to the service?
- Time to travel – is this reasonable?
- Is the person accessing the nearest service that meets their needs?
- Is the service on a direct bus route?
- Could a volunteer support the person with their travel requirements?
- Would the person be able to travel independently after travel training?
- Is there a medical reason why the person could not travel independently?
- Does the person have a sensory impairment that has an impact on them travelling independently?
- Is there a physical reason that can have an impact on the person travelling independently?
- Reasons for a person being unable to travel independently must be identified as part of a risk assessment
- Is the person in receipt of Mobility Allowance (a component of Disability Living Allowance) and if not do they need assistance to apply?
- Does the person or family have a Motability vehicle and if not do they need assistance to apply for one?
- Does the person have a concessionary bus pass, if not do they need assistance to apply for one?
- Ensure people have been supported to apply for appropriate benefits.

The principle is that whenever possible people should be encouraged to make their own transport arrangements, with staff from HASS acting as facilitators in indicating appropriate transport options.

Sensitivity will need to be applied to those situations where transport is currently provided and the review/re-assessment identifies that transport will no longer be provided. A time limited transition period will need to be agreed so that alternative arrangements can be made.