

Adult Social Care Committee

Item No:

Report title:	Transport
Date of meeting:	5 September 2016
Responsible Chief Officer:	Catherine Underwood, Acting Executive Director of Adult Social Services

Strategic impact

The Council has responded to the financial challenges facing all local authorities through the development of a new strategy which sets out a direction for the Council to radically change its role and the way it delivers services. This commits the Authority to delivering the Council's vision and priorities, working effectively across the whole public sector on a local basis, and will ensure that the Council's budget of £1.4bn is spent to the best effect for Norfolk people.

Adult Social Care is contributing to this vision through the Promoting Independence strategy where people are able to achieve their outcomes through the most independent means possible, helping individuals and families to connect easily to the support of their communities and targeting Council's resources where additional support is needed. The aim is to develop a sustainable approach to social care in Norfolk, by working with local communities and changing the mix of service provided. We aim to reduce the level of long term packages of care; help people to stay at home longer and provide better use of all resources available to reduce the cost of care packages. Part of this change includes changes to transport and savings in this area.

Executive summary

The report provides a short update on the Transport savings and project as requested by the Committee, following the previous report to the Committee on 6 July.

Recommendations:

Adult Social Services Committee Members are asked to:

- a) **Note the work being carried out to deliver transport savings**
- b) **Note that the department is in the process of finding someone from outside Norfolk County Council (NCC) to carry out a Transport Review to complement the work already carried out. This will also need to sit alongside any other work being undertaken corporately on transport. The review would include looking at: good practice in other authorities in Adult Social Services Transport, especially those who have a relatively low spend on transport; and what efficiencies could be made in the administration, management and procurement of transport for Adult Social Services**

1 Background

- 1.1 Adult Social Care currently spends about £7m each year on providing transport for people eligible for social care funding. It is difficult to provide the total amount of funding that the department spends on transport for people who use the services as some of the funding is given to people as part of their personal budget allocation. Transport is not a service in its own right – it is a means of accessing services or

support. The Travel and Transport team in Community and Environmental Services (CES) arrange transport for people on behalf of Adult Social Services.

2 Budget Savings

- 2.1 Included in the 2014-17 budget agreed by Council in February 2014 were Adult Social Services transport savings of £2.1m.

Financial Year	£m
2014-15	1.800
2015-16	0.150
2016-17	0.150
Total	2.100

- 2.2 To deliver the £2.1m saving the department reduced the funding allocated for transport in the Resource Allocation System (RAS) from 1 April 2014. The reduction was implemented with immediate effect for new service users and from time of annual review for people who were already service users. Therefore all new service users from April 2014 have had a reduced allocation for transport. The Council said that for people who were already service users they would have a face to face annual review (some people have telephone reviews) where there was a reduction in their Personal Budget for transport or for wellbeing. For transport the reduction was effective from the date of the annual review. At the face to face review the person carrying out the review would have the discussion with the service user about how to meet their transport needs in other ways with less funding.

- 2.3 As part of the 2015-18 Budget planning additional savings were agreed to be made from transport:

Financial Year	£m
2016-17	0.900
2017-18	0.800
Total	1.700

Therefore a total of £3.8m of savings has been budgeted to be achieved in the years 2014-18.

- 2.4 The 2015-18 savings of £1.7m are to be delivered by:
- a) Making sure people are using their Motability vehicle or mobility allowance for their transport
 - b) Asking people to use public transport or community transport where we assess that they are able to do this
 - c) Asking people to use the service that is closest to them if this will meet their needs, for example, their local day centre. If they don't want to use the local service as they prefer to use a service that is further away, we will not pay for them to travel there
 - d) If we cannot find a service that meets people's needs in their local area we would not automatically pay for them to travel a long way to get the service elsewhere. Instead we would work with the person who needs the service and their carer/s to come up with a more creative solution that involves less travel
 - e) If we cannot meet people's care needs through the options listed above, we will pay for people's transport through their personal budget
- 2.5 The department started using the new policy from 1 April 2015, assessing all new service users under the new criteria. The department re-assesses existing service

users, who use their personal budget to buy transport or who have their transport paid for by the department, at their annual review.

2.6 Given the difficulties in achieving the budgeted savings from the actions agreed so far the department is proposing to commission someone to carry out a Transport Review to complement the work already carried out and to identify how compensating savings could be made. The proposed scope of the review is:

- a) Good practice in other authorities in Adult Social Services Transport, especially those who have a relatively low spend on transport
- b) The most cost effective way of meeting transport needs in social services
- c) Administration and management of all transport commissioned for Adult Social Services
- d) Procurement of all transport for Adult Social Services
- e) What efficiencies could be made in the administration, management and procurement of transport for Adult Social Services?

Discussions are underway with Children's Services as to whether this should be a joint review with Children's Services as Travel and Transport administer and procure transport for them too. The same vehicles, both private hire and Norse, are often used for Children's Services and Adults at differing times of the day, with Adults often having to fit around school transport.

3 Other Work Being Carried Out

3.1 Further to the report to Adult Social Care Committee on 4 July there are the following updates on some of the work being carried out:

- 3.2 **a) High cost packages.** The project team have reviewed information from Care First and the system used by Travel and Transport to arrange transport and have identified potential savings from transport packages for individuals that seem high cost. These packages are mainly for people with complex Learning Difficulties. This information has been shared with the locality teams to help inform their reviews/reassessments of people, as the department should not make changes to peoples' packages of care without carrying out a reassessment. Due to the lack of capacity in the locality Learning Difficulties teams the reassessments of these people have not happened at the pace hoped for. The lack of capacity remains an issue and the department has not been able to resolve this, eg trying to recruit agency staff.
- 3.3 **b) Thetford Day Services for people with Learning Difficulties.** As part of looking at the high cost packages the project team identified that if a suitable service was available in Thetford and met these person's needs closer to where they lived, the department could make significant savings on transport for these people. The project team identified an NCC property in Thetford which would be suitable for day services for people with Learning Difficulties. A business case has been prepared and it has been agreed corporately that the department could use some of the Social Care Capital grant to refurbish the building and make it into a day services hub. However the detailed costings have now been provided and are significantly higher than expected from the original estimates. Part of the detailed costings includes an amount for unknown risks so the department has asked for surveys to be carried out to mitigate some of the risks and to see if this reduces the estimated cost. Once the survey results are available and the costs clarified the business case for using this site will be reviewed or whether other sites in the area need to be considered.

- 3.4 **c) TITAN (Travel Independence Training Across the Nation) travel training.**
TITAN is a travel training programme, set up by Children's Services, which was devised to assist students who have problems with regard to the use of public transport. It enables students to raise their levels of confidence and self-esteem, and gives them the opportunity and entitlement to be proficient in independent travel skills. The department has agreed with Children's Services to make TITAN training available to adults, ie providing training at "off peak" times for schools and colleges, and will be starting a pilot in October 2016. There will be a small cost to this, but this will be on an invest-to-save basis. The department has spoken to three large providers of day services and with them has identified people who may benefit from travel training.
- 3.5 **d) Bus Passes.** An issue for some people is that they cannot use their bus pass before 09:30 and NCC is then providing transport so that they can travel before this time. The department is working with some of the larger day service providers to identify the numbers of people that might benefit from having bus passes that they can use before 09:30 and is working with Travel and Transport to see if there is a means of doing this. There needs to be a sufficient number of people to make this cost effective. As well as helping to make savings this will also help people to be more independent.
- 3.6 **e) Transport Guidance.** Guidance has been issued to Adult Social Services staff which reiterates the principles around transport and when it shouldn't usually be provided.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 At the end of 2015-16 the spend on transport was £6.909m compared to a budget of £4.581m, ie an overspend of £2.328m. The savings from transport are taking longer to deliver than originally anticipated for the reasons in the section below.

5 Issues, risks and innovation

- 5.1 The savings from transport are taking longer to deliver than anticipated:
- a) lack of capacity in the locality teams has meant the reassessments of people, particularly the high cost packages, have not happened at the pace hoped for, despite having additional bank staff for a period of time
 - b) the travel systems do not provide the information in the format most useful to the department in terms of identifying where savings could be made
 - c) even if two people make alternative travel arrangements and no longer travel on an NCC funded minibus, there might still be four people travelling which means the minibus is still required and therefore no overall savings are achieved until more people have different transport
 - d) the savings on Transport rests upon a general assumption and expectation that service users will meet their own needs for transport to access and take advantage of existing services or support, including public transport. Funded transport should only be provided if, in the opinion of the assessor, it is the only reasonable means of ensuring that the service user can be safely transported to an assessed and eligible service. The overriding principle is that the decision to provide transport is based on needs, risks and outcomes and on promoting independence. This is a cultural shift and it is taking time to embed
- 5.2 Given the difficulties in delivering the savings the department is in the process of sourcing someone from outside NCC to carry out a Transport Review to complement the work already carried out and to identify how compensating savings could be made.

This will also need to sit alongside any other work being undertaken corporately on transport.

6 Background Papers

6.1 There are no background papers relevant to the preparation of this report.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper or want to see copies of any assessments, eg equality impact assessment, please get in touch with:

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