

Joint travel assistance policy for council-supported travel



Lewisham



Information and questionnaire

If you are reading this on behalf of a service user and they need a more accessible version please fill in the sheet below or call us.

Please ensure you allow enough time to complete it and return it to us by 3 April 2017, when the consultation closes.

You can ask for this information and questionnaire in:

- easy-to-read version
- another language
- audio
- Braille.

If you need any of these or if you would like help completing the questionnaire, please fill in the sheet below and send it to us using the pre-paid envelope provided, or to the address below:

Travel Assistance Consultation
Joint Commissioning
Community Services Directorate
2nd floor Laurence House
Catford
SE6 4RU

I require a large print version (size 16 font)

I require a jumbo print version (size 18 font)

I require a copy in Braille

I require this information in another language

[please name language]

I require an easy-to-read version

I require an audio version

Name:

Address:

.....

Postcode:

Telephone number:

If you have any difficulty understanding the information in this pack please call 020 8314 8606. Leave a message with your contact details and we will get back to you.

Introduction

We are inviting you to give your thoughts on proposed changes to Lewisham Council's travel assistance policy for young people over the age of 16 accessing education and adults with a social care need. We will use your feedback to determine the final proposals, which will go to Mayor and Cabinet in May 2017.

This is an opportunity for you to give your opinion about the proposals we are putting forward and tell us about any alternatives you would like us to consider, recognising the financial constraints we are working within. It is very important that we hear from you and we welcome your comments. We have written to all service users who may be affected by these changes inviting them to complete this questionnaire.

How to take part in the consultation

By email – send any views or questions to travelassistanceconsultation@lewisham.gov.uk

By post – please fill in the enclosed questionnaire and send it back to us in the pre-paid envelope. Alternatively you can write to

Travel Assistance Consultation, Joint Commissioning, 2nd floor, Laurence House, Catford SE6 4RU

Attend a consultation meeting to hear about the proposed changes and give your views direct to senior council officers.

- Friday 27 January 2017, 12.30–2pm, Room 4, Civic Suite, Catford SE6 4RU
- Tuesday 7 February 2017, 6.30–8pm, Room 3, Civic Suite, Catford SE6 4RU
- Monday 20 February 2017, 11am–12.30pm, Room 2, Civic Suite, Catford SE6 4RU
- Wednesday 8 March 2017, 6.30–8pm, Room 4, Civic Suite, Catford SE6 4RU

Online at www.lewisham.gov.uk/consultation

If you need more information

Please call 020 8314 8606 and leave a message or email travelassistanceconsultation@lewisham.gov.uk

When does the consultation end?

The consultation ends on the **3 April 2017** so please send us your views in time to reach us by then.

After the consultation

We will consider the responses and a summary of the responses will be included in a report to the Mayor and Cabinet meeting in May 2017. The report may also recommend changes to the original proposals based on the findings of this consultation.

The report will ask for approval for the proposed implementation of the travel assistance policy. If you are affected by the proposals you will get support with any changes to your service. We expect to start making any changes agreed by Mayor and Cabinet by the end of May 2017.

Please note that the questionnaires are anonymous so we will not be able to identify you by your response.

Background

This consultation is about changing the way services are provided by the Council to give people more choice in their care, and provide those services more cost-effectively. Along with other councils we are required to make significant savings but remain committed to meeting the needs of vulnerable adults and young people. We aim to meet these needs creatively, delivering high-quality services and promoting safety even within these financial constraints. Among the proposals being considered is a change to the assistance we provide to people who travel to activities during the day and to educational establishments.

We are keen to promote people's independence and ability to exercise greater choice over the support they receive. In adult social care this is achieved by enabling people to purchase their own care through the use of personal budgets and direct payments. People who get adult social care support or who have statements of educational need and disability can also benefit from services available to the wider local community.

We are also committed to improving the transition between childhood and adulthood for people using our services. The transition for people getting travel assistance is sometimes problematic when an individual moves from one policy and eligibility/assessment criteria to another. We are therefore proposing to join the post-16 special educational needs travel assistance policy and the adult social care travel assistance policy. This would lead to consistent eligibility/assessment criteria, service provision and commitment to support the development of future independence.

In accordance with legislation for children and families and adult social care we are committed to providing people with the right support at the right time, in the most appropriate and least restrictive means possible.

The Council continues to face significant cuts to its funding. Despite making savings of £121m since 2010, we will need to find savings of £45m over the next three years. While government funding is going down, we are facing increasing demands on our services, placing more pressure on the reducing budget.

Therefore we have some important decisions to make about how we spend our money. We always want to get the best value for the people of Lewisham and the Mayor, Cabinet and councillors are committed to working with local people to agree on what matters most.

You can find some questions and answers below.

Questions and answers

Who will be affected by the proposed changes?

The proposals will effect two groups of people who currently receive support with their travel:

- young people aged 16–25 with an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational need who attend an educational establishment
- people aged 18+ who receive adult social care support from the Council to attend structured day activities.

Why are you proposing these changes to people's existing travel arrangements?

The current travel arrangements do not help to develop people's confidence and independence; or allow them to access activities in the community the way other people do. One way of improving people's independence is to offer them safe opportunities to develop their skills. We do not think that putting people into local council buses is the most effective way to develop this independence. As such, we want to give people the opportunity to try different travel arrangements.

Also, the way we currently provide travel may not be the most cost-effective way to support people's needs. As the number of people requiring transport has reduced, the costs have stayed fairly consistent. By offering alternatives to the current service we can reduce costs and support people more flexibly.

What will the proposals mean?

The proposals mean that from the age of 16 people will be assessed to determine what eligible needs they have regarding travel assistance. As part of the assessment family members and carers will be asked if they can provide travel support for the person to help them attend their activity. The assessment will also look at what other travel support is available to the person in the form of benefits or travel passes. If these are available to use then the person will be encouraged to use them to go to their activities.

What are eligible needs?

The Care Act 2014 implemented a nationwide criteria used to assess what people's needs are and then to determine if those needs are eligible for support from the Council. Not all needs are considered eligible for support. Also, if someone's eligible need is already being met by suitable and appropriate means the Council does not have to provide additional support.

You can find more information about eligibility criteria at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance

What other travel options are there?

As a London borough, Lewisham benefits from comprehensive transport links provided by Transport for London (TfL). TfL offers a wide range of accessible transport options so that young, older and disabled people can travel around London. TfL is committed to improving transport in London by making it more accessible, safer and reliable. TfL runs a mobility aid recognition scheme which can offer people advice on planning a journey using accessible routes. TfL can even provide a mentor to support for people on their first few journeys to help you gain confidence and become an independent traveller.

Find out more about this support at

www.tfl.gov.uk/transport-accessibility/learn-to-use-public-transport.

There are also support and benefits available to people which entitle them to help with travel. Some of these benefits are provided by the Government, like DLA and PIP, in order to provide support specifically aimed at people with mobility needs. The Council also runs a concessionary travel scheme which provides people with freedom passes entitling them to free journeys on TfL's bus network across the borough.

Why are family members being asked to take people to college or day activities?

The proposed policy looks at what is the most appropriate way that travel assistance can be provided to adults receiving support from the council. To bring the travel assistance policy in line with the principles of the Care Act 2014, families and carers will be asked to consider how they can directly support the person they care for to get around and remain mobile.

Why are you including young people in a policy for adult social care?

Travel assistance for young people accessing education over the age of 16 is a discretionary service and not all councils provide young people with support. We have continued to provide this assistance and we intend to continue providing support for those who are most vulnerable and have the greatest need. In order to meet the aims of the service and to be able to continue to provide this support in the future we are looking creatively at how the service is delivered and who can access other support.

We also need to make improvements to support young people as they move from being classified as children to adults. The joint policy on travel assistance supports our aim to give people more choice about the care provided to them and provide those services more cost-effectively.

We will continue to support young people to develop skills that allow them to travel to their place of education independently, and provide assistance for those meeting the eligibility criteria whose needs mean that they cannot travel to their destination by other means. We are proposing to introduce a charge that will contribute towards the cost of this service. Many young people with special educational needs and disabilities accessing education are entitled to access grants and funding which include funding support for travel. We therefore expect that if support is provided by the Council then a reasonable contribution is made.

What about people who cannot travel on London buses? It's not safe to expect everyone to use public transport.

To support those with the greatest need we are looking at options to meet travel needs more effectively and efficiently. Any changes that are implemented by the adoption of this policy will need to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals and young people are supported and that travel arrangements support the preparation and move into adulthood. A key aspect of the policy is to assess people's eligible needs for transport and then look at how that need can be appropriately and safely met.

Why are you looking at people's benefits to cover the transport costs?

The policy proposes that, when assessing how a person's travel needs are being met, we will consider any benefits or entitlements that are provided to help support that person to get around. It is reasonable to expect that these benefits should be used for the purpose for which they are provided. This can include but is not limited to:

- PIP and DLA payments provided through the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)
- bus passes and travel concessions.
- educational bursaries and grants.

Consultation questions

About you

Which of the following best describes you? Please tick all that apply.

- Service user
- Parent/carer
- Young person
- Teacher/headteacher
- Representative of a local business
- Member of a voluntary organisation or advocacy group
- An advocate completing this on behalf of someone else
- Other (please specify)

Do you/your family member currently receive travel assistance?

- No
- Yes – from the Council
- Yes – other (please specify)

Are you or the person receiving support from the Council currently receiving either Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA) with mobility component?

- Yes – higher rate
- Yes – lower rate
- No – care component of PIP/DLA only
- Not at all
- Don't know/not applicable

Proposal 1: implement a joint travel assistance policy

Currently there are two separate policies – one covering young people aged 16–25 who go to college and a separate policy for adults who get care and support from the Council. We propose to combine the two policies, providing clarity over the process of assessing people for travel assistance and helping with young people's transition into adulthood.

1. Do you agree with the proposal to implement a joint travel assistance policy covering young people over 16 with a special educational need attending education and adults aged 18 and over who get adult social care support from the Council?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

The joint policy will be underpinned by the principles of travel assistance listed overleaf:

1. Travel assistance will be considered for people who have an eligible need.
2. The aim of the travel policy is to promote people's confidence to travel independently in the community.
3. Parents and carers have a vital role to play in providing support for people to travel.
4. People's mobility benefits or other travel assistance will contribute towards helping them to travel.
5. We can offer a range of travel assistance appropriate to the assessed needs of the individual.
6. Where people are eligible for support from us, the support provided will be the 'most appropriate and least restrictive option possible' as directed by the Care Act. Our preferred 'least restrictive' method of support is to provide people with a personal budget and direct payment, though direct support may be available where appropriate.

2. Do you agree with these principles of travel assistance?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Do you agree that personal budgets and direct payments would be a least restrictive and suitable method of providing support for people who are eligible for assistance to travel?

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please give any other comments you have on proposal 1.

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Proposal 2: Implement a travel assistance eligibility assessment

Families and individuals are currently required to apply for travel assistance:

- when they start post-16 education
- when the young person turns 18 years of age
- when social care travel assistance is required.

Currently at each milestone and for each different reason for support, different eligibility criteria may be applied when assessing if support should be given. We would like to make it clearer to families what the eligibility criteria are and, if eligible, what form the assistance will take. Eligibility will apply to both young adults attending education and adults who get social care support from the Council.



4. Do you agree that the travel assistance eligibility criteria should be the same for all post-16 educational travel assistance and adult social care provision?

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

5. Do you agree, as with other services, the Council should do an assessment of a person's needs to decide whether or not they are eligible for travel assistance?

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please give any other comments you have on proposal 2.

Proposal 3: People will be encouraged to travel more independently by using existing travel arrangements and services within the community

Before we will consider providing travel assistance, we expect that families and individuals use existing services and/or support available. This includes using existing free travel on Transport for London services, using some of the funding or benefits an individual receives for travel needs. We accept that, despite services being in place for free travel and funding, some individuals will continue to receive support from us to access essential services.

6. Do you support our aim of encouraging people to travel independently, if they are able to do so safely?

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please give any other comments you have on proposal 3.



Proposal 4: Parents and carers will be encouraged to support people

One of the key principles of the Care Act is to encourage families and carers to be directly involved in supporting people who get care and support from the Council. The Care Act states that, as part of the assessment, the Council must ask how a carer intends to provide support for the person they care for. We propose to implement this aspect of the Care Act in the assessment of a person's travel needs.

7. Do you think families and carers should be asked how they can help support people's travel needs as part of their assessment?

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please give any other comments you have on proposal 4.

Proposal 5: Existing travel benefits will be considered for travel assistance

If someone is receiving DLA, PIP, concessionary passes or another form of travel benefit, we will take these into consideration when assessing whether their needs are already being met. We do not need to provide support for needs that have already been met, for example by using existing benefits or concessions to help them.

8. Should existing mobility benefits or travel concessions be the main method that people use to travel to their chosen destination?

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree or disagree Disagree Strongly disagree

Please give any other comments you have on the above proposal 5.



About you

We would like to ask a few questions about you so that we can evaluate the responses to this survey in greater detail. We want to do this so we can better understand what residents say to us, and so we can use that understanding when we make decisions.

However, you do not need to answer any of these questions.

Any information that you do provide will remain strictly confidential in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

Gender

Male Female I'd rather not say

Other (please state)

Age

Please select your age group (please select one answer)

Under 18 years 18-24 25-29 30-34
 35-39 40-44 45-49 50-54
 55-59 60-64 65+ I'd rather not say

Ethnicity

What is your ethnic group?

White

English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British Irish Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Any other White background (please specify)

Mixed/multiple ethnic groups

White and Black Caribbean White and Black African White and Asian

Any other mixed/multiple ethnic back ground (please specify)

Asian/Asian British

Indian Pakistani Bangladeshi Chinese

Any other Asian background (please specify)

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

Caribbean African

Any other Black/African/Caribbean background (please specify)

Other ethnic group

Arab Any other ethnic group (please specify)

Rather not say

Disability

Under the Equality Act 2010, a person is considered to have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a sustained and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People with HIV, cancer and multiple sclerosis (MS) are also included.

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes No Rather not say

Please state the type of impairment that applies to you.

People may experience more than one type of impairment, in which case you may indicate more than one. If none of the categories apply, please mark 'other' and specify the type of impairment.

- Physical impairment, such as difficulty using your arms or mobility issues which mean using a wheelchair or crutches
- Sensory impairment, such as being blind/having a serious visual impairment or being deaf/having a serious hearing impairment
- Mental health condition, such as depression or schizophrenia
- Learning disability/difficulty such as Down's syndrome or dyslexia, or cognitive impairment such as autism spectrum disorder
- Longstanding illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease or epilepsy
- Other (please specify)

Sexual orientation

How would you define your sexual orientation?

- Straight/heterosexual Gay/lesbian Bisexual
- Other (please specify)
- Rather not say

Religion/belief

What is your religious belief?

- None Christian (all denominations) Buddhist Hindu
- Jewish Muslim Sikh
- Any other religion/belief (please specify)
- Rather not say

Please put your finished questionnaire in the pre-paid envelope and post it to us in time for it to arrive by **3 April 2017**.

Thank you for giving us your views. The results of this public consultation are expected in May 2017 and will be available on our website or by emailing a request to travelassistanceconsultation@lewisham.gov.uk.