

**ASC Transport Policy Consultation Report**

Councillor Ruth Moher & Assistant Director Lance Douglas set out the proposed new transport policy for adult social care clients. Transport Modernisation is a person centred process that has been going on for 3 years. Its purpose is to modernise transport provision for Adult Social Care clients to better meet their needs. Some people prefer to be more independent and travel independently to their chosen activities. But some people will always need the services that Brent Transport provides them at the moment. The consultation is to tell you about the proposal and also to listen to your views as it is very important to get your opinion.

Ruth Moher welcomed everyone to the meeting. She wanted to emphasize the message that Brent is not aiming to cut transport for people who need it. But if some people prefer to travel independently and they can safely do that, we fail them by not supporting them in this matter.

The purpose of the new Brent Transport Policy is not stopping the transport for service users but changing it for them and encouraging independent travel.

Lance Douglas underlined that the purpose of the policy is to promote people's independence. A lot of help will be given to anybody who can travel independently. Care managers and everybody involved understand carer's concerns about vulnerable people's safety. LD assured nobody will be put under unnecessary risk.

Historically Brent has been providing transport services for everybody who went through the system of special education regardless of whether they needed it or not.

He emphasized that the purpose of the transport transformation is to have better travel arrangements despite difficult financial situation. He said that the Council is prepared to listen and give clarification so that everybody can understand the whole process. He identified the different ways that the Council was consulting, including consultation meetings, inviting letters with self-addressed envelopes

and by email or telephone. He said the Council had written to every service user and sent them a copy of the draft policy for them to comment on.

Very soon we are starting a new wave of re-assessments for service users with learning disabilities where everybody who currently receives the services will be assessed. Alison Armstrong whose team is doing the assessments will be able to tell you more how they will be conducted.

If anybody is assessed and found to benefit from travelling independently then we will make sure that they can do so safely. Nobody will be forced to do this if this is not safe.

Very soon we are starting a new wave of re-assessments for service users with learning disabilities where everybody who currently receives the services will be assessed again. Transport needs will be assessed as part of these extensive, very comprehensive assessments. A multidisciplinary team of care managers, occupational therapists and physiotherapists will be working with the clients and their carers as part of their social care assessment. If anybody is found to benefit from travelling independently then we will make sure that they can do so safely. Nobody will do this if this is not safe.

**Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 10:45 - Stonebridge Day Centre**

Question	Answer
Mrs. Thompson suffers from a number of health conditions. Transformation meetings upset her. She is worried that her son who depends on Brent Transport Services will not get them because Brent is trying to save money.	Lance Douglas: We have not targeted transport as area of huge savings. If a service user is assessed that he needs the transport this person will continue receiving support suited to his needs. Councillor Moher: This meeting is not taking decision about any particular case.
Is Transport Transformation group working together with Alison Eliot's team who already conducted client's assessments?	Client's assessments will be done in the near future and we are working together with Alison Elliott's team. Transport is only one of the assessed needs. Alison Armstrong is responsible for the assessments. She will be answering questions on this. We did not

<p>Having this consultation so soon after Day Services Transformation consultation puts an additional layer of stress on people.</p> <p>Are you considering privatizing the transport?</p>	<p>want to conduct two consultations together.</p> <p>Transformation of transport services is based on a simple principle. If clients are assessed that they need transport they will continue receiving it. To use an alternative transport provision they have to be mobile, confident and judged safe.</p> <p>Privatisation was not considered.</p>
<p>Asmita Acharya, a service user is worried if transport picks service users up the same way as they have been doing all these years.</p>	<p>Lance Douglas: Yes, if you are assessed that you need the service.</p>
<p>How will travel training will be provided?</p>	<p>Lance Douglas: An appointed travel trainer will be providing the service. Duncan Mathews, the Independent Travel Programme Manager will work together with other Council departments to ensure the scheme is successful.</p>
<p>Mrs O'malley asked if the service will still pick-up as now and be door to door or at designated collection points because the policy currently talks about may be door to door and implies door to door will be stopped.</p>	<p>There is no intention to change the current system lance apologised if the policy was unclear we will change this to make it clear.</p>
<p>Brent Transport has been a beacon of Brent for many years. Why do you want to change it? How many clients you anticipate won't need its services?</p>	<p>Lance Douglas agreed that Brent Transport provides excellent services.</p> <p>We won't have an exact number before we complete all assessments. Until now there has been a culture of institutionalization. People who attend special education school automatically receive transport services with very little discussion and consideration of their actual needs.</p>

<p>Who will be doing assessments?</p>	<p>Alison Armstrong: The assessments are going to be comprehensive and transport is part of them. A multidisciplinary team of occupational therapists, nurses, physiotherapists and social workers will be doing the assessments.</p>
<p>You claim that some service users told you that they did not want Brent transport. Have you actually asked them this question or you are going to do that now?</p> <p>Why it has not been done before?</p> <p>Will it involve additional time and financial resources to conduct these assessments?</p>	<p>Lance Douglas: Transport needs will be assessed as part of the general assessments which are being done anyway.</p> <p>Ruth Moher: Adult Social Care transformation did not include transport. Transport is a different element.</p> <p>Lance Douglas: We want your views on the transport policy and we shall apply Transport policy to the assessments.</p> <p>Ruth Moher: In the past it was assumed that people will need transport if they want it or not. The purpose is to help people to travel independently and not to penalise them.</p>
<p>Carers are upset that their views are not listened to. They are disheartened by the results of the Adult Day Care Transformation consultations. Adult Social Care and Transport transformation are interlinked. Where the transport will be going to if the day centres are closing down? Carers feel very strongly that their views have not been heard and consultation is just a formality.</p>	<p>Lance Douglas: People need to be transported into community. It may require investment because service users will be going out to different places. Transport will still be provided to those people still attending day centres. Transport can be provided to other places. We will support those people who do not need transport and want to travel independently to do so.</p> <p>Brent Council's Executive made a decision that these two consultations should be carried out separately. They are separate changes and are quite different.</p> <p>LD said that he understood that carers felt frustrated. There is a genuine attempt to listen to the views of</p>

	users and carers.
Carer: Adult Care Transformation is just a cost cutting exercise.	Councillor Moher: Personalisation started about three years ago and then it was caught up in the cost cutting measures. We are looking to provide more personal services to the service users. Stonebridge and Strathcona day centres are underused. Stonebridge Day Centre is not fit for purpose. New provision gives an opportunity to the people and as a result they will gain more. The consultation identified that other council buildings can be used more flexibly.
Carers save the government millions of pounds by caring for their loved ones.	Lance Douglas agreed.
Do we only discuss transport to the day centres?	LD confirmed we are discussing transport provided by BTS
When one of the carers asked if people will be getting transport to get to Brent Cross another carer responded that it should be covered by the direct payment.	Lance Douglas replied that transport is not included in direct payment and individual budgets.
Are there plans to introduce payment for the transport services?	Lance Douglas: Not at the moment. There will be more consultations if charging for transport is considered.

**Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 18:00 - Stonebridge Day Centre**

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
Where are the assessments are being held?	Lance Douglas: Care managers will be doing assessments in the day centres, in offices or in people's homes. Care managers will be supported by occupational and physiotherapists.

<p>Will you assess only people's mobility needs or you will take into consideration other factors e.g. people's anxieties?</p>	<p>Lance Douglas:          People may be encouraged to travel independently only if they can travel independently. If the assessment shows that you cannot do that, nobody will force you to.          Duncan Mathews is developing a set of measures on how to help people travel independently. He is putting in place an independent travel-training program. There will be support for people through the independent travel training scheme. Brent staff will provide the support.</p>
<p>What will happen if a client is assessed that they can travel independently but after they start on the travel training program it becomes evident that they cannot do that? Will there be a review?</p>	<p>Lance Douglas:          Yes. If it's not safe and a person is not learning, there will be another re-assessment. Nobody will be forced to travel independently if they cannot safely do that. If someone cannot travel independently they will not have to.</p>
<p>What does it mean to travel independently?</p>	<p>There are different ways. They can travel on their own or have a travel buddy or support worker with them.</p>
<p>Lance Douglas gives carers a lot of reassurances but we need a clear statement in writing of what you are intending to do. Carers are disheartened by their experience with previous consultations and request that all verbal promises are put in writing.          Can you promise us that if people want transport they will receive it?</p>	<p>Lance Douglas:          The draft Brent Council Policy on Transport Support for Adult Social Care Clients has been sent out. We are consulting with carers and services users as Brent Executives told us.          We cannot promise that if people want the transport they will get it. It is down to the assessment. Everybody who needs transport will continue receiving it.</p> <p>Ruth Moher:          This policy covers the whole range of people including for example children with behaviour problems. Those people who cannot travel independently will continue travelling on Brent</p>

	coaches.
We always believed that the vulnerable will be protected. The decision is being forced on us.	With the current scale of budget cuts Brent is estimating that we will need to save £90 – 100 million over the next four years. But if somebody has been travelling on council transport for the last 20 years it is likely that this person will continue receiving this service.
Travelling on public transport especially at peak time can be dangerous even for people without disabilities. People with learning disabilities can be subjected to bullying and intimidating behavior. It can be scary even if they travel with somebody. You are not thinking about the whole picture. Carers do not believe that their views will be listened to.  What are the criteria on which people will be judged that they can travel independently?	Duncan Mathews referred carers to the page 3 on the draft policy where it says that assessment will consider both physical and social reasons that might enable or prevent the client from travelling independently. DM read out a relevant part of the document.  Alison Armstrong: AA reassured that the majority of current service users will still travel on Brent buses though they might not be travelling to the day centres five days a week. There will be more mainstream destinations. Care managers together with occupational and physiotherapists will be doing these assessments. All assessments will be personally signed by me. I'll only sign them if I am absolutely sure. If your GP sends us a letter it will also be taken into consideration.
Will you involve private Occupational therapist or will they will be employed by Brent?	Brent.
What is the timeline for the consultation?	The policy is up for consultation until 3 <sup>rd</sup> of March. The report on consultation and suggestions will be made after this date. The assessment will be done between April - October. The assessment team will be seeing service users and carers. In the

	intermediate period everybody who is currently receiving the services will still be getting them.
How carers will be involved in the assessments?	Alison Armstrong: If clients have capacity they will be asked if they want their carer to be present during assessments. There will be carers' assessments too.
How do you judge client's mental capacity?	Alison Armstrong: The Mental Capacity is that a person must be assumed to have capacity to make a decision or act for themselves. Only specially qualified social worker, GP or psychiatric nurse can identify if you have a capacity. The majority of the service users already had the capacity test. You can tell us if you want a re-test.
<p>Anjna Manek on behalf of the carers: Concern was raised that though the Section 3 of the proposed transport policy lists a number of physical and social reasons that might enable or prevent the client from travelling independently a softer criteria for accessing Brent Transport is not taken into consideration.</p> <p>In the 1980s Brent tried to implement similar measures. A client started the travel training programme but was withdrawn from it at the final stage.</p> <p>Carers are not trying to sabotage client's independence. Their main concern is their loved ones' safety. People are not resisting change for the sake of this. You need to start listening to the carers' concerns. Today service users receive reliable, systematic and safe services from Brent transport. Proposed Transport policy makes perfect sense but not for the learning disabilities.</p> <p>Carers don't think that using Brent Transport coaches bears a stigma of institutionalization the same way as using Transport for London does not.</p>	
<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
The policy states that the assessment and provision of	Lance Douglas: The service users can request the review.



transport will be reviewed on a 3- or 6-monthly basis. Will it apply to everybody?	The review will take into consideration not only listed criteria but also more subtle aspects.
The judgment on softer aspects is very subjective. Difficulties arise when you try to convert it into what kind of services people will be receiving.	Alison Armstrong: That is why a multidisciplinary team will be doing clients' re-assessments. This team will include care managers, physio and occupational therapists. You can ask your GP to write a letter. All these professionals won't be in the room during the assessment because it would be very intimidating for the clients. If the service user is identified that they will benefit from employment, Mencap and organization called Toucan will support them.
Carers are worried about practicalities of travel training.	Duncan Mathews: DM gave a summary of travel training programme in its different stages. The travel trainer is responsible for making sure the student understands the realities of public transportation and learns the skills required for safe and independent travel.
Let us know a) when the report on the Policy is available b) when the decision is made.	Lance Douglas: The report on the Transport Policy is going to the Executives in March. The Report will be published on Brent website. We will write you about the results.

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 10:45 - Stonebridge Day Centre**

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
At the weekend people want to travel to different places e.g. West End and shopping but buses are crowded. Will Brent Transport help us to go there?	Lance Douglas: We would like to encourage people to go out more independently and with their carers.
One of the clients shared his	Lance Douglas praised the client and said that this

<p>achievements of travelling independently but said that it was very difficult because he was partially sighted.</p>	<p>person could even help other people to start travelling independently. He also agreed that not being able to see properly makes travelling very difficult.</p>
<p>How will the assessments be done?</p>	<p>Everybody will be assessed using the national Fair Access To Services criteria. People mobility needs will be assessed too as part of the combined assessments.</p> <p>Some people with physical disabilities have mobility cars and they can drive themselves to their day activities. Some people have mobility car and their carers drive them. Will these people get transport services or not depends on their circumstances.</p> <p>One of the carers said that she drives her brother to doctors' appointments etc but Brent coach takes him to his day centre. LD replied that assessment will ask the carer if they can take clients to their day activities too.</p>
<p>Some clients are mobile and physically fit to travel but they have learning disabilities that prevent them from travelling independently.</p>	<p>If people are not mentally capable to safely travel on their own they will continue using Brent Transport services unless somebody can take them.</p>
<p>Brent Transport is very efficient and reliable. At the moment clients are facing a lot of instability with day centres closing. Not being able to use coaches will add to their confusion and create a lot of behavioral and safety issues.</p>	<p>A lot of people were put on Brent coaches without considering any alternative. If service users are assessed that they need transport they will continue with it as at the moment, and if they don't need transport it will be stopped. The first wave of assessments is starting at the end of January. We realize that if a service user has been travelling by Brent coaches for 10 – 40 years it is unlikely that the assessment team will tell them to start travelling independently.</p> <p>Brent aims to maintain managing existing transport services and further improving them.</p>

Is there a target to reduce transport usage in Brent?	LD: An initial assessment shows that 45 people out of 400 might be assessed that they can travel independently.
Will the impending assessments take into consideration that clients who are not usually prone to challenging behaviour can have the outbursts?	Care managers are going to conduct very thorough comprehensive assessments. Carer's views will be taken into consideration. Carers might attend the assessments if clients want them to be there. An experienced social worker will be talking to the carers.

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at 18:00 - Stonebridge Day Centre**

<b>Questions</b>	<b>Answers</b>
A carer thanked Lance Douglas and Ruth Moher for dispelling rumors that Brent is going to stop providing transport for services users. It has been a great relief.	If a service user is assessed that they cannot travel independently they will continue using the transport services as before. If they can travel independently some alternative arrangements will be made. Travel training will be provided.
What individuals can be put forward for travel training?	Anyone who wants to be travel trained will be given the opportunity. Duncan Matthews : A qualified travel trainer will be working individually with the clients giving them stage by stage support. There are different travel training schemes depending on client's needs and abilities. The decision will be taken at the end if it is safe for the service users to travel independently. In some cases, in spite of all resources and efforts invested in the travel training, the person will be judged as not being able to do that. These people will continue receiving Brent Transport services. There might be cases when people will be accompanied at all times. Lance Douglas: Though the services are changing Brent will still

	<p>respect its statutory obligations of meeting people's needs.</p> <p>Unfortunately it might be only a minority of current service users who will be able to start travelling independently. For those who are capable of doing that it will be a life changing experience.</p>
<p>Concerns about safety of older people if they are encouraged to start travelling independently.</p>	<p>Older people who lack capacity or too frail will continue receiving Brent Transport services.</p>