
Meeting	Cabinet Resources Committee
Date	7 November 2012
Subject	Adult Passenger Transport Policy
Report of	Cabinet Member for Adults Cabinet Member for Environment Cabinet Member for Customer Access and Partnerships
Summary	This report summarises current work to implement efficiencies in door-to-door transport arrangements for adults with mobility needs, and sets out the results of public consultation on door-to-door transport, and recommends changes to relevant policies.

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Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	All
Key Decision	Yes
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in (if appropriate)	Not applicable
Function of	Executive
Enclosures	Appendix 1 - Summary of conclusions of Equalities Impact Assessments Appendix 2 - Report of findings of public consultation survey (attached as separate document) Appendix 3 - Report of consultation meetings Appendix 4 - Utilisation of adult passenger transport provided by Adult Social Care and Health Appendix 5 - Proposed eligibility policy for adult passenger transport provided by Adult Social Care and Health Appendix 6 - Proposed rules for the provision of reserved parking bays for disabled people
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1. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet Resources Committee:

- 1.1 Consider the outcomes of the public consultation on door-to-door transport for vulnerable adults and the equalities impact analysis.**
- 1.2 Approve the Eligibility Policy for council-funded transport for adults.**
- 1.3 Approve a charge of £10 payable by successful applicants for a 3 year Blue Badge parking permit.**
- 1.4 Approve the revised policy for the provision of personal parking bays for disabled people.**
- 1.5 That the Committee approve the replacement of the existing Travel Voucher scheme with the London wide Taxicard scheme.**

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Cabinet Resources Committee, 27 September 2011 (Decision item 16) - approved the transformation of passenger transport services through full membership of the West London Alliance (WLA) and through participation in the WLA Transport Efficiency Programme, including the procurement of transport provision, the establishment of a Transport Bureau, the development of a 'Door to Door' Transport Policy for Vulnerable Adults, transformation of the in-house transport service, and the purchase of new vehicles for the in-house fleet.**
- 2.2 Cabinet Resources Committee, 20 June 2012 (Decision Item 17) – approved the award of a contract to Dimensions for preventative support for people with learning disabilities to support personalisation of social care and health, including provision of independent travel training.**
- 2.3 Cabinet, 17 July 2012 (Decision Item 11) – considered the outcomes of the public consultation on day services for older people, agreed the Model for future services and approved the development of an implementation plan for consideration by Cabinet Resources Committee.**

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 The three priority outcomes set out in the Corporate Plan are:

- Better services with less money;
- Sharing opportunities, sharing responsibilities;
- A successful London suburb.

3.2 The One Barnet programme has three overarching aims:

- A new relationship with citizens;
- A one public sector approach;
- A relentless drive for efficiency.

3.3 The overarching aim of the One Barnet Programme is to create a new citizen centred council through delivering a new relationship with citizens and, by improving their experience of door-to-door transport services, this will contribute to the council in achieving this aim. This aim is conducive with the One Barnet Framework aim of “providing a new relationship with citizens” and the benefit of “greater choice and control for residents and customers” that will be delivered through this programme.

3.4 The policy directions recommended in this report will contribute to the successful achievement of these outcomes and aims by enabling people with the capacity to travel independently to get the extra support they need to do so, ensuring that help with transport is provided in accordance with assessed need and that a fair price is charged for services provided. This will enable increased value for money and the realisation of future savings.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1 Barnet’s population is healthier and living longer than the national average. National prevalence models when applied to Barnet’s demography indicates that the borough will experience an 11% increase in residents with learning disability and mental ill health, a 17% increase in residents with a physical disability and a 21% increase in residents aged 65. At the same time, resources to the Council to meet the needs of Barnet’s residents are set to decrease in line with the Government’s Comprehensive Spending Review. The implementation of clear criteria for access to adult transport provision is necessary to ensure that services are targeted to those who need them and that risks of inappropriate expenditure are avoided.

4.2 Provision of Council-funded transport services for people able to use alternative transport creates inappropriate dependencies. The application of eligibility criteria based on consideration of each individual’s needs mitigates this risk. This person-centred assessment of mobility and capacity also ensures the Council is able to identify

individuals who would benefit from enablement to use mainstream transport provision.

- 4.3 Provision of travel training particularly for younger people including those in transition to adult social care services helps service users reduce the risk of greater levels of dependency in later life. Shifting the balance of resources in this way towards early intervention and prevention offers good value for money for individuals and the Council by reducing requirements for more expensive specialist transport provision and replacing them with access to lower-cost travel. For example, Essex County Council has reported a first year saving of £243,000 following an investment of £60,000 in two full-time travel trainers. Greater independence in travel arrangements also means that individuals and their families can exercise choice in selecting services and activities and to take real control of their personal budgets.
- 4.4 The introduction of a charge for successful Blue Badge applications and the closure of the Travel Voucher scheme address the risk of unnecessary pressures on the Council's resources by charging a fair rate for services provided and by eliminating duplication of concessionary travel services.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 Between 14 May 2012 and 6 August 2012, the Council carried out extensive consultation (see section 9 and appendices 2 and 3) on the proposals now being recommended in this report, with the public, service users, carers and relevant organisations. This included an on-line publication of consultation documents in standard and easy read versions, provision of hard copies to current Adult Social and Health (ASCH) transport users and consultation meetings held in day centres and a range of other locations with service users and representative bodies.
- 5.2 All proposals relate to the provision of transport for people with mobility needs and consequently impact directly on residents with disabilities and/or older people. The responses to this consultation have been used to review the initial conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessments (EqA) completed when the proposals were being formulated. The responses to the consultation as well as the detailed equalities analysis have informed the formulation of the proposals in this report.
- 5.3 The EqAs show the overall impact of the Council's proposals on the different equality strands; identifies potentially negative impacts and identifies ways to promote equality of opportunity and ensure greater access to services. The outcome of the assessments undertaken on the proposals on the various equality groups is that there will be an overall neutral impact.

- 5.4 The consultation survey results indicate overall a majority support for the proposed Blue Badge application charge and for changes to the rules for provision of personal parking bays but less support for the proposed eligibility policy on disabled people and the proposed termination of the travel voucher scheme. In all cases, respondents indicated concerns that the changes could potentially impact negatively on people with disabilities and on people with low income. Concerns of this nature were strongest among those responding to the easy read consultation documents, which is likely to include a high proportion of current service users.
- 5.5 In officers' view these concerns to a large extent reflect understandable fears of loss of provision. The intention of the changes though is to ensure that the Council provides the right kind of help with travel for each individual, based on an assessment of their needs. Implementation of the policies would be monitored to identify and resolve or mitigate any adverse outcomes identified.
- 5.6 The size of the response to the consultation survey and the limited attendance at most consultation meetings arranged during the consultation period for service users, their families and carers may be due to several factors including disinterest resulting from consultation fatigue or tacit support for the changes. We will continue to proactively engage with stakeholders during the implementation phase to ensure the proactive involvement of those people and organisations who have an interest in this re-shaping of transport for older people and those with disabilities.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Financial, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Procurement, Sustainability)

Proposal 1 - Eligibility Policy

- 6.1 Transport for Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) service users with mobility needs is currently provided by the Council's Passenger Transport Service using a combination of owned and contracted vehicles. Outturn expenditure for 2011/12 for this provision met from the ASCH base budget was £1,038,140 comprising £818,033 for minibus services and £220,106 for taxi services.
- 6.2 If approved, the new policy will be implemented from April 2013. It is intended that ASCH will purchase transport services from the Transport Bureau recently established by the West London Alliance (WLA), with the Council's Passenger Transport Service operating as a contractor commissioned by the Bureau. Budget efficiencies are anticipated in future years but it is not possible to quantify these at present and none are consequently included in the Council's medium term financial strategy.

- 6.3 Implementation of the eligibility policy for access to ASCH transport provision is not expected to result in substantial savings. The policy has not yet been implemented by WLA member boroughs and benchmark data is not therefore available at present. Direct and indirect savings are realisable in future, particularly from the provision of independent travel training to enable people to access public transport. However, estimates are not currently available and these will be quantified during 2013 following implementation of the policy if approved. The costs will be contained within the existing Adults transport budget

Proposal 2 - Independent Travel Training

- 6.4 ASCH currently fund independent travel training as part of the services delivered by some day services contractors including Your Choice, the former in-house day service transferred to Barnet Homes earlier this year. ASCH has also recently commissioned a training service as part of the contract with Dimensions for prevention services for people with learning disabilities, as specific provision for people identified through ASCH implementation of the eligibility policy if approved. Use of this provision and the outcomes achieved will be monitored during 2013 to establish value for money and the business case for further investment. This is currently being funded from ASCH budgets and further investment will also be contained within the service.

Proposal 3 - Blue Badge Application Charge

- 6.5 Recently a national scheme has been introduced to improve the quality of the Blue Badge parking permit service. There are two types of Blue Badges those which are known as type 1 are “eligible without further assessment” and type 2 “eligible subject to further assessment” Type 2 assessments can be desk based assessments (DBA) or require an Independent mobility assessment (IMA) In the 4th quarter data shows that out of 1652 Blue Badges issued, 570 were issued as Type 1 and 66% were Type 2.
- 6.6 The administration cost of the scheme is £20 per application. This policy is proposing to introduce a £10 charge for those who are applying for a Blue Badge parking permit. This £10 charge is the maximum, which Local Authorities are able to charge, and 11 out of 15 comparable Local Authorities will be introducing this maximum charge.
- 6.7 It is proposed that from 1 January 2013 a fee of £10 be levied for successful applications only (no fee will be payable for an unsuccessful application). The fee will be used to contribute to the overall administration cost of managing the Blue Badge service within Customer Services.

- 6.8 There is no expected impact on the performance or resources with the Assisted Travel team on the agreement to implement this charge

Proposal 4 - Personal Parking Bays

- 6.9 There is concern that the current criteria used in assessing applications for disabled bays is not sufficiently robust and this results in many bays being provided which may not be beneficial to either the individuals concerned or for road users in general. This concern runs in parallel to national concern about the disabled badge scheme, and the apparent abuse/misuse/fraud by motorists of the disabled badge system.
- 6.10 It is considered that the Council should focus its disabled bay scheme to benefit the individuals who most need them given the nature of their personal circumstances. It is also considered that steps should be taken to minimise misuse and abuse of the disabled bay system by making the criteria for their provision more robust.
- 6.11 It is considered that such steps should result in less disabled bay applications being made and less applications being approved, hence ensuring the continued best use of limited resources, in both staff time, implementation and subsequent removal of the bays along with the continued administration of the scheme. It will also achieve the primary objective of making the disabled bay scheme better suited and serving the purpose for which they are intended. The revised eligibility criteria will be applied from 1/1/13.

Proposal 5 - Travel Voucher Scheme

- 6.12 Barnet Council currently provides travel vouchers for residents who are unable to use public transport or travel independently. This Travel Voucher Scheme is not used by many and is costly to the Council. The overall estimated annual cost of running a Travel Voucher service based on 2010-11 figures, was £9,561 in respect of 120 applications which represents a low take up of the Travel Voucher Scheme.

The Council is, therefore, proposing to cease this scheme from 1/4/13 and instead assist residents in applying for a Taxicard. The Taxicard scheme is run by London Councils and offers help with taxis to people living in London. The money saved from ceasing the travel voucher scheme will be re-invested in customer services to support staff to signpost users to the Taxicard scheme

7. LEGAL ISSUES

Power to charge

- 7.1 A local authority has a discretionary power to charge for the issue of a disabled person's badge pursuant to Regulation 6 of The Disabled

Persons (Badges for Motor Vehicles) (England) Regulations 2000. These Regulations were amended in December 2011 permitting a fee not exceeding £2 for badges, which have a date of issue before 1 January 2012 and a fee not exceeding £10 for badges with a date of issue on or after 1 January 2012.

Consultation

- 7.2 As a matter of public law the Council is required to consult on the proposed changes set out in this report. For consultation to be deemed as proper consideration, it must be undertaken whilst the proposals are in a formative stage. Consultation documents must include sufficient reasons for the proposal to allow those being consulted to be properly informed and to give an informed response, adequate time must be given to the consultees to consider the proposals. Also there must be a mechanism for feeding back the comments and those comments must be conscientiously taken into account by the decision maker / decision making body when making a final decision.

The council has consulted all stakeholders extensively on these proposals and the responses to the consultation have informed the final proposals. Members of the committee must be mindful of their duty to take consultees' comments into consideration when making their final decision.

Public Sector Equality Duties

- 7.3 The core provisions of the Equality Act 2010 came into effect in October 2010. The Act provides a new cross-cutting legislative framework to update, simplify and strengthen the previous discrimination legislation. In short, the council must have due regard to the equality duties whenever it exercises a public function.

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality and good relations into day-to-day business requiring equality considerations to be reflected into the design of policies and the delivery of services and for these to be kept under review. Members must consider what impact if any the proposals set out in this report will have on one or more protected groups, whether there will be any cumulative impact and what mitigating steps must be put in train.

Members are referred to the Equality Impact Assessments (appended to this report) which were completed for each of the proposals and further reviewed in the light of responses to the extensive public consultation.

- 7.4 The general duty on public bodies pursuant to section 149 of the Act states:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- a. eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act
- b. advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c. foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7.5 Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- a. remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;
- b. take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c. encourage persons who share a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.

7.6 Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to:

- a. tackle prejudice;
- b. promote understanding.

7.7 Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

The relevant protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation.

- 7.8 It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination.
- 7.9 'Due regard' as required by legislation is more than 'regard'; it requires more than simply giving consideration to the issue of disability, race or gender. The law requires a rigorous and open-minded approach and for the duty to be exercised in substance.
- 7.10 The Equality and Human Rights Commission has issued a statutory code of practice with regard to services, public functions and associations as well as a number of non statutory guides, including an essential guide to the public sector equality duty, equality objectives, equality information, meeting the equality duty in policy and decision-making and engagement. The council must follow statutory guidance and have regard to non-statutory guidance when formulating policies and decision-making and should only depart from it with good reason.
- 7.11 The guidance states, amongst other matters, that public authorities should:
- Have an adequate evidence base (i.e. up to date and reliable information about the different groups) when undertaking the analysis and making decisions and to consider what engagement needs to be undertaken with people who have an interest in tackling discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations; and
 - Analyse the potential impact that a policy, procedure or practice might have on different equality groups.
- 7.12 The Council is following the Codes and considering the guidance in formulating its proposals for consideration by Cabinet.
- 7.13 The Council will keep under review whether in developing the new services these statutory duties are relevant.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

- 8.1 Council Constitution, Part 3, Responsibility for Functions – Section 3.6 details the responsibilities of the Cabinet Resources Committee which includes 'Approval of schemes not in performance management plans but not outside the Council's budget or policy framework.'
- 8.2 This decision is considered to be a key decision by nature of it having a significant impact on people living in two or more wards of the borough.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Context

- 9.1 This report takes forward specific policy developments as part of the transformation of transport for adults with mobility needs related to disabilities and age. The recommended changes support and form part of the wider work of the Council as a full member of the West London Alliance (WLA) and its participation in the WLA's Transport Efficiency Programme. The report sets out each of the proposals, the consultation process and the responses to the consultation.
- 9.2 The Transport Efficiency Programme aims to achieve a shared services model, which will meet participating Boroughs' passenger transport, fleet services and concessionary travel requirements. This has the potential to deliver financial savings, improve service levels and meet the changing national policy and social care transformation strategy.
- 9.3 The transformation strategy being pursued will maximise the opportunity to attain savings for the participating Boroughs through the creation of the WLA Transport Bureau established in June 2012. This seeks to drive collaborative working, establish best practice and embed a shared service approach with all participating Boroughs to enable citizens to be as independent as possible and individual savings for each Borough to be realised.
- 9.4 The Council currently plans to transfer the planning and scheduling of passenger transport for Adult Social Care and Health and Children's Services and the management of the contracted transport function of the Council's existing Passenger Transport Service to the WLA Transport Bureau from April 2013.
- 9.5 It is expected that the WLA will propose specific developments of the Bureau's future role, potentially including advice and information services concerning concessionary travel options and specialist independent travel training services.
- 9.6 As part of the Council's work, Cabinet Resources Committee in September 2011 approved plans to achieve savings through the management and transformation of the Council's in-house transport fleet operation, and the deployment of £742,000 social care capital allocation for the purchase of London Emission Zone compliant vehicles.
- 9.7 This Committee also recognised that it will be necessary for the Council to have in place a clear door-to-door and eligibility policy for passenger transport and concessionary travel for Adults with mobility needs related to disability or age. Specific proposals on the eligibility policy and related matters have recently been the subject of full public

consultation as reported below, and the remainder of this report is concerned with this area of policy development.

9.8 Consultation

The Council commenced public consultation on 14th May 2012 and the consultation period ended on 6th August 2012. In line with legal advice and practical considerations, the three-month period has been adopted as the norm for consultations with ASCH clients and other vulnerable people concerning social care and support services. Printed consultation documents and questionnaires in standard and easy read formats were sent and residents also had the opportunity to complete the survey online.

9.9 In total 265 surveys were completed, among which there were 121 standard surveys (of which 44 were completed online) and 144 easy read alternatives.

- Over 60% of respondents were aged 55 or over, and only 10% were aged under 35;
- Numbers of male and female respondents were roughly equal;
- Three-quarters of respondents identified themselves as having one or more disabilities, of whom one half reported reduced mobility and one-quarter said they had learning difficulties;
- One-quarter of respondents recorded their ethnicity as other than White or White British, roughly equivalent to the overall proportion of Barnet's adult population but relatively high given the preponderance of older people among the respondent group.

9.10 The analysis of the responses is reported at Appendix 2, and summaries are included in the following sections concerned with each of the proposals of the consultation documents.

9.11 In addition, service users were invited to attend ten meetings held at a range of locations during the day and evening. Presentations were also made to the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board. A summary of the feedback received at these meetings is at Appendix 3.

Proposal 1 Policy on Eligibility for Transport provided by the Council's Adult Social Care and Health

9.12 The Council has developed the proposed policy with member boroughs of the West London Alliance as the basis for a common approach across the sub-region. Complementary work on a common eligibility policy in respect of children with special educational needs is nearing completion and is expected to be adopted by member boroughs shortly.

9.13 The proposed policy for adults with mobility needs related to age or disabilities defines qualifying criteria for access to transport services

funded from the Adult Social Care and Health budget. There are currently almost 400 people currently using minibuses provided by the Council's Passenger Transport Service and serving eight day centres daily. A further 25 people are currently using private taxi services either to attend other day services or where shared transport would be unsuitable. Data is shown in Appendix 4.

9.14 The changing context in which transport is provided presents both risks and opportunities:

- Numbers of people with mobility difficulties are set to increase in line with longer life expectancy and disability prevalence rates;
- The choices of people using social care and support services are changing; for example, few of the Fremantle day care places have been operating to capacity;
- Day opportunities provision for older people and people with disabilities will become more diverse as a result of take-up of personal budgets;
- The Council's commitment to the Ageing Well agenda and the localisation of support offers opportunities to tap into 'neighbourhood spirit', volunteering and other social capital.

9.15 The proposed policy recognises that future use of transport services should be based on the need to promote independence and to support service users to remain independent for as long as possible. Assessments would take place as part of the overall consideration of each person's need for social care and support to achieve this overarching objective.

9.16 The policy is shown in full in Appendix 5 and sets out a method for structured and consistent decision-making soundly based on person-centred assessment of each individual's transport needs, taking into account three primary criteria:

- Access to existing transport, for example whether the person has a mobility vehicle or other suitable transport that they already use;
- Assessment of mobility, in particular the extent to which the person is physically able to manage independent travel options;
- Assessment of ability to travel independently, taking into account risks or other factors that may make independent travel unsafe.

Proposal 1 - Consultation Findings

9.17 43% of all respondents disagreed with the proposal compared with 27% who supported it and 30% who were unsure or had no opinion.

- 9.18 Respondents to the standard survey were asked to give their view on the likely effect of the proposed policy on different groups. 80% and 66% respectively felt that there would be a negative impact on disabled people and on people with low income. When asked how the Council could improve these negative impacts, 12 respondents indicated that the current policy should continue. The position will be that people who have FACS eligible needs and who receive transport to for example day centres will only have their provision of transport changed as part of a community care re-assessment. The Council has an ongoing duty of care to ensure that eligible needs are met.
- 9.19 Further information provided by respondents to the standard and easy read surveys indicated views that the current service is vital to people whose condition(s) make independent travel unsafe and concerns that the changes would lead to higher costs for the people affected.

Proposal 1 Comment

- 9.20 The anxieties expressed by respondents to the surveys and during consultation meetings reflect the high proportions using current transport services who are concerned that they and other people with mobility needs may lose them and consequently the opportunity to attend day services. However, implementation of the proposed policy would not lead to this outcome under any circumstances since the criteria will support continued provision unless the individual has a suitable alternative transport option.
- 9.21 It is not expected that implementation would lead to the widespread withdrawal of provision. Officers believe that there are few people using current services who either have existing alternative travel options but prefer to use Council-funded transport or who have sufficient mobility and related capacity to use safely mainstream transport. The intention of the policy is rather to include transport needs within the overall discussion and agreement of each person's support package and ensure that individual aspirations and capacity for greater independence are recognised and met within the context of the Council meeting its duty of care as specified in paragraph 9.18.
- 9.22 It is necessary for the Council as a public body responsible for resource allocation to set criteria for access to transport services to ensure the basis of its decision-making process is clear to citizens. The proposed policy has been adopted by WLA member boroughs either as approved policy or as a basis for public consultation, and similar policies have been introduced by other local authorities researched by officers.

Proposal 1 Implementation

- 9.23 Key milestones and indicative timescales for implementation of the proposed eligibility policy are currently being scoped and it is proposed

that implementation of the application of the new eligibility criteria is applied from 1 April 2013.

- 9.24 Related activity will continue during the remainder of 2012 in preparation for the transfer of transport operational activity to the WLA Transport Bureau currently planned from 1 April 2013 as set out in Paragraph 9.4

Proposal 2 Independent Travel Training

- 9.25 The eligibility policy for Council-funded transport is intended to minimise the risk of unnecessary dependency and costs. Providing transport on request simply as an adjunct of day service provision means that individuals may over time lose motivation and capacity that they once had to achieve more independent travel.

Early intervention and prevention, helping people to live as independently as possible, is at the heart of adult social care strategy and applies equally to meeting transport-related needs.

- 9.26 There is a substantial national body of good practice and innovatory projects demonstrating the benefits of Independent Travel Training for learners, carers and statutory agencies. This has been summarised in the Department for Transport's publication, Travel Training - Good Practice Guidance (2011).

9.27 Benefits for **learners** include:

- Increased independence and confidence, and improved self esteem;
- Increased opportunity to participate in social and leisure activities;
- Improvement to general health and well-being, improved quality of life;
- Increased opportunity and likelihood of entering employment or education.

Benefits for **carers** are a reduction in care responsibilities, enabling greater participation in employment, education and leisure activities.

Benefits for **statutory agencies** include:

- Cost savings as a result of reduced demand on local authority transport services,
- Cost savings in transport associated with healthcare, such as home visits;
- Reduced long term social care requirements;
- Reduced demand on the health service due to long term health benefits associated with increased independence.

- 9.28 The benefits of Independent Travel Training are long term as the training often results in lifelong changes in behaviour among learners. The following comments illustrate both the broad and specific positive outcomes that Independent Travel Training can deliver:

“I was very nervous about travelling on the bus as I was concerned that I would miss my stop or get off at the wrong place. Now I can get to college without any worries or fears. I couldn’t have gone to college without that support.” (Service user)

“My son’s confidence and self-esteem have blossomed. In his eyes, the world has become accessible and he feels that he ‘fits in’ with his peers, which is so important to a teenager.” (Parent)

- 9.29 Putting in place effective training and support for individuals to gain independent travel skills is therefore an essential part of the WLA Transport Efficiency Programme. A WLA working group will report detailed conclusions and recommendations shortly and is expected to propose relevant development of Bureau functions.
- 9.30 Although significant Independent Travel Training is provided currently for Adult Social Care and Health clients as part of the range of activity offered by providers of day services including Your Choice, it is not separately recorded or monitored as a discrete activity. Additional provision has recently been included in the contract with Dimensions the provider commissioned to deliver re-modelled voluntary sector prevention services for people with learning disabilities, approved by this Committee in June 2012. This is intended to provide access to ring-fenced Independent Travel Training for individuals with substantial or critical needs nominated by Adult Social Care and Health.
- 9.31 Implementation of the proposed eligibility policy will include review of the customer pathway to Independent Travel Training and to evidence potential requirements for additional supply. Analysis of outcomes achieved by the Dimensions Independent Travel Training service will further inform the business case for ‘spend-to-save’ expansions that may be recommended in the future.

Proposal 2 Consultation

- 9.32 Respondents were asked how important they felt it was that the council commissioned trainings services which would promote independent travel and reduce the dependency on social services transport.
- 9.33 Almost a quarter (23%) of respondents said that it was very important for the Council to commission such training and a further 24% said it was something which was fairly important. Only 13% of respondents said it was not at all important that the Council commissioned independent travel training.

- 9.34 Although still high, agreement that travel training was important was lower among respondents to the easy read survey. 38% of the 138 respondents who gave a response said that they thought travel training was important. 30% of respondents did not think that travel training was important and a further 32% said they were not sure how important this form of training was.
- 9.35 When asked to give any additional comments, respondents to both the standard and easy read survey said that this type of training would be beneficial (20 respondents to the standard survey, 9 respondents to the easy read survey).

Proposal 2 Comment

- 9.36 It is likely that the relatively high proportion of respondents who were using current transport services or caring for users and who were from older age groups has influenced the survey results, since these users are less likely to benefit from Independent Travel Training than younger groups. It is particularly significant that a high proportion of easy read respondents were not sure whether or not Independent Travel Training was beneficial, indicating the scope for developing awareness, knowledge and engagement with Independent Travel Training opportunities.
- 9.37 The value and importance of the Council's development of the Information, Advice, Advocacy and Brokerage Strategy for older people and people with disabilities is further evidenced by the 45% of respondents who reported difficulties with finding information about help with travel.
- 9.38 Establishing user led organisations to lead on information, advice and support planning, continues to be a key national Government policy of the Office for Disability Issues. The Council's development of Barnet Centre for Independent Living (BCIL) has been identified as an example of good practice by the ODI. This work will be taken forward during 2013 through the procurement of further contracts for information, advice and support planning provision including Later Life Planners for older people, approved by this Committee as part of the re-commissioning of voluntary sector prevention services and day opportunities for older people.

Proposal 3 Blue Badge Application Charge

- 9.39 During the past year, the Council has changed the way in which applications for Blue Badge parking permits for people with restricted mobility as part of national arrangements introduced by the Department of Transport (DoT) in 2011. The purpose of the changes have been to

put in place administration, assessment and enforcement practices that are:

- fair and consistent in their treatment of Blue Badge applicants
- customer-friendly and clear
- timely and cost-efficient
- resistant to abuse.

9.40 Implementation in Barnet has included:

- Promotion of an online facility in an attempt to reduce costly paper applications, however applications can still be accepted by telephone or post
- adoption of the DoT's model assessment tool to enable desk-top assessment of mobility against standardised criteria, replacing inefficient and expensive GP assessments
- commissioning an Independent Mobility Assessment service to respond to appeals by unsuccessful applicants
- Introduction of a face to face element to the Application process in line with DoT's guidelines to further combat fraud
- mandatory participation in the national badge-issue service provided by the DoT's commissioned contractor, to minimise risks of fraud.

9.41 Currently operated by the Council's Customer Services, the Blue Badge application function currently serving almost 20,000 Barnet residents, will be undertaken as part of the NSCSO contract expected to commence on 1 April 2013.

9.42 The consultation on door-to-door transport included a specific proposal to introduce a charge of £10 for applications for a Blue Badge parking permit. The actual cost of administering the scheme at present is £20 for each application, twice the amount of the proposed charge.

9.43 £10 is the maximum charge that local authorities are able to put in place towards administering Blue Badges. Out of 15 comparable local authorities surveyed on this issue, 11 said that they had introduced this maximum charge, with the remainder still consulting on introducing the maximum charge. We will review changes in the cost of administration.

9.44 The Council believes that it is right that people who wish to benefit from the scheme should contribute to its cost and as the badge is valid for three years, this works out at 6p per week. This cost is expected to fall as a result of the improvements summarised above, and the charge amount will therefore be periodically reviewed to ensure that it remains a fair contribution.

Proposal 3 Consultation Findings

9.45 Just under two thirds (63%) of respondents to the standard survey agreed that introducing these charges would be fair and around half

(51%) of respondents to the easy read survey felt that the charge was a good idea.

- 9.46 Around half (51%) of easy read respondents felt that the proposal to charge £10 towards the costs of the Blue Badge scheme was a good idea. Around a third (34%) of respondents said that this charge would be a bad idea and 15% of respondents were not sure whether this cost would be a good or bad idea. All respondents to the easy read survey gave an answer to this question.
- 9.47 Around three fifths of respondents said the charge would negatively affect those with a low income (61%) and those with disabilities (58%). Among the 20 respondents who gave a suggestion on how negative impacts of the policy could be improved, 60% (12 respondents) said that Blue Badges should be free to those on low incomes.
- 9.48 Almost three fifths of respondents said that the charge would not have a negative impact on people with particular religious beliefs (59%); people from ethnic minorities (58%); people who are bisexual, homosexual or transsexual (58%); women (57%) or men (57%).

Proposal 3 Comment

- 9.49 Nearly two thirds of respondents agreed that, given the economic climate and the pressure on services, the proposed charge is in fact reasonable and appropriate. As such, the Council recommends that a £10 administration fee for successful Blue Badge applicants is introduced.
- 9.50 The Council, however, recognises that 59% of respondents felt the charge would negatively affect those on “low income”. As the Blue Badge is catered specifically towards those with mobility issues, those residents with disabilities are more likely to be negatively affected by the charge. The £10 charge is a very small amount compared to the actual value of the badge and the benefits the badge provides to the holder over a three-year period. The Council, therefore, proposes to introduce a flat rate charge for all successful applicants, in line with many other Councils.

Proposal 4 Parking Bays for People with Disabilities

Proposal 4 Consultation Findings

- 9.51 The Council’s Highways Service currently provides disabled parking places outside the homes of Blue Badge holders, provided they meet the Council’s existing eligibility rules. Because disabled bays are available for use by any Blue Badge holders, in some cases the bays have not always been available to the individuals for whom they have been specifically provided. Currently there are approximately 1,000

disabled bays within the borough, of which over 90% have been provided outside residential properties. The remaining bays have been provided for general use, for example in shopping areas, in the vicinity of doctors' surgeries/libraries etc.

- 9.52 There is concern that the current criteria used in assessing applications for disabled bays is not sufficiently robust, and results in many bays being provided which may not be beneficial to either the individuals concerned or for road users in general. This concern runs in parallel to national concern about the disabled badge scheme, and the apparent abuse/misuse/fraud by motorists of the disabled badge system.
- 9.53 In terms of the criteria, it is clear that Barnet is not adequately robust both in comparison to other local authorities' or for its own purposes so changes should be made to ensure that the disabled bays in our borough are provided for the most needy.
- 9.54 Lessons can be learnt from other boroughs, and consideration given to providing designated bays or similar, as standard, in order to eliminate situations in the future where there is 'over demand' for a disabled bay in residential areas. Certainly, the main difference was that many of the authorities contacted insisted that the applicants received the higher rate mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance.
- 9.55 Providing 'designated' bays is already an established practice - 5 designated bays are currently provided in the borough – and designating a bay will ensure that it is only available for the person it was provided for.
- 9.56 Accordingly it is considered that the current criteria should be reviewed with the intention of better serving those that would most benefit from such provision by ensuring that this provision target towards the successful applicant. It is also considered that taking such steps would prevent those who are otherwise abusing the Blue Badge system from gaining further advantage in utilising the bays.
- 9.57 A change in criteria should result in less disabled bay applications being made and less applications being approved, hence ensuring the continued best use of limited resources, in both staff time, implementation and subsequent removal of the bays and the continued administration of the scheme.
- 9.58 The proposal seeks to revise the rules and that successful applicants should be provided with a 'personalised' bay for their own exclusive use. Updated rules were therefore proposed as part of the Council's consultation on door-to-door transport.

Proposal 4 Consultation Findings

- 9.59 Almost two thirds (63%) of respondents to the standard survey agreed with the proposed eligibility criteria for disabled parking bays; positive opinion towards the policy was lower among respondents to the easy read survey (39%).
- 9.60 Respondents to both surveys were again asked to give any additional comments they had about the policy. A half of those who provided an additional comment on the standard survey said that the proposal would ensure that a bay created for individuals would be available for their use (14 respondents). 37 respondents to the easy read survey provided an additional comment, with 22% (8 respondents) saying that the council needed to ensure that people who have their own bays really need them.
- 9.61 Similar to previous policies, it was residents with disabilities (51%) and residents with a low income (35%) who were most frequently identified as being negatively affected by the proposed changes. Among the 15 respondents who suggested a way to reduce the negative impact, around half (47%, 7 respondents) said that the eligibility criteria which had been suggested was too restrictive.

Proposal 4 Comment

- 9.62 Given the total number of Blue Badge holders in the borough the total number of responses to the survey can be considered low. However, where comment has been given the responses are considered to be representative and can be seen to reflect the expected outcomes inasmuch as there is an acceptance that those that are in most need of the bay provision are not getting the best value from them.
- 9.63 The bays are provided as a result of an individual offering up personal information relating to their circumstances but once successful are not guaranteed to be able to park, often meaning that the bay is practically worthless to them and they continue to suffer without adequate parking provision.
- 9.64 Concern with loss of parking provision is understandable given that non-bay holders can still currently utilise any Blue Badge bay. However, this level of concern is not considered to be particularly high in context of the overall recognition of the benefits that can be gained from introducing a more robust system, and it should also be acknowledged that applications for those currently not bay holders would still be welcomed.
- 9.65 Accordingly given what the new criteria is setting out to achieve and the general acceptance of the overall benefit to introducing a more robust fit for service scheme it is considered that the new criteria be adopted.

Proposal 5 Travel Voucher Scheme

- 9.66 Large numbers of Barnet's older and disabled residents currently benefit from concessionary travel provided by Transport for London and by London Councils through the Dial-a-Ride, Freedom Pass and Taxicard schemes. Subsidised access to public transport and taxis ensure widened access to social and recreational activity and help to redress the substantial disadvantages experienced by people with restricted mobility and financial means. Concessionary travel represents a key means for people to lead active, healthier lives for longer.
- 9.67 The Council recognised the value of concessionary travel by introducing the local Travel Voucher scheme for borough residents. This was before the development of the London-wide schemes. This local scheme offers a complex arrangement that allows residents to use taxis at reduced rates by using vouchers purchased from the Council to 'pay' participating taxi operators who are then able to redeem the vouchers and receive payment from the Council.
- 9.68 The Travel Voucher scheme offers a less flexible service for individuals and is expensive for the Council to administer. Use of the scheme is low and declining as very few new applications are now received. The door-to-door consultation therefore proposed closure of the local scheme and for current users to be assisted to apply for other schemes, outlined above.

Proposal 5 Consultation findings

- 9.69 When asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the Council should bring the Travel Voucher Scheme to an end, around three-tenths (29%) of respondents said they were in agreement. Contrary to this, a further 29% of respondents strongly disagreed that the Council should end the Travel Voucher Scheme, with a further 7% stating that they disagreed.
- 9.70 Respondents to the easy read survey tended to be more positive about the Council's proposal to stop the Travel Voucher Scheme, with four out of ten respondents considering the policy to be a good idea. Around a quarter (27%) of respondents thought that stopping the scheme was a bad idea and 32% said they were not sure if this policy was a good or bad idea.
- 9.71 Respondents were given the opportunity to provide further comments or suggestions, and 45 of the 121 provided a response. Among those who gave a response, around a fifth said that free vouchers were needed (20%) and that removing the Travel Voucher Scheme would have a negative impact on the quality of life (18%).

9.72 31 respondents to the easy read survey provided an additional comment about the Travel Voucher Scheme; 11 respondents (36%) said they were unaware of the Taxicard scheme and a further 5 respondents (16%) said that more general information about the Taxicard scheme is required.

Proposal 5 Comment

9.73 The findings indicate there is some resistance to the removal of the Travel Voucher scheme, however the number of respondents overall is not significant and the number of individuals adversely impacted by the removal of the scheme is also not significant. Given there are suitable alternatives, the Council recommends that the Travel Voucher scheme is ended and that those affected are contacted and supported to use alternative provision.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Consultation documents

Finance: MC/JH

Legal: HP

Full Equality Impact Assessment

APPENDIX 1 SUMMARY OF THE EQUALITY ASSESSMENTS

1.1 A full version of the Equalities Assessment can be found within the Background papers. This includes the dataset the assessments have been based on. The tables below set out a summary of the EQA.

Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health	Provide Independent Travel Training services	Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications	Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme
Age				
<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>Older people are highly represented among transport service users due to the greater incidence of age-related mobility needs among this group. However, irrespective of age, those who are not capable of independent travel would be eligible under the proposed eligibility policy.</p>	<p>Overall Positive Impact</p> <p>Independent Travel Training would be offered to adults of all ages including older people and if successful, will enable use of alternative transport. If unsuccessful, the person would continue to be eligible for ASCH-funded transport</p>	<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>The cost of the application charge is just 6p per week for the three year period of Blue Badge validity. Although the average income of older people is lower than working age adult groups, the very low level of the proposed charge would have a negligible effect on the income.</p> <p>Charge income will enable the council to</p>	<p>Positive Impact</p> <p>Older people are highly represented among users of parking bays of people with disabilities due to the greater incidence of age-related mobility needs among this group.</p> <p>It is proposed to focus the Council's disabled bay scheme to benefitting the individuals who most need them given the nature of their disability by the provision of</p>	<p>Potential Overall Negative Impact</p> <p>There is a risk that termination of the scheme would mean that some existing users would no longer receive help with taxi costs. This is likely to disproportionately impact on older people since this group are likely to be more highly represented among Travel Voucher scheme users than other groups. It is not clear that all older people using the</p>

<p>Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p>Provide Independent Travel Training services</p>	<p>Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications</p>	<p>Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities</p>	<p>Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme</p>
		<p>reduce the incidence of fraudulent use of Blue Badges. Older people will benefit from the resultant greater availability of disabled parking spaces.</p>	<p>‘designated’ disabled bays, in order to better serve successful applicants</p> <p>The provision of ‘Designated’ Disabled bays will mean that the bay can only be used by the Blue Badge holder they are provided for and will reduce misuse and abuse of the disabled parking bay system.</p>	<p>Travel Voucher scheme will necessarily be eligible to use London Councils’ Taxi Card scheme. In addition, although the two schemes are similar, some Travel Voucher scheme users have pointed to differences that would make the Taxi Card scheme less helpful to their particular requirements</p>
<p>Gender</p>				
<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>Women are more highly represented among transport users as a result of greater life expectancy. Irrespective of gender those who are not capable of</p>	<p>Overall Positive Impact</p> <p>(Independent Travel Training would be offered irrespective of gender and if successful, will enable use of alternative transport. If unsuccessful, the person</p>	<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>Although no data is available concerning the gender of Blue Badge applicants, women are likely to be highly represented. Women are also more likely to have</p>	<p>Overall Positive impact</p> <p>Although no data is available concerning the gender of parking bay applicants, women are likely to be highly represented.</p>	<p>Potential Overall Negative Impact</p> <p>Although no data is available concerning the gender of scheme users, it is likely that women are highly represented and consequently would</p>

<p>Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p>Provide Independent Travel Training services</p>	<p>Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications</p>	<p>Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities</p>	<p>Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme</p>
<p>independent travel would be eligible under the proposed eligibility policy</p>	<p>would continue to be eligible for ASCH-funded transport reasons as above under Age)</p>	<p>lower average income. Nevertheless, the overall effect is unlikely to be significant in view the low level of the proposed charge is considered</p>	<p>The provision of 'Designated' Disabled bays will mean that the bay can only be used by the Blue Badge holder they are provided for and will reduce misuse and abuse of the disabled parking bay system.</p>	<p>be disproportionately affected as compared with other groups</p>
<p>Ethnicity</p>				
<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>The impact on this equality strand will be proportionate. As the number of day centre users from BME populations is low, the impact of the eligibility policy will also be low.</p> <p>Cultural and language requirements must be met during the assessment process.</p>	<p>Overall Positive Impact</p> <p>Training provided in a manner sensitive to individuals' cultural will have a positive effect.</p>	<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>Minority ethnic groups experience lower income but the overall effect is unlikely to be significant in view the low level of the proposed charge is considered</p>	<p>Potential Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>No data is available concerning the ethnicity of scheme users but there is no reason to consider that those from minority populations would be disproportionately affected</p>	<p>Potential Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>No data is available concerning the ethnicity of scheme users but there is no reason to consider that those from minority populations would be disproportionately affected</p>

<p align="center">Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p align="center">Provide Independent Travel Training services</p>	<p align="center">Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications</p>	<p align="center">Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities</p>	<p align="center">Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme</p>
<p>Disability</p>				
<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>The proposed policy is exclusively concerned with people with mobility needs. Its effect would be to remove eligibility from those able to make independent travel arrangements. There would consequently be no disbenefit since individuals would either remain eligible for council-funded services or would be able to make use of alternative travel options</p>	<p>Overall Positive Impact</p> <p>The effect of the proposal would be beneficial for disabled people with mobility needs since Independent Travel Training provision would enable individuals to travel as independently as possible</p>	<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>Blue Badges are exclusively intended for people with mobility needs and application arrangements will therefore directly affect disabled populations. Although disabled people receive lower average income than non-disabled groups, the overall effect is unlikely to be significant in view the low level of the proposed charge is considered</p>	<p>Positive Impact</p> <p>Older people are highly represented among users of parking bays of people with disabilities due to the greater incidence of age-related mobility needs among this group.</p> <p>It is proposed to focus the Council's disabled bay scheme to benefitting the individuals who most need them given the nature of their disability by the provision of 'designated' disabled bays, in order to better serve successful applicants</p>	<p>Potential Overall Negative Impact</p> <p>There is a risk that termination of the scheme would mean that some existing users would no longer receive help with taxi costs. This is likely to disproportionately impact on disabled people since this group are likely to be more highly represented among Travel Voucher scheme users than other groups. It is not clear that all disabled people using the Travel Voucher scheme will necessarily be eligible to use London Councils' Taxi Card scheme. In</p>

Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health	Provide Independent Travel Training services	Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications	Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme
			The provision of 'Designated' Disabled bays will mean that the bay can only be used by the Blue Badge holder they are provided for and will reduce misuse and abuse of the disabled parking bay system.	in addition, although the two schemes are similar, some Travel Voucher scheme users have pointed to differences that would make the Taxi Card scheme less helpful to their particular requirements
Religion or belief				
Overall Neutral Impact	Overall Neutral Impact	Overall Neutral Impact	Overall Neutral Impact	Overall Neutral Impact
Sexual orientation				
Overall Neutral Impact	Overall Neutral Impact	Overall Neutral Impact	Overall Neutral Impact	Overall Neutral Impact
Low Income				
Possible negative effect The effect of the proposed policy would be to remove eligibility from those able to make	Overall Positive Impact The effect of the proposal would be beneficial for people on lower incomes since Independent Travel	Overall Neutral Impact The cost of the application charge is just 6p per week for the three-year period of Blue Badge validity. As stated	Overall Neutral Impact There is no proposed charge for the scheme	Potential Overall Negative Impact There is a risk that termination of the scheme would mean that some existing users

Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health	Provide Independent Travel Training services	Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications	Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme
<p>independent travel arrangements. Some of these independent travel arrangements may have a financial implication for the individual or their carer, for example petrol costs where an individual had a mobility care. Whilst there will not be a means test as part of the eligibility assessment it does consider a person's access to existing transport. This implicitly will include consideration of free alternatives (such as Freedom Pass) or personal assets (such as Mobility Car). Whilst an individual may lose their entitlement to council funded bus transfer dis-benefits should be minimised since individuals who are not eligible for council-</p>	<p>Training provision would enable individuals to travel as independently as possible on low cost options such as public transport.</p>	<p>above whilst older people and people with disabilities experience lower income the very low level of the proposed charge would have a negligible effect on the income.</p>		<p>would no longer receive help with taxi costs. This is likely to disproportionately impact on people with lower incomes since this group are likely to be more reliant on the support from Travel Voucher scheme users than other groups. It is not clear that all people using the Travel Voucher scheme will necessarily be eligible to use London Councils' Taxi Card scheme. In addition, although the two schemes are similar, some Travel Voucher scheme users have pointed to differences that would make the Taxi Card scheme less helpful to their particular requirements</p>

<p>Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p>Provide Independent Travel Training services</p>	<p>Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications</p>	<p>Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities</p>	<p>Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme</p>
<p>funded services would be able to make use of alternative travel options</p>				
<p>Carers- discriminated by association</p>				
<p>Potential Overall Negative Impact</p> <p>The effect of the proposed policy would be to remove eligibility from those able to make independent travel arrangements. Some of these independent travel arrangements may have an implication for carers, for example where someone has a mobility vehicle of which they are not normally the driver themselves. This would consider whether it is reasonable to expect that the service user will use that vehicle in order to travel to the location</p>	<p>Overall Positive Impact</p> <p>The effect of the proposal would be beneficial for people on lower incomes since Independent Travel Training provision would enable individuals to travel as independently as possible reducing their reliance on carers</p>	<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>The cost of the application charge is just 6p per week for the three-year period of Blue Badge validity. The very low level of the proposed charge would have a negligible effect on the family income.</p>	<p>Potential Overall Negative Impact</p> <p>Applicants often ask for a disabled bay to be specifically designed to them, therefore the satisfaction of the new disabled parking bay owners is likely to be increase as other Blue Badge Holders would not be able to use their bay as they currently do.</p> <p>However, the satisfaction of other Blue Badge holders (who may be carers) may theoretically be reduced, as they will not be entitled to use the new</p>	<p>Overall Neutral Impact</p> <p>There is a risk that termination of the scheme would mean that some existing users would no longer receive help with taxi costs. This could increase the contributions that families and carers need to make. It is not clear that all people using the Travel Voucher scheme will necessarily be eligible to use London Councils' Taxi Card scheme. In addition, although the two schemes are similar, some Travel Voucher scheme users have</p>

Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health	Provide Independent Travel Training services	Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications	Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme
<p>of the care service/activity. Whilst an individual may lose their entitlement to council funded bus, transfer dis-benefits should be minimised, as there will be an assessment to establish whether the carer can reasonably provider this support.</p>			<p>bays. It should be noted that it is not proposed to make any retrospective changes to the designation of the existing bays in the borough therefore any new bays provided under a new criteria would be for a facility that disabled badge holders do not currently have access to as none exists.</p>	<p>pointed to differences that would make the Taxi Card scheme less helpful to their particular requirements</p>
<p>What action has been taken already to mitigate any negative impact?</p>				
<p>The current policy for the provision of local councils' Adult Social Care services is aimed at promoting the maximum possible independence for the person who uses social care services. In extending this principle to councils' provision of transport services, this</p>	<p>Provision of Independent Travel Training will mitigate negative impacts of introduction of criteria for other transport alternatives.</p> <p>There is a substantial national body of good practice and</p>	<p>The cost of the application charge has been kept low at just 6p per week for the three year period of Blue Badge validity to reduce the negligible effect on the family income.</p>	<p>The proposal is to better serve those who are most in need of a disabled bay, and to minimise the risk of misuse and abuse of the system, Updated rules were therefore proposed as part of the Council's consultation on door-to-door transport</p>	<p>Large numbers of Barnet's older and disabled residents currently benefit from concessionary travel provided by Transport for London and by London Councils through the Dial-a-Ride, Freedom Pass and Taxicard schemes. Subsidised access to</p>

<p>Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p>Provide Independent Travel Training services</p>	<p>Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications</p>	<p>Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities</p>	<p>Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme</p>
<p>proposed policy sets the criteria that will be used to assess when the service user's transport needs can be met best through independent travel arrangements or whether council-provided transport services continue to be necessary.</p> <p>The eligibility criteria have been designed to consider a range of factors to ensure a reasonable outcome for individuals.</p> <p>Implementation of this eligibility policy will be well planned and closely monitored to ensure fair application of the principles.</p>	<p>innovatory projects demonstrating the benefits of Independent Travel Training for learners, carers and statutory agencies. This has been summarised in the Department for Transport's publication, Travel Training - Good Practice Guidance (2011) and included in the body of the report at 9.29.</p>			<p>public transport and taxis ensure widened access to social and recreational activity and help to redress the substantial disadvantages experienced by people with restricted mobility and financial means. Concessionary travel represents a key means for people to lead active, healthier lives for longer.</p> <p>The Council recognised the value of concessionary travel by introducing the local Travel Voucher scheme for borough residents. This was before the development of the London-wide schemes.</p> <p>The Travel Voucher scheme offers a less</p>

<p>Implement the eligibility policy for transport services funded by Adult Social Care and Health</p>	<p>Provide Independent Travel Training services</p>	<p>Implement a £10 charge for Blue Badge applications</p>	<p>Implement revised eligibility criteria for the provision of personal parking bays for people with disabilities</p>	<p>Withdraw the Travel Voucher Scheme</p>
				<p>flexible service for individuals and is expensive for the Council to administer. Use of the scheme is low and declining as very few new applications are now received. It is hoped that use of the London wide Taxicard scheme will mitigate the negative impact of the loss of the Travel Voucher Scheme.</p>

1.2 Response to the Corporate Equality questions

a. Are there differential service outcomes for different communities? If so, what measures will be put in place to re-dress these differences?				
Change policy about who qualifies for transport provided by ASCH	Provide travel training	Introduce charge for Blue Badge applications	Change eligibility criteria for parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw Travel Voucher Scheme
A few existing users may be affected, i.e. those with alternative travel options or who have sufficient mobility and related capacity to safely use mainstream transport. However, this scheme is aimed at those people without the above facilities.	No as the benefits of Independent Travel Training for learners, carers and statutory agencies are well documented.	Although it has been said that this scheme may affect those on a low income, the cost of the badge which is valid for three years, works out at 6p per week.	This proposal seeks to better serve those who are most in need of a disabled bay, and to minimise the risk of misuse and abuse of the system.	No specific benefits have been identified in its retention and alternative options are available.
b. What will be the impact of the delivery of any proposed new services or functions on satisfaction ratings amongst different groups of residents'?				
Change policy about who qualifies for transport provided by ASCH	Provide travel training	Introduce charge for Blue Badge applications	Change eligibility criteria for parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw Travel Voucher Scheme
Dissatisfaction with the new proposals amongst current service users is estimated to be low due to the numbers who will qualify under the new	Satisfaction ratings are expected to increase with the implementation and greater publicity around this initiative.	The issuing fee is applicable to all sectors of the local community, and so treats all sectors equally.	The introduction of the Desk Based Assessment aims to increase overall customer satisfaction. This will be a result of	There may be dissatisfaction among the community as it seems people were not aware of the existence of this scheme. This can

eligibility criteria.			the improvements in the time taken to process applications.	be countered by advertising more widely the other alternatives available.
c. Does the proposal enhance Barnet's reputation as a good place to work and live?				
Change policy about who qualifies for transport provided by ASCH	Provide travel training	Introduce charge for Blue Badge applications	Change eligibility criteria for parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw Travel Voucher Scheme
The council has redeployed savings made to its transport fleet to purchase London Emission Zone compliant vehicles.	Travel training to achieve more independent but safe travel was seen as a good initiative.	It is to be expected that there will be concern regarding the charge from existing (and new) Blue Badge applicants. However, comparatively, the potential gain for the badge holder still represents very good value for money.	This initiative is to minimise the abuse of the current system.	Impact of its removal will be negligible as its use is in decline.
d. Will members of Barnet's diverse communities feel more confident about the council and the manner in which it conducts its business?				
Change policy about who qualifies for transport provided by ASCH	Provide travel training	Introduce charge for Blue Badge applications	Change eligibility criteria for parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw Travel Voucher Scheme
The policy should be administered taking into account people's language and cultural needs as well as easily	The policy should be administered taking into account people's language and cultural needs as well as easily	The policy should be administered taking into account people's language and cultural needs as well as easily	The policy should be administered taking into account people's language and cultural needs as well as easily	The policy should be administered taking into account people's language and cultural needs as well as easily

understood information for those with learning disabilities when carrying out the eligibility assessment.	understood information for those with learning disabilities when carrying out the training	understood information for those with learning disabilities when carrying out desk based assessments.	understood information for those with learning disabilities when carrying out eligibility assessments.	understood information for those with learning disabilities when informing people about the withdrawal of the scheme.
e. How will the new proposals enable the council to promote good relations between different communities?				
Change policy about who qualifies for transport provided by ASCH	Provide travel training	Introduce charge for Blue Badge applications	Change eligibility criteria for parking bays for people with disabilities	Withdraw Travel Voucher Scheme
As in (a), (b) and (c) above	As in (a), (b) and (c) above	As in (a), (b) and (c) above	As in (a), (b) and (c) above	As in (a), (b) and (c) above
f) How have residents with different needs been consulted on the anticipated impact of this proposal? How have any comments influenced the final proposal?				
<p>The Council commenced public consultation on May 14th 2012 and the consultation period ended on 6th August 2012. In line with legal advice and practical considerations, the three-month period has been adopted as the norm for consultations with ASCH clients and other vulnerable people concerning social care and support services. Printed consultation documents and questionnaires in standard and easy read formats were sent and residents also had the opportunity to complete the survey online.</p> <p>In total 265 surveys were completed, among which there were 121 standard surveys (of which 44 were completed online) and 144 easy read alternatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almost 60% of respondents were aged 55 or over, and only 10% were aged under 35; • Numbers of male and female respondents were roughly equal; • Three-quarters of respondents identified themselves as having one or more disabilities, of whom one half reported reduced mobility and one-quarter said they had learning difficulties; • One-quarter of respondents recorded their ethnicity as other than White or White British, roughly equivalent to the overall proportion of Barnet's adult population but relatively high given the preponderance of older people among the respondent 				

group.

The analysis of the responses is reported at Appendix 2, and summaries are included in the following sections concerned with each of the proposals of the consultation documents. The Equality analysis outcome is to make no major change the EqA demonstrates that the policy is robust and that the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that all opportunities to promote equality have been taken. All feedback is noted and recorded and will be used to ensure that communication about implementation addresses the anxieties raised.

In addition, service users were invited to attend a total of ten meetings held at a range of locations during the day and evening. Presentations were also made to the Learning Disabilities Partnership Board and the a summary of the feedback received at these meetings is at Appendix 3

1.3 Decision

Decision and comments; addressing the impact			
Decision on impact			
No Impact	Positive Impact	Neutral Impact	Negative Impact or Impact Not Known
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The outcome of the assessments undertaken on the impact of the proposals on the various equality groups is that there will be, in general a positive impact.			

Options for consideration	
Having considered the potential or actual impacts the council has made an informed judgment on the following four possible options:	
Option 1: No major change the EqA demonstrates that the policy is	X

robust and that the evidence shows no potential for discrimination and that all opportunities to promote equality have been taken	
Option 2: Adjust the policy to remove barriers or better promote equality	
Option 3: Continue the policy despite potential for adverse impact or missed opportunities to promote equality	
Option 4: Stop and remove the policy – if the policy shows actual or potential unlawful discrimination it must be stopped and removed or changed	

Comment on decision
<p>It is proposed that the council continues with its proposals as outlined but ensuring the issues highlighted above are addressed.</p> <p>The assessments above have been undertaken with the primary consideration of the council’s duty to have ‘due regard’ to the need to promote equality. The decision has balanced the potential negative impact of the withdrawal of the Travel Voucher scheme. Additionally, the responses from the consultation on whether people thought the proposals would produce a negative impact to the various equality strands, the majority thought that this would not be the case. Whilst this question was a subjective one, in that people’s opinions were sought on equality strands that they themselves may not belong to, it gave an opportunity for people completing the questionnaire to think about how these proposals may impact on others.</p>

1.4 Equality Action Plan

Equality Objective	Action
Access, promotion / publicity	<p>Access to any information services should be made simple and clear to cater for existing and potential service users</p> <p>Any new service will need to take into account language barriers, cultural requirements as needs of people with</p>

	learning disabilities.	
Milestones for Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend existing assessment tools or create new; produce staff guidance; define monitoring requirements; briefing/train assessment staff • Complete assessments of current transport users as part of annual review of support plan • Commence new client assessments as part of standard care planning processes • Agree service and referral arrangements for independent travel training with contractors, and implement referrals 	Advertise the scheme to make users and non-users aware of the scheme and its eligibility criteria; assessments to be done taking into account language, cultural issues and the needs of people with learning disabilities. Referral arrangements to include necessary equalities
	The Council's development of Barnet Centre Independent Living has been identified as an example of good practice by the ODI in supporting disabled and older people to be aware of the choices and options that are available to them. This work will be taken forward during 2013 through the procurement of further contracts for information, advice and support planning provision including Later Life Planners for older people.	Ensure BCIL and Later Life Planners are aware of transport options
	Currently operated by the Council's Customer Services, the Blue Badge application function currently serving almost 20,000 Barnet residents, will be undertaken as part of the NSCSO contract expected to commence on 1 April 2013.	Normal equalities contractual requirements to be taken into account
	The rules should be revised, and that successful applicants should be provided with a 'personalised' bay for their own exclusive use.	Equalities issues as identified to be included in the assessment process.
	Use of the scheme has reduced and very few new applications are now received, almost certainly reflecting customer preferences for the other available options.	Advertise other options for door to door travel ensuring easy-read options available.