

Warrington Borough Council

Adult social care transport policy

Date published: July 2025

Review date: July 2027



WARRINGTON
Borough Council

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Purpose of this policy

This Policy sets out the Council's position with regards to the provision and funding of transport for individuals accessing adult social care services to meet their assessed needs under the Care Act. We aspire to support individuals to be as independent as possible while offering support that meets their individual's needs.

Government Legislation (the Care Act 2014) means that Councils have a duty to provide support to a growing number of people. The Council needs to ensure it continually reviews the provision of all services to ensure they are cost effective and maintain and promote independence and meet the needs of Warrington residents in the most efficient and effective way possible.

Transport services are currently subsidised by the Council. This policy aims to ensure all appropriate options are considered in order to meet the need for all those that qualify, following a relevant Care Act assessment and where they are not able to have these needs met without transport assistance.

Scope of this policy

This policy relates to the provision of transport for residents of Warrington over the age of 18 whom have assessed needs for adult social care services.

This policy does not cover home to college transport for students with special educational needs from 16-25, as this is covered by a separate annual policy statement. In addition, the Home to School Transport Policy covers home to school travel assistance for pupils with special educational needs. Both policies can be found on [the home to school transport page on the council website](#).

Under the Care Act 2014, the Council generally has a duty to arrange care and support for those who are eligible following an assessment of need. Transport is not a service in its own right, but is a means to accessing services and support, including employment, education and training opportunities, day services, respite provision etc. Transport will only be provided by the Council if it is the only reasonable means of ensuring that an Individual can safely travel to activities and services as part of an agreed support plan.

Principles of this policy

This policy is based on an expectation that the Council will only support transport for individuals after all other possible options have been explored. These options include, where appropriate and available, independent travel on local community or public transport services, support from family and friends, using vehicles funded through Personal Independence Payment (PIP) or Disability Living Allowance (DLA). Further options may include sharing with other individuals traveling to settings.

An Individual's assessment, or review and subsequent support plan, will consider the level of support needed to enable the individual to travel to a service for meeting their needs. At this planning stage, the individual and their family or representatives will be given information about their transport options and the most appropriate and best value option available will be detailed in the support plan.

The overriding principle of this policy and our approach is to promote independence. The decision to provide funding or transport as part of a care and support plan/package will always be based on a person's individual circumstances and assessed needs. The assessment will consider the individual's

needs, the needs of their carers, the risks, and the agreed outcomes.

Travel proposals and arrangements will be subject to a risk assessment will include independent travel options, for example assistance to help individuals to travel independently, as well as with help from family and friends and other support networks, including service providers.

If an individual can travel to an assessed eligible service, work or training activity through any of the means below, they will be expected to do so. This includes:

- Travelling independently, including walking, using public transport, or community-based transport (using assistive technology where appropriate)
- With family or friends (unpaid carers)
- Using a Motability vehicle which they drive/own themselves
- Using a Motability vehicle, which is provided for them - where they are not normally the driver. We would expect the driver and the vehicle to be available to them when they need to travel. If the driver is an unpaid carer, they will be asked whether they would be willing or able to support travel needs in this way
- Through any transport available through an approved service provider, for example, 'car sharing' with other individuals who may live in the same accommodation or access the same service

Further information about the above options, is included in appendix one.

If an individual lives in a care setting (residential/supported living) the cost of travel will in the most part be incorporated in the cost of the placement, this must be included in the providers cost breakdown workbook.

Where the above options listed above are not possible and an individual cannot arrange their own transport to meet their assessed needs, the Council will arrange transport on their behalf. This may be through one of the Council's fleet vehicles or a contract with a taxi company. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, the transport will be shared with other individuals and the service and routes planned to secure the most efficient and effective service.

In circumstances where it is best value, the Council may explore the option of unpaid carers (family or friends) being paid a mileage/Personal Travel Budget for them to provide the transport to meet the assessed needs for travel. Unpaid carers, family and friends can raise this as an option at any time.

When required, it may also be determined through an individual risk assessment that a 'passenger assistant' or an 'escort' is required to support the individual to travel safely. This will be provided as part of the transport solution.

Assessments for eligibility and transport planning

The assessment or review for care and support will identify whether an individual has an eligible need for support to get around in the community safely. It will also identify whether an individual will need support to travel to assessed and eligible services identified in the support plan. All the options available

as listed above in the principles of this policy section will be explored. Family, friends, advocates or other representatives are encouraged to be part of the assessment and exploration of options available.

If one of the options above is appropriate, the person undertaking the assessment or review will explore how this will happen in practice and what contingency arrangements can be put in place, for example should the planned travel arrangements not be able to take place, e.g. if a family member is unwell. This may include agreeing/making alternative provision on these days, for example, booking a taxi or car sharing arrangements.

If it is agreed/determined that the individual may be capable of travelling independently, options for independent travel training will be explored. Temporary transport solutions may then be explored whilst the training is undertaken.

Where the most cost-effective solution involves a payment of a mileage/Personal Travel Budget allowance to a carer for providing the transport, the value will be assessed in line with the individuals' personal travel circumstances. These payments will be reviewed annually and take account of any changes.

If none of the options detailed in the above principles of the policy section are possible, the person undertaking the assessment will make a referral to the Council's Specialist Transport Team to assist in arranging a service.

Eligibility and provision of transport services will be reviewed as part of the annual review process or earlier if there are changes in circumstances.

If an individual is not eligible for services or transport following an assessment, they will be signposted to public and community transport options. Further details are contained in appendix one. Any challenge to the assessment outcome can be raised through adult social care team managers or through the customer complaints process [customer complaints process](#).

Paying for transport services

Transport, where provided, will be charged as a flat rate per single journey. The charge will be reviewed on an annual basis. If an individual wishes to cancel their scheduled transport, 24-hour notice is required, otherwise there will be a full charge. Consideration will be given to unavoidable cancellations when 24-hour notice is not given (e.g. due to illness). More details on our [charging policy](#) can be found online.

If an individual or their family opt for a service outside Warrington, when there is an appropriate local service (in borough), the individual will be required to pay the difference between the cost of transport to the local provision and the additional 'actual' cost of the transport to the alternative chosen. This will be calculated using pricing available through our specialist transport team.

The Council does not charge for independent travel training. There is an expectation that some service providers will also provide this training as part of the support they are providing to individuals during the day. Alternatively, Warrington Speak up have a programme called [Connect Yourself](#) enabling travel training for young people.

Appendix one: Transport options for people supported by Adults Social Care

Public transport buses

Warrington Own Buses operate most buses in the Warrington area and with the new electric fleet, all are wheelchair accessible with Audio and Visual next stop announcements.

Arriva provide the next largest proportion of bus services in Warrington, with a few smaller operators providing the remainder of services.

[Timetables, maps and operator details](#) can be found online.

[Older Persons bus passes](#) and [Disabled Persons passes](#) allow individuals to travel free after 9.30am Monday to Friday and all-day Saturday and Sunday (please check our webpages to see where and when you can travel). Further details and how to apply can be found online.

Driving, and blue badge parking

If you are disabled a [Blue Badge permit](#) allows you to park legally near to places you need to visit.

The permit is for any eligible disabled person whether they are travelling as a driver or as a passenger. It allows free parking in some pay and display car parks and on single and double yellow lines in most streets for up to three hours.

Motability Vehicles and Scooters

Higher rate mobility allowance can be exchanged for a Motability vehicle from any participating car dealership.

Some people in receipt of mobility allowance can also use some of this to rent a Motability scooter or powered wheelchair. Full details can be found on the [Motability website](#).

Warrington Disability Partnership – Shopmobility

The Shopmobility service helps people with limited mobility, both temporary and permanent, to experience greater freedom and independence; shopping, socialising and/or travelling to appointments in Warrington town centre.

The fleet of over 50 mobility scooters, manual and electric wheelchairs are available from offices located at Golden Square Shopping Centre (Legh Street Car Park). A satellite service also operates from Warrington Market. Further details can be found on [Warrington Disability Partnership's website](#).

Dial-a-Ride (Warrington Community)

A door-to-door accessible minibus transport service operating locally within the boundaries of Warrington Borough Council using staff and volunteers. Staff escort members to and from the vehicle and assist with personal belongings. Journeys catered for: shopping trips, healthcare appointments, social outings, or accessing places of education, employment and direct access to

shopmobility.

For further details contact:

- Warrington Community Transport on 01925 419988
- Warrington Dial-a-Ride – 01925 419988

Citizens Advice

[Citizen Advice](#) can offer guidance and support related to benefits, including those that might be used for travel, and can direct individuals to appropriate services for specific needs. They also offer advice on a variety of other issues, such as debt, consumer rights, and immigration.

Appendix two: Questions to be explored during the assessment for travel support

Introduction

This guidance sheet is to help individuals and their supporting social worker to source the correct transport option when accessing their social care services. The full Adults Social Care Transport Policy is available online.

You may want to consider the below points when discussing your travel options.

Distance to your support or service.

- How far is the support or service from where you live? People will be expected to access support and community services based nearest to where they live, if they are appropriate to meet the assessed eligible needs.

Options

- Can you walk to the service? Being able to walk might mean by walking alone or with the assistance from someone else, e.g. from friends, family or carer.
- Can you use your own transport? If you have your own motor vehicle or a vehicle obtained through the Motability scheme, it is expected that this will be available for use.
- Can you use public transport?
 - This might be travelling independently or with assistance from someone else, for example friends, family or a carer.
 - Do you have a concessionary bus pass? If not, could you be supported to apply for one?
 - Would independent travel training support you to travel on public transport? Could this be provided by your support service (if applicable) or would a separate referral be required?
- Can you access transport with a carer, family member or friend?
 - Could a family member or friend transport you? There may be an option to pay a mileage allowance/personal travel budget if this is the most cost-effective option
 - Sharing transport may be an option. If you live in supported accommodation/shared lives, could you share with other individuals attending the same services or services nearby?