

**ADULT SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
2 JUNE 2009**

**REVIEW OF SOCIAL CARE AND COMMUNITY TRANSPORT
Director of Corporate Services**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek comments on the attached Social Care and Community Transport Review. The Review has already been considered and endorsed by the Council's Corporate Management Team. Comments from the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel are welcomed to assist with the preparation of the detailed business case and implementation of the recommendations.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 **To note and comment on the attached review report.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Review was carried out by a group of officers between September 2008 and April 2009 and involved detailed analysis of service information and consultation with users. The recommendations of the review are as follows:

4 REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Produce a robust business case to enable appropriate resource to manage the above services including, budgets, staff and vehicles required. Subject to the outcome of a detailed working model the changes listed below are recommended.

4.2 **Social Care and Learning Transport:**

- Centralise transport provision for clients accessing services at Downside, Heathlands, Waymead, Larchwood, the Family Centre, the Learning Disabilities trial and Bracknell Day Services. This should also include the management of the Youth Services bus;
- All transport bookings for the above centres as well as the Learning Disabilities transport trial to be managed by the Integrated Transport Unit;
- Replace Bracknell Forest Council fleet with more fit for purpose vehicles as leases expire where there is a business need for a new vehicle;
- Continue with the Learning Disabilities transport trial until it can be part of the wider transport provision of the Integrated Transport Unit;
- Manage all regular taxi bookings for Bracknell Forest Council clients through the Integrated Transport Unit.

4.3 **Keep Mobile:**

- Centralise the management of the Keep Mobile Service Level Agreement to the Integrated Transport Unit;
- When the existing Keep Mobile SLA (31st March 2011) and the home to school transport contracts expire (31st July 2011) review all options for how the service might be provided;
- Reduce administration from Keep Mobile by amalgamating separate subsidised fares invoices into one monthly payment;
- Review the subsidised fares element of the grant paid to Keep Mobile;
- Consider using Keep Mobile as a training provider for transport related courses;
- Consider how to further promote Keep Mobile;
- Consider the terms of the SLA to meet the requirements of current demand for services;
- Discuss the results of the consultation with Keep Mobile.

4.4 The detailed business case when completed will need to be considered by the Council's Corporate Management Team before consideration by the Executive in July.

Background Papers

None

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**Review of Social Care
and Community
Transport for Bracknell
Forest Council**

**Final Report
April 2009**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report builds on the work carried out on the best value review of Bracknell Forest Council transport which was completed in 2005. That review recommended centralisation of transport as the key to efficiency and cost management. It led to the setting up of the Integrated Transport Unit and the transfer of Education Transport from Education into Corporate Services. This Review recommends that centralisation should be now extended further to include elements of Social Care and Community Transport.

The review has found that the internal vehicle fleet within Social Care is fragmented and consequently poorly managed, underutilised and generally not fit for purpose particularly with the Personalised Agenda becoming essential to Bracknell Forest Council's clients.

The outsourced Community Transport currently provided by Keep Mobile whilst well regarded by users, is underutilised, poorly publicised, and expensive.

Under the chair of the Director of Corporate Services this second review has given the subject areas a very detailed inspection and has come up with the following recommendations.

Review Recommendations

Produce a robust business case to enable appropriate resource to manage the above services including, budgets, staff and vehicles required. Subject to the outcome of a detailed working model the changes listed below are recommended.

Social Care and Learning Transport:

- Centralise transport provision for clients accessing services at Downside, Heathlands, Waymead, Larchwood, the Family Centre, the Learning Disabilities trial and Bracknell Day Services. This should also include the management of the Youth Services bus;
- All transport bookings for the above centres as well as the Learning Disabilities transport trial to be managed by the Integrated Transport Unit;
- Replace Bracknell Forest Council fleet with more fit for purpose vehicles as leases expire where there is a business need for a new vehicle;
- Continue with the Learning Disabilities transport trial until it can be part of the wider transport provision of the Integrated Transport Unit;
- Manage all regular taxi bookings for Bracknell Forest Council clients through the Integrated Transport Unit.

Keep Mobile:

- Centralise the management of the Keep Mobile Service Level Agreement to the Integrated Transport Unit;

- When the existing Keep Mobile SLA (31st March 2011) and the home to school transport contracts expire (31st July 2011) review all options for how the service might be provided;
- Reduce administration from Keep Mobile by amalgamating separate subsidised fares invoices into one monthly payment;
- Review the subsidised fares element of the grant paid to Keep Mobile;
- Consider using Keep Mobile as a training provider for transport related courses;
- Consider how to further promote Keep Mobile;
- Consider the terms of the SLA to meet the requirements of current demand for services.
- Discuss the results of the consultation with Keep Mobile.

Next Steps

April 2009: Corporate Management Team

Departmental Management Teams

Access Advisory Panel

Development of business case

June: Overview and Scrutiny – Social Care and Learning

July: Executive

September: Start of implementation of recommendations

Introduction

This review builds on the work carried out on the best value review of Bracknell Forest Council transport which was completed in 2005 which recommended centralisation. In addition the 'Balancing the Budget' report published in 2007 identified transport centralisation as an important development and set a £50k savings target on completion.

A project to provide people with learning disabilities an additional transport service is currently being piloted by the Council. It has been working successfully and generally positive feedback has been received from users. The service started in April 2008 and is a dial-a-ride type service where clients book individual transport journeys to take place between 9am and 10.00pm seven days a week.

However, at a meeting of the Access Advisory Panel on 11 June 2008 a number of concerns were raised about the pilot, including:

- its restriction to certain groups of residents
- potential duplication with services provided by Keep Mobile, and
- the lack of a clear strategy to evaluate the success of the pilot.

In view of the above, together with concerns about the under utilisation of Social Care vehicles, and the identified need to further review the Council's transport function following the establishment of the Integrated Transport Unit, Corporate Management Team decided that a full review of the Council's Social Care and Community Transport Provision should be undertaken.

1.0 Terms of Reference

1.1 The terms of reference for the review were agreed at Corporate Management Team on the 17th July 2008.

1.2 Purpose

To review the transport arrangements currently provided by Bracknell Forest Borough Council Social Care vehicles.

- To review the transport provided by 'Keep Mobile' (the current community transport provider for Bracknell Forest Borough Council who are funded through an existing service level agreement).
- To put forward recommendations for the future delivery of Social Care and Community Transport

1.3 Scope

The project included all Social Care and Community transport but excludes the following areas –

- Public transport
- Subsidised fares
- Home to school transport
- Staff business travel or commuting
- External ad hoc transport provision
- Other voluntary sector transport

1.4 Objectives

Using best value principles:

- Review Social Care Transport and the potential for further integration of this service within the Integrated Transport Unit.
- Review Community Transport in relation to current providers.
- Identify opportunities for improving the delivery of Social Care and Community Transport.
- Identify opportunities for Social Care and Community Transport to work together for the benefit of residents and social care clients.
- Identify opportunities for collaboration with other bodies.
- To develop an implementation plan for the recommendations which are sensitive to the needs of the relevant client groups.

1.5 Approach

- Analyse existing Social Care and Community Transport by the monitoring and logging of journeys on software held within the Integrated Transport Unit.
- Benchmark journey data and costs with other local authorities and public bodies through the Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit.

- Participate in the National Health Service – LA Personal Transport Shared Service for Berkshire project being led by the Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit.
- Consult stakeholders about the future provision of the service.
- Review internal vehicle fleet usage with the intention of increasing utilisation.
- Ascertain the approach adopted by similar authorities.
- To report back findings and recommendations to Corporate Management Team.

1.6 Review Membership

Alison Sanders – Director of Corporate Services (Chair)
 Alan Nash – Chief Officer – Financial Services
 Zoë Johnstone – Head of Adults and Commissioning
 Damian James – Head of Transport Provision
 Nick Ireland – Head of Learning Disabilities Services
 Roger Cook – Transport Development Manager
 Simon McKenzie – Head of Service: Learning Difficulties and Disability –
 Children’s Social Care
 Sandie Gill – HR Advisor (when required)
 Keith Woodman – Chief Officer: Customer Services (when required)
 Corporate Services legal advisor (when required)

2.0 Current Service Profile

2.1 SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT VEHICLES

There are currently 23 passenger carrying vehicles on the Bracknell Forest Council fleet (see appendix 1 A). These are managed by 9 separate locations across all three Council departments. There are 254 passenger seats available on the fleet although that number would reduce if seats were removed in order to transport people in wheelchairs. 10 vehicles are wheelchair accessible. The average age of these vehicles is 6 years which is well above the industry average of 3-4 years. At the start of this review there were 25 passenger carrying vehicles but two minibuses have since been sold. Both minibuses were spare vehicles located at Central Depot. One was for Heathlands (and was included in the data used for this review) and the other for Bracknell Day Services.

The vehicle fleet is location based which means that responsibility for day to day usage lies with the site and the site manager. There is little evidence of vehicle sharing or collaborative working. This results in the vehicles being significantly underutilised. The average monthly distance travelled is 900km (560 miles) compared to an industry average of between 2,680km (1,666 miles) to 3,352km (2,083 miles) per month. This equates to 34% average utilisation against the lower figure quoted above of 32,180km (20,000 miles) per annum. In addition this has caused increased maintenance costs due to underutilisation of vehicles. Typical examples of this are numerous flat batteries and hydraulics not working as pressure is lost over time.

22 out of the 23 vehicles are on a finance lease arrangement which had been used for many years by Bracknell Forest Council. These vehicles were acquired using this lease arrangement through competitive tender in order to keep the purchase of vehicles off the balance sheet. This means that the vehicle has been purchased by Bracknell Forest Council and then sold to a finance company. Bracknell Forest Council then pays an annual lease charge to the finance company. These leases do not include any maintenance which remains at the risk of the Council. As the vehicles have aged the maintenance costs have increased which has led to budget pressure in the Social Care and Learning department. The leases are also reliant on Bracknell Forest Council having to negotiate direct with the manufacturers and dealers to obtain any vehicle discount. The vehicle fleet as a whole has declined recently due to Bracknell Forest Homes and other services being outsourced. This has meant that discounts have reduced as they are volume based. In addition there are five separate manufacturers badges (Ford, Toyota, Iveco, Mercedes and Optare) represented out of the 23 vehicles reducing further the potential buying power of Bracknell Forest Council. The finance leases have historically been arranged over long periods (the average is 6 years) in order to reduce the annual lease cost.

As many of these vehicles are on lengthy leases the business need has changed significantly since the vehicle was first ordered. This has caused a number of vehicles to be no longer fit for purpose. The finance leases arranged by the Council do not have an early termination clause. Therefore if vehicles are no longer needed or are unsuitable as the clients needs have changed over the years the only way to return the vehicle early is by paying off the remainder of lease years left in one lump sum. This means that it is not financially viable to return vehicles.

When vehicles are returned, end of term damage charges can be significant. As there are six different finance companies used they have different expectations in terms of fair wear and tear and end of lease collection charges. There is no overarching agreement which they have to abide by.

Since 2007 new arrangements have been used for contract hire. These arrangements include all maintenance, road fund licence, tyres, and vehicle recovery in their annual lease cost. New vehicles have been sourced using an existing national framework agreement which gives far superior discounts with manufacturers and dealers due to the volume purchased nationally. This has resulted in an average saving of 10% on annual lease costs and further saving on maintenance as this is included within the annual lease cost. All suppliers are covered by a contract which includes details on return conditions and termination penalties for returning vehicles early. The framework agreement used by Bracknell Forest Council is benchmarked against other agreements each time a vehicle is ordered to make sure that best value for money is achieved. It should be noted that this new arrangement covers accessible vehicles from 2009 and so the benefits detailed above can now be gained across the fleet that Bracknell Forest Council is likely to need.

It has become evident that the current transport arrangements within Social Care do not meet the aspirations of the Department. The Personalised Agenda is starting to gain momentum within Bracknell Forest and a much more individual service is envisaged as far as transport provision is concerned. A range of vehicles within a centralised fleet under control of the Integrated Transport Unit would be able to provide services for a much broader population. In addition this should be supplemented by increased utilisation of Community Transport as a separate arrangement.

2.2 FLEET COSTS

The fleet utilisation data that has been used has originated from the Berkshire Procurement Shared Services Unit which collected one week's worth of trip data during June 2008. This information has then been used to calculate passenger numbers and journey details.

The 23 passenger vehicles included in this review cost £190k in the 10 months up until the end of January 2009. £90k of this was in annual lease costs and the remaining £100k was split between £27k fuel costs, £25k in insurance and management fees, and the remainder £48k in maintenance, and road fund licence costs.

A comparison of cost per passenger km of Bracknell Day Services (including Waymead), Downside and Heathlands (the three main Social Care Locations) transport can be seen in appendix 1 B. It shows that Bracknell Day Services and Heathlands have costs of £1.59 and £1.74 per passenger km which are comparable to Keep Mobile and the Learning Disabilities trial. Downsides costs are £4.02 per passenger km.

2.3 OTHER PASSENGER CARRYING VEHICLES

There are four other locations which have passenger carrying vehicles-

- Forest Care – two cars and one minibus
- Larchwood – one minibus now shared with the Family Centre

- Glenfield House – one car
- Youth Services – one minibus

Forest Care want to give up their minibus as it is very rarely used. The lease currently expires on the 25/07/2011. The cost of sending this vehicle back early would be around £8k (£4k per year left on the lease). Ideally this vehicle should be re-allocated but if this is not possible it should be returned to the leasing company after negotiation on the final settlement figure.

During the review, two sites, Larchwood and the Family Centre, have made a decision that they could share one vehicle as they currently have one vehicle each. This saves around £5k per annum although some of this will be reinvested in other transport services which could be provided by the Integrated Transport Unit to meet any needs. The Family Centre minibus lease expires at the end of March 2009. It will then be returned and not replaced. This vehicle reduction is possible because the Family Centre uses the vehicle Monday to Friday and Larchwood need it in the evenings and at weekends. It is recommended that this shared approach is reviewed after 12 months.

There is little data available on the car based at Glenfield House other than it does very low annual kilometres (5,279km). It is recommended that this vehicle be centralised to the Integrated Transport Unit as it is not needed at Glenfield House. They will be able to access transport as required through the Integrated Transport Unit or with external taxi companies.

The Youth Services minibus is based at the Depot and again covers very low annual kilometres (6,439km). It is available for booking through Groupwise. It is recommended that this vehicle comes under the control of the Integrated Transport Unit to increase its utilisation and Youth Services book this vehicle from the Integrated Transport Unit when required.

2.4 TAXI COSTS

Analysis of taxi costs charged to Social Care during the financial year to date is £87k (see appendix 1 C). Pro rata this would be £122k per annum. Of this spend £37k year to date is managed through the Integrated Transport Unit using their approved suppliers. There is however significant spend identified with one non approved contractor (Burgundy cars – £20k up to the end of January 2009). On investigation this is for a single Bracknell Forest Council client to be transported to Oakbridge Day Services. On benchmarking this cost against Bracknell Forest Council approved contractors a minimum saving of 50% can be achieved, although as the Integrated Transport Unit already contracts a service to the nearby location and if sharing a taxi is an option the total saving would be around £27k per annum. Altering this particular arrangement would require sensitive handling.

There are also two other approved contractors being used although these journeys are booked direct by Social Care and Learning and not through the Integrated Transport Unit. If these journeys were booked through the Integrated Transport Unit there is the potential for further shared transport and therefore reduced costs.

2.5 LEARNING DISABILITIES TRANSPORT TRIAL

The Integrated Transport Unit has been engaged in a dial-a-ride transport trial for people with Learning Disabilities since April 2008. The trial is funded by existing Learning Disabilities budgets and is only available to those clients (approximately

370). Learning Disabilities has provided one accessible minibus from Bracknell Day Services and a driver to resource this initiative. Bookings for the service are made through Customer Services. Booked journeys are then completed by the Integrated Transport Unit. Success criteria for the trial were developed and are shown in appendix 1 D. This shows that the trial has achieved success in a number of different areas. Of particular note is the increase in destinations that have been accessed by the clients. The range of destinations listed is listed in appendix 1 E.

Total costs incurred 2008/2009 year to date for the Learning Disabilities trial are shown in appendix 1 H as a comparison to Keep Mobile charges.

The feedback from the Learning Disabilities transport trial has recently been collected using a questionnaire and is generally positive (see appendix 1 F). Unfortunately the response was poor with 270 questionnaires being sent out and only 25 being returned (9%). However 65% of respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with the transport being provided but only 25% gave the same response when asked about the booking process. This information correlates with the independent consultation undertaken by QA Research and presented later in this report. Over 70% thought that the trial provided value for money. The client pays £2.00 per trip by buying a voucher from Bracknell Forest Council locations. This voucher is then clipped by the driver when a client travels. A third of respondents felt the trial reduced the need for transport provided by Parents or Carers i.e. increased the independence of clients and a similar percentage considered it reduced the need to use taxis. It should also be noted that some customers in this client group only feel comfortable travelling with vehicles and drivers that they know. This means that whilst often taxis may be the most economical transport available it is not necessarily the most suitable for the client's needs.

One of the findings that has come out of the Learning Disabilities trial is that the booking process is not effective enough. This is currently handled by Customer Services through a dedicated telephone number (01344 352002). This number is ring fenced to ten Customer Services call handlers who have been trained to use the software. The agents enter the booking onto the system and then allocate that booking onto the minibus used for the trial.

Whilst this initially worked well with a low number of journeys, as the numbers of passengers has increased (see appendix 1 G) the allocation of journeys onto the minibus has proved problematic. Frequently journeys are booked for the bus that are not possible to complete e.g. four bookings at 10.00am in four different locations. It is likely that the agents in Customer Services do not fully appreciate the complexity of the software package or the logistical difficulties of moving around Bracknell which leads to this scenario.

It is a recommendation of this report that, if the trial moved to more permanent arrangement, then this booking process should be handled by the Integrated Transport Unit. They have a much greater understanding of the particular clients needs, the activities that they are travelling too, the traffic conditions and the time taken to travel around the Borough. This would then stop the need for an additional vehicle being used to supplement the existing service.

Around 10% of Learning Disabilities trial journeys are cancelled by the client. This may be by the client phoning up and cancelling using the booking telephone number or by phoning the Integrated Transport Unit direct. Where a booking has been cancelled in advance of the journey this has not always been cancelled off the software but just off the driver's paperwork. This has then been shown as a

completed trip on reports. There has now been a new procedure put in place to ensure all cancellations are made on the software.

More frequently cancellations occur when the vehicle arrives to pick up the client who has made a booking. Again previous procedure has been altered and drivers have been instructed to clip the client's voucher in all practical circumstances. This is why when comparing revenues with journeys completed there is a mismatch between the two figures.

However, going forward, income collection is still a difficult area to manage and it is recommended that further investigation on use of the Smart Card or some form of prepayment as a method for transport payment is undertaken.

The information collected as part of the consultation for this report highlighted the need for a transport service for clients in the weekday evenings and at weekends. This was particularly appreciated by LD clients. The local public transport infrastructure was seen by the respondents as being not frequent enough 'out of hours' and also was felt to be intimidating for some vulnerable users. Keep Mobile does not offer an evening and weekend service for their Dial-a-ride service.

2.6 STAFFING

There are currently 18 staff (appendix 1 H) connected with driving and or escorting in Social Care and Learning. Three of these staff also have some responsibility for handy work within their job description. Seven staff are permanent employees with Bracknell Forest Council and two of these are full time. The other five are contracted to work 20 hours per week. The salaries of these seven staff total £65.5k. The remaining 11 staff are on a casual contract and are paid on an hourly basis through time sheets.

2.7 PURPOSE AND USES

The sites where the 23 vehicles are located are detailed in appendix 1 I. Appendix 1 J gives details of vehicle data collected from Heathlands, Downside and Bracknell Day Services (and Waymead) as part of the Berkshire Procurement Shared Services Unit project and shows number of passengers carried and the total seating capacity of the available vehicle fleet.

2.8 BUDGETS

The recommendation to centralise transport provision from Social Care and Learning and Environment, Culture and Communities is dependant on sufficient budget for vehicles and staffing being transferred to the Integrated Transport Unit. This will enable the Integrated Transport Unit to manage the services effectively whilst providing for the right level of client expectation. The budget for vehicles in 2008/2009 within Social Care and Learning was £152k. This did not include the three vehicles within Forest Care. This budget figure does not include any staffing costs. It is recommended that as part of the business case staff that are responsible for driving / caring duties on vehicles are analysed in detail in order to build up an accurate picture of how much of their time is spent related to transport activity.

2.9 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

If potential service users are assessed by Social Care to need transport then it is provided free of charge. Bracknell Forest Council do not currently charge for

transportation but this was recently highlighted as a potential opportunity in the income generation report completed by Price Waterhouse Coopers. To charge clients for transport the 'fairer charging' policy would need to be reviewed and subject to consultation altered. Any service user would be means tested prior to a final decision being made.

2.10 MOTABILITY VEHICLES

Motability is the leading car scheme for disabled people. It is available to anyone who qualifies for the higher rate mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance or the War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement. Part or all of the allowance can be given up in return for a vehicle. Eligible drivers can top up their payments to get the car of their choice. The vast majority of the vehicles on the scheme are contract hires over three years.

There has been some concern raised during the review that some Bracknell Forest Council clients have a Motability vehicle and these are either not used by the eligible client, but a member of their family, or that the client does not use them and Bracknell Forest Council still pick them up on one of the minibuses.

To clarify the position and authorised use of vehicles, Motability issue a guidance booklet 'Authorised Use of Motability Scheme Vehicles'. This states in section three that –

- 'The Motability car may only be used by, or for the benefit of, the disabled person who qualifies for the scheme'.
- 'The car may be used by the household e.g. spouse may use the car to and from a place of work, grocery shopping or other routine activities from which the disabled person derives an identifiable benefit'.

Given the guidance above if a Motability vehicle is not used by the eligible person or their family but Bracknell Forest Council still provide transport this support should be withdrawn and the client should use their vehicle for all journeys.

3.0 Keep Mobile

3.1 SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT

Keep Mobile were appointed as the providers of the Borough's community transport service in 2002. The existing service is managed in Environment, Culture and Communities by Roger Cook, Transport Development Manager. This team are also responsible for Public Transport. The service provided by Keep Mobile is managed by this Department because there is a link with Public Transport. However the service is far more personalised and therefore there are some synergies with the individual type of services that are currently located within the Integrated Transport Unit such as the Learning Disabilities trial and home to school transport.

The service was tendered again in 2004 through the European Journal as the total spend was above the minimum threshold. The tender was not successful and only attracted one potential supplier (Keep Mobile). As a result a service level agreement (appendix 1 K) was negotiated with them on the 1st March 2007 which runs until 31st March 2011.

The service provided by Keep Mobile and grant funded by Bracknell Forest Council divides into three areas –

- Dial-a-ride - Members can telephone to reserve a journey but must book the journey at least 2 days in advance. This service is available to any UK destination subject to availability.
- Shopping trips - regular weekly services to local towns with sufficient time to shop or meet friends.
- Group transport – Member groups can book Keep Mobile to take them on trips.

To be eligible for a Dial-a-ride or shopping trip the potential user must be over 70, or have a disability. Appendix one of the Keep Mobile service level agreement states that 'The Borough Council has for some years supported Community Transport Services on behalf of approximately 3,000 eligible Bracknell Forest residents. Annual operational mileage of the supported services is estimated to be in the region of 100,000 miles plus. Based on the August 2008 to January 2009 data (6 months) the prorated annual mileage for each service is:

Dial a ride - 26,091 miles (6 months data is 21,007 kms)

Group - 7,288 miles (6 months data is 5,868 kms)

Shopping - 2,464 miles (6 months data is 1,984 kms)

Therefore total mileage is 35,843, just a third of what was envisaged by the service level agreement and therefore it is a recommendation of this report that further work is done with Keep Mobile in order to increase the utilisation of this valuable service. This would centre on increasing the publicity for the service. The management of the approved list of groups supported by the Bracknell Forest Council grant needs closer monitoring and updating as it was found to be out of date.

It has been noted during this review that Keep Mobile preferred the centralised transport management model that is used by Wokingham Borough Council to the

current arrangement at Bracknell. Currently there is no incentive for Keep Mobile to increase the utilisation as they get a fixed amount of grant from Bracknell Forest Council. As part of any new contract arrangements in 2011 a part of the grant payable could be used to cover fixed costs but also a further element could be based on passenger numbers.

3.2 CHARGES

Bracknell Forest Council pays Keep Mobile an annual grant of £123,876.00 (2008/2009). A more detailed breakdown and cost comparison with other forms of transport is in appendix 1 L. Keep Mobile charges are detailed in appendix 2. This is split over the three services as following –

- Dial-a-ride - £63,176.76 (51% of total)
- Shopping trips - £34,685.28 (28% of total)
- Group transport - £26,013.96 (21% of total)

In addition to the above grant Social Care and Learning contract Keep Mobile for some additional transport. The cost of this is around £16k for the full year 2008/2009 (detail contained in Appendix 1 M and N).

Currently Bracknell Forest Council pay a 50% subsidised fare for registered users on shopping trips only. Wokingham Borough Council pays 100% of the cost for all dial a ride and shopping trips. As users from both Council areas regularly use the Keep Mobile service, this is a cause of concern from the Bracknell Forest users. It should also be noted that all subsidised fares paid to Keep Mobile are invoiced separately. There is potential for encompassing this cost into the service level agreement to avoid unnecessary invoice processing administration.

3.3 USAGE

Using the last six months worth of data provided by Keep Mobile the average passenger journeys per month are

- Dial-a-ride - 239
- Shopping trips - 79
- Group transport – 118

When equating these monthly passenger figures with the amount of grant paid and the average journey distance travelled, the subsidy paid by Bracknell Forest Council per passenger kilometre works out as –

- Dial-a-ride - £1.50
- Shopping trips – £8.74 (£9.16 if a subsidised fare is paid)
- Group transport – £2.22

This is in addition to the cost paid by the user. Information that has been fed back from the data provided by Keep Mobile and subsequently backed up by the consultation is that group excursions (currently not supported by the Bracknell Forest Council grant) are extremely popular. This is something that should be reviewed when this service is re-tendered as it supports the Council's objective of community cohesion by encouraging older and vulnerable people to meet and socialise with others. The independent consultation carried out by QA research showed that those using the Keep Mobile service generally feel that it is effective and meets their needs.

Keep Mobile are also a training organisation for courses related to transport and the carrying of passengers. It is recommended that this should be investigated further as this could be beneficial to both parties. There were a number of areas for improvement to the Keep Mobile service arising out of the consultation which should be discussed with Keep Mobile.

3.4 STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

There are no statutory requirements for Bracknell Forest Council to provide community transport although there is a high expectation from clients that it should continue and will continue to be supplied.

4.0 Vision for Personalised Transport Provision

The future vision for transport provision is very different to what is provided now by Bracknell Forest Council and Keep Mobile. It is likely to be more about individual services and is not daily transport into and out of Social Care Centres. This vision is being driven by the Personalised Agenda which will give users choice and control about what services they wish to access. The aspirations and options for the different areas managed by Bracknell Forest Council are set out below.

4.1 Community Transport

- Need for independent dial a ride, group and shopping type service.
- Dial a ride type service could be provided by private hire vehicles but is dependent on users' perception of the safety of the service.
- Can't stop current services due to public expectation
- The promotion of community cohesion could be helped by a focus on group transport and excursions and redirecting the available grant to support this

4.2 Social Care Transport

4.2.1 Learning Disabilities

- Need affordable individual journeys (taxi type) to access community opportunities
- Moving away from providing bus transport to and from day centres
- More individual control of timing and destinations
- Need clear and simple payment mechanism (e.g. e-card)
- Need clear and simple booking mechanism
- MUST be reliable
- Drivers and escorts will need specific training:
 - awareness of the impact of having a learning disability
 - communication skills
 - supporting people with mobility problems
- Service must be consistent with familiar drivers, vehicles etc.
- Accessible vehicles
- All vehicles should be non-stigmatising – i.e. no Bracknell Forest Council logo/labels
- Need affordable transport to access further education opportunities
- It will remain appropriate for some journeys to have care staff driving (e.g. shopping/leisure related journeys whilst staying at Waymead Short Term Care)

4.2.2 Mental Health

- Need affordable individual journeys (taxi type) to access community opportunities
- Moving away from providing bus transport to and from day centres
- More individual control of timing and destinations
- Need clear and simple payment mechanism (e.g. e-card)
- Need clear and simple booking mechanism
- MUST be reliable

- Drivers and escorts will need specific training:
 - awareness of the impact of having a mental health problem
 - communication skills
 - supporting people with mobility problems
- Service must be consistent with familiar drivers, vehicles etc.
- All vehicles should be non-stigmatising – i.e. no Bracknell Forest Council logo/labels
- Need affordable transport to access further education opportunities
- It will remain appropriate for some journeys to have care staff driving

4.2.3 Older People & Physically Disabled

- Need affordable individual journeys (taxi type) to access community opportunities
- Moving away from providing bus transport to and from day centres
- More individual control of timing and destinations
- Need clear and simple payment mechanism (e.g. e-card)
- Need clear and simple booking mechanism
- MUST be reliable
- Drivers and escorts will need specific training:
 - awareness of the impact of age-related issues.
 - communication skills
 - supporting people with mobility problems
- Service must be consistent with familiar drivers, vehicles etc.
- Accessible vehicles
- All vehicles should be non-stigmatising – i.e. no Bracknell Forest Council logo/labels
- Need affordable transport to access further education opportunities
- It will remain appropriate for some journeys to have care staff driving (e.g. shopping/leisure related journeys whilst staying at Heathlands)

4.2.4 General

- Some potential for group excursion type activities
- Personalised agendas will start to have an impact within a year

4.3 Children's Services

Like Adult Social Care the need for flexibility in service provision is crucial in the development of transport provision to respond to changing needs of children and young people. There is a need to balance the promotion of children and young people independence with the need of the Local Authority to safeguard children.

4.3.1 Children with learning difficulties and disability

- Support to increase independence especially during transition period to adulthood.
- Aiming High for disabled children transformation agenda will promote and develop greater inclusion within mainstream activities as well as increasing the number of short breaks. Transport issues are being considered within these developments.

- Larchwood Short Break Unit will continue to need access to a vehicle to enhance the experience of young people using the Unit as well as enabling access to community services and resources.

4.3.2 Safeguarding

- The Family Centre provides in depth risk assessments and support for families, in order to enable and ensure access to the service appropriate transport is critical.

4.3.3 Looked After Children

- Flexibility to meet transport needs with regards contact with families, access to mainstream activities and services.
- Support to increase independence especially during transition period to adulthood.

4.3.4 Opportunities

- The existing pool of staff trained and providing home to school transport provides for a potential workforce to support social and community transport.

5.0 Consultation

The consultation for this review has been undertaken by QA Research. They are the Council's specialist consultation providers. A summary of key findings is in appendix 1 O. The full consultation report is provided as appendix 3.

The aim of the research was to review and evaluate current awareness, usage and satisfaction with the existing community and social care transport services and to identify ways, if any, in which the service can be improved.

This research has been delivered in the following three key phases:

- 310 **postal surveys** (59 with carers, 137 with Life Line users, who are potentially vulnerable people, and 114 with users of Keep Mobile).
- 39 **depth interviews** (24 with service users, 7 with staff and 8 with voluntary groups).
- One **discussion session** with the Access Advisory Group

Postal surveys were also available through the Bracknell Forest Council public website and members of the review team attended the Older Peoples Conference in January in order to hand out further questionnaires.

5.1 KEY FINDINGS ON JOURNEYS MADE

5.1.1 Eligibility

Postal survey respondents were likely not to know whether they, or the person they cared for, would be eligible for free social care operated by Bracknell Forest Council.

5.1.2 Journeys

Respondents are likely to be currently making journeys to:

- Travel to / from out-of-town shopping centres or supermarkets
- Visit the hospital or doctors
- Travel to / from town centre shops

These are also the journeys they are most likely to want to make.

Different groups of service users are using transport differently, which may reflect their support needs. For example, older respondents are likely to be using Keep Mobile services or social care transport provided by Bracknell Forest Council to get them to day centres or support groups in addition to using Keep Mobile to go on outings and shopping trips.

5.1.3 Choice of how to make local journeys

Keep Mobile service users and carers who are likely to have used / or have access to some form of transport service are more likely to agree that they

have a choice of transport in Bracknell. Conversely, Life Line users are significantly more likely to have no opinion. This suggests Life Line respondents are less likely to be aware of transport services available to them.

Taxis were not widely considered by respondents as a viable alternative form of transport due to the cost and concerns over door-to-door safety. They did not believe that the drivers would care for them adequately.

5.1.4 Service awareness

Postal survey respondents are particularly likely to have heard of Shopping Trips, Dial a Ride and Excursions provided by Keep Mobile. Carers are significantly more likely to have heard of social care transport services provided by Bracknell Forest Council (60%) compared to Keep Mobile users (31%).

5.1.5 Transport services used

Carers (57%) and Life Line (48%) service users are significantly more likely to be using social care services provided by Bracknell Forest Council than those currently registered with Keep Mobile (5%). This is likely to reflect the level of social care eligibility for each group.

Service users with learning disabilities were likely to be using, or to have heard of, the learning disabilities Transport Trial. This is widely considered by them to be a crucial service enabling them to access services or places they would not otherwise be able to.

5.1.6 Other local journeys made

Respondents are likely to make other journeys locally without using community and or social care transport services; 71% of Keep Mobile respondents, 78% of Life Line users and 89% of Carers.

Respondents are likely to be making other journeys by car either driven by someone else or by themselves.

5.1.7 Factors affecting how journeys are made

Different groups of respondents prioritise elements of the services differently. For example, carers are significantly more likely to consider whether there will be an escort or assistant on the service as important (48%) compared to those currently registered with Keep Mobile (23%).

Carers are also significantly more likely (46%) to identify the qualities of the driver, escort or staff training to be important compared to either Life Line service users (38%) or Keep Mobile users (21%).

Whilst cost was identified as an important factor for all groups of respondents, a simple cost structure was considered to be particularly important for respondents with learning disabilities.

Barriers to travelling with social and / or community transport services

There are a number of specific barriers identified by respondents as key reasons why they or the person they cared for did not use community and / or social care transport to make some local journeys. The most frequently identified were:

- Not knowing the service was available or how to access this
- Being able to drive themselves or have support to drive them locally
- Convenience and ease of use
- Cost of the service
- Misconception around the costs of Keep Mobile 'dial-a-ride' service and charging structure

5.1.8 Experience of service use

Respondents who have used local transport services operated either by Keep Mobile or Bracknell Forest Council social care are broadly very positive about the services received.

For respondents with learning disabilities, the Transport Trial was commented on more frequently than other forms of transport available to them. Despite some initial problems encountered, these were widely considered to be 'teething problems;' respondents remain largely very positive about this service.

5.1.9 Extent to which needs are met

The greatest proportion of respondents to the postal survey consider that their needs are met either fully or most of the time by Keep Mobile and Bracknell Forest Council social care transport services.

Respondents are broadly positive about the range and type of journeys they are able to make using existing community and social care transport services in Bracknell.

5.1.10 Service availability and arranging travel

The greatest proportions of survey and depth interview respondents are satisfied with the availability of community and social care transport services. Respondents are likely to have found it easy to arrange travel with each service, with the exception of respondents with learning disabilities who were unlikely to have accessed Keep Mobile transport. Staff working with this group identified having found this service difficult to book.

In addition, staff are unable to cancel bookings for service users, which given that some service users have memory problems for example, can cause difficulties for staff.

Respondents were less positive about the learning disabilities Transport Trial booking system, based on their experiences of double booking and the timings of pick-ups and drop-offs scheduled.

5.1.11 Personal security

Respondents feel very safe when travelling with each form of transport. Some safety concerns were raised due to time spent waiting for services to arrive, particularly social care transport provided by Keep Mobile and the learning disabilities Transport Trial.

5.1.12 Attitude of drivers

Respondents were strongly positive about drivers' attitude having found them consistently helpful and friendly.

5.1.13 Punctuality

For all services, the greatest proportion of postal survey respondents considered themselves satisfied.

Respondents from all service groups identified that services which took them to and from Day Centres and other services were often early or late in the mornings. This could become a concern where sessions were effectively shortened for some respondents with activities being 'squeezed out.'

The learning disabilities Transport Trial was considered often to be late or early. This raised concerns relating to reaching destinations on time and also safety concerns should respondents be left outside waiting.

5.1.14 Ease of access

Respondents widely considered that services were physically easy to access.

5.1.15 Service information

Findings suggest there is a need for further information regarding the social and community transport services available in the Bracknell area to be publicised.

Respondents who are using Keep Mobile services are consistently more likely to be satisfied with how easy it has been for them to find out information about community and transport services compared to Life Line users.

Respondents would like to find out further information through leaflets / letters, and through carers or social services staff.

Written publicity material is less accessible for respondents with learning disabilities who are more dependent on information being verbally supplied to them through carers, friends and support services used.

5.1.16 Learning Disabilities Transport Trial

Service users with learning disabilities and staff working with this group have not historically used Keep Mobile services; the Transport Trial is considered to be meeting a previously unmet demand.

Respondents widely considered the booking system for the Learning disabilities Transport Trial to be the aspect of the service most in need of improving.

Difficulties with the service experienced were seen to be problems stemming from the booking system such as return journeys not being booked, being booked but not included on the drivers schedule or the bus being late.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS OF CONSULTATION

- Respondents are satisfied overall with the community and social care transport services in Bracknell.
- Respondents are very satisfied with the service provided by drivers.
- Respondents are likely to feel that community and / or social care transport needs to be further publicised.
- Keep Mobile fares are perceived to be expensive and the fare schedule has caused some confusion.
- Greater flexibility needed in the Keep Mobile booking system particularly for staff to be able to make changes to some vulnerable respondents' journeys.
- Concerns regarding day centre being able to make trips with high number of wheelchair users and 'walkers'
- Improvements are needed to the learning disabilities Transport Trial booking system to improve service reliability.

6.0 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis was carried out as part of meetings with both Social Care and Keep Mobile.

6.1 SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT

Strengths

1. Location based
2. Always available
3. One to one service
4. Carers know the passengers
5. Passenger trust of drivers
6. Flexible for the Centre
7. Ad hoc easily accommodated

Weaknesses

1. Significant over capacity
2. Large vehicles carrying low numbers of passengers most of day
3. Average vehicle utilisation only 30% of industry average
4. Carers carrying out driving duties which many are unhappy with
5. Fleet is old, unreliable and expensive to maintain
6. Many vehicles not fit for purpose
7. Majority of vehicles on long leases
8. Local management means no flexibility as a fleet
9. Still using Keep Mobile despite over capacity
10. No obvious booking or management of vehicle

Opportunities

1. Centralised management
2. Reduce use of Keep Mobile when cheaper alternatives available
3. More individualised service
4. Extended hours service
5. Recharging health service
6. Charging all clients
7. Reduced fleet size, more fit for purpose vehicles, cheaper vehicles
8. Support for Sandhurst Day Centre
9. Personalised agenda and where this is heading
10. Support from Centres

Threats

1. Resistance from Centres
2. Resistance from drivers/carers
3. Concern from Keep Mobile
4. Political support
5. Slow changes to fleet and fleet costs
6. Current vehicles not right for business need
7. Personalised agenda and where this is heading

6.2 KEEP MOBILE

This Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis was compiled during a meeting between the Director of Corporate Service and representatives of Keep Mobile.

Strengths

1. Independent of Council: No area restrictions on where transport can be provided in addition to services included in service level agreement.
2. Volunteers: Keeps costs down: Use Long term unemployed and retired to provide useful activities. They bring additional skills. Act as drivers, escorts and admin and provide professional support.
3. Services: Can go outside service level agreement with voluntary money – events and socialising are additional services. Wider service than just transport e.g. Parties and functions, bingo. One taxi firm uses Keep Mobile for physically disabled customers.

Weaknesses

1. Affording service. Keep Mobile would like to provide: Evenings and weekends transport. They cannot afford additional buses and taxis for wheelchair users
2. Funding: Charge only covers running cost and depreciation of vehicles; driver's costs need additional funding.

Opportunities

1. Day excursions and dial-a-ride need additional capital.
2. Keep Mobile would like to work closer with Council.
3. Transport Management Software: Widely used by community transport providers across the country. Bracknell Forest Council purchased differently. Developed by 3 operators (Keep Mobile, Slough and Swindon).
4. Excursions: Would like to do more, gets people out from loneliness. No Bracknell Forest Council funding for this. West Berkshire Primary Care Trust gave £6,500 funding for excursions. East Berkshire Primary Care Trust currently considering funding these. Very popular.
5. Lost money last year (£14k) as had to pay additional drivers due to number of excursions.
6. Some indication in last month that demand is falling, possibly due to recession.
7. Recruitment of staff shown to improve in recession with driver and admin posts; 84 applicants for a post advertised in December.
8. Training: Training provided as agency Minibus Driver Assessment Scheme (MIDAS), Passenger Assistant Training Scheme (PATS) (escorts), training provided for other organisations. They would like to provide training for the Council.
9. Section 19 rules change from April which allows use of smaller vehicles, consideration being given to providing a demand responsive service using smaller vehicles (similar to taxis).

Threats

1. End of funding: Grants of £200k are currently received.
2. Bracknell Forest Council provides almost half of total income. Wokingham parishes (most of 22) also contribute. Sandhurst Town Council contributes. Wokingham Borough Council contributes – just under Bracknell Forest Council level. Work: 53% Bracknell Forest area 47% Wokingham area.
3. Fares: Need to raise another £100K to break even (approx £60k of which is fares for work done).
4. Vehicles expensive to buy (£44k). Planned replacement on hold due to concern over current review.

7.0 Compare

7.1 KEEP MOBILE WOKINGHAM

Wokingham Borough Council are also clients of Keep Mobile who are actually based in the Borough of Wokingham. It was natural as part of this review that we should want to speak to them about what services they receive from Keep Mobile and at what cost. However Wokingham Borough Council was unwilling, due to legal reasons, to give Bracknell Forest Council any data surrounding the use of Keep Mobile. As a result it was impossible to do any meaningful comparison with them.

7.2 OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITY COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Adjacent authorities have varying information available on their websites but a summary of findings can be found in appendix 1 P

7.3 OTHER UA SOCIAL CARE & COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

In comparing Bracknell Forest Council provision with other authorities around the country questions were posed on two forum message boards. These were the Freight Transport Association Public Authority Transport Network (FTA PATN) and the Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers (ATCO). The question that was posted was;

'I am in the middle of a transport review and am interested in what other authorities do in relation to Social Care transport and Community transport. Which of these services are in house and which are outsourced. If it is in house is it managed centrally or done at a local level by the Social Care sections.'

Responses were received from seven authorities from around the country and have been detailed in appendix 1 Q.

To summarise the responses given most Authorities are working along similar lines to what is being done in Bracknell Forest Council. The provision of transport was generally provided by a mixture of internal fleet vehicles and external support for Community Transport. A general finding was that most services were under review as a key part of Social Care modernisation. It is clear that transport is key to this agenda but one of the most challenging areas to get right.

There is one notable exception to the norm which was Spelthorne who provide an internal dial-a-ride service (similar to the Learning Disabilities trial). Some services were reported to be reviewing how they provided this service due to the implementation of personalised services in Social Care. Details of their services can be found as appendix 4. West Berkshire also produces a very detailed transport service brochure which is appendix 5

8.0 Options

The development of options takes the potential whole range of possibilities for the future provision of Social Care and Community Transport and looks at the pros and cons of each. When this was worked through with the review team a preferred option was revealed which has now been developed as the recommendations in the executive summary.

8.1 KEEP THE SERVICE AS IT CURRENTLY IS WITH KEEP MOBILE AND SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT INDEPENDENT OF EACH OTHER

Pro

- Location based
- Always available
- One to one service
- Carers know the passengers
- Passenger trust of drivers
- Flexible for the Centre
- Ad hoc easily accommodated
- Relatively low cost and easy to manage

Con

- Significant over capacity
- Large vehicles carrying low numbers of passengers most of day and generally low take up of services due to lack of publicity
- Average vehicle utilisation only 30% of industry average
- Carers carrying out driving duties which many are unhappy with
- Fleet is old, unreliable and expensive to maintain
- Many vehicles not fit for purpose
- Majority of vehicles on long leases
- Local management means no flexibility as a fleet
- Still using Keep Mobile despite over capacity
- No obvious booking or management of vehicle
- Does not support personalised agenda

8.2 INCREASE USAGE OF KEEP MOBILE TO TAKE OVER SOME ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT

Pro

- Excursions/groups in support of community cohesion
- Reduces Bracknell Forest Council fleet
- Bigger Vehicles
- Reduction in taxi spend
- Greater flexibility in terms of service provision

Con

- Potentially poor value for money
- Low volume
- Out of hours inconsistent
- Cost of positioning from Wokingham
- Bigger vehicles
- Taxi appears better value
- Does not fit with personalised agenda

8.3 100% OF TRANSPORT PROVISION AWARDED TO KEEP MOBILE AND NO SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT FLEET	
<p>Pro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single provider • Excursions/groups in support of community cohesion • No Bracknell Forest Council passenger carrying vehicles • Bigger Vehicles • Reduction in taxi spend • Specialist provider – software, vehicles and staff • Fits Keep Mobile desire to provide more transport 	<p>Con</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single provider • Potentially poor value for money • Out of hours inconsistent • Cost of positioning from Wokingham • Bigger vehicles • Taxi appears better value • Does not fit with personalised agenda • Consistency of vehicles and staff • Contract management relationship • Over EU procurement threshold • Less flexibility at Centres • Keep Mobile's ability to cope with increased load
8.4 INCREASE BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL PROVISION TO TAKE OVER SOME ELEMENTS OF KEEP MOBILE TRANSPORT BUT DECENTRALISED AND MANAGED BY SOCIAL CARE CENTRES AS CURRENT	
<p>Pro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility with 100% vehicle availability • More choice for residents • Improved vehicle utilization 	<p>Con</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in agreed Keep Mobile service level agreement (grant fixed until 2011) • Reduction in taxi use (taxi's appear to be good value for money for some journeys) • Current fleet not right (old, unreliable and expensive) • Does not satisfy personalised agenda • Centres difficulty in increasing transport provision • Difficulty in management of transport by centres

8.5 100% OF TRANSPORT PROVIDED BY BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL BUT DECENTRALISED AND MANAGED BY SOCIAL CARE CENTRES AS CURRENT

<p>Pro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More choice for residents • Improved vehicle utilization 	<p>Con</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in agreed Keep Mobile service level agreement (grant fixed until 2011) • Reduction in taxi usage (taxi's appear to be good value for money for some journeys) • Current fleet not right (old, unreliable and expensive) • Does not satisfy personalised agenda • Centres difficulty in increasing transport provision • Reduced flexibility due to increased vehicle and driver load • Need additional vehicles and drivers • Difficulty in management of transport by centres
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8.6 100% OF TRANSPORT PROVIDED BY BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL BUT CENTRALISED MANAGEMENT WITHIN THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT

<p>Pro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated Transport Unit in place including software and client understanding • LD trial proves concept at a reasonable cost • Supports personalised agenda • One point of contact for customers • Reduced administration cost • Better vehicle utilisation • Co-ordinated approach to all passenger transport • Better management control possible 	<p>Con</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in agreed Keep Mobile service level agreement (grant fixed until 2011) • New vehicles required • More Integrated Transport Unit staff required • Level of acceptance by Centres • May not be better value than taxis or Keep Mobile for all occasions
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8.7 SOCIAL CARE TRANSPORT RETAINED BUT MANAGED WITHIN THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT AND KEEP MOBILE RETAINED PROVIDING THE SAME SERVICE AS CURRENT BUT MANAGED BY THE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT UNIT

Pro

- Integrated Transport Unit in place including software and client understanding
- Learning Disabilities trial proves concept at a reasonable cost
- Supports personalised agenda
- Reduced administration cost
- Better vehicle utilisation
- Contract management of Keep Mobile allows increased need to be accommodated by Keep Mobile
- Co-ordinated approach to all passenger transport and therefore optimise use
- Allows Social Care centres to concentrate on providing service they are meant to
- Could allow more group excursions through better fleet utilisation

Con

- New vehicles required
- More Integrated Transport Unit staff required
- Level of acceptance by Centres
- May not be better value than taxis for all occasions

8.8 GO TO MARKET FOR ALL TRANSPORT REQUIREMENTS	
<p>Pro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential to be cheaper • Flexible • Should be an option for business case 	<p>Con</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bracknell Forest Council staff impact • Vehicles currently on lease and the cost of ending these • No experience of this approach working in other Local Authorities • Internal resistance • Not possible to tender for Community Transport until 2011 • New contractor may undermine the current confidence of clients • Lack of flexibility to respond to changing personalised care agenda
8.9 SHARED SERVICE WITH OTHER LOCAL AUTHORITIES OR PUBLIC/VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION	
<p>Pro</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential for small saving 	<p>Con</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Already investigated by Berkshire Procurement Shared Services Unit and National Health Services not a good fit (both passenger experience and journey type) • Vehicles travelling longer journeys to pickup points • Agreement of standards • Different software systems • Management of logistics

8.10 KEEP AS IS BUT REDUCE PROVISION AND DE-CENTRALISE TO SOCIAL CARE CENTRES

Pro

- Location based
- Always available
- One to one service
- Carers know the passengers
- Passenger trust of drivers
- Reduced fleet costs

Con

- Large vehicles carrying low numbers of passengers most of day
- Carers carrying out driving duties which many are unhappy with
- Fleet is old, unreliable and expensive to maintain
- Many vehicles not fit for purpose
- Majority of vehicles on long leases
- Local management means no flexibility as a fleet
- No obvious booking or management of vehicle
- Less Flexible for the Centre
- Ad hoc less easy to accommodate
- Level of acceptance by Centres
- Increased passenger time in vehicle
- Reduced offering to client
- Increased spend on external transport
- Does not support personalised agenda
- Requires driver/carer role shift

9.0 Preferred option

The preferred option recommended by the review team is to centralise the majority of the provision and management of transport to the Integrated Transport Unit. This would include all the vehicles from Bracknell Day Service, Downside, Heathlands and Waymead. Centralisation of the Youth Services bus should also be an option. All journeys for these centres would need to be booked through the Integrated Transport Unit and they would be recorded and scheduled on the routing and scheduling software. The relevant staff, vehicles and budgets would need to be transferred to the Integrated Transport Unit in line with when the service provision starts.

It should also be considered whether to move the contract management of Keep Mobile from Environment, Culture and Communities to the Integrated Transport Unit. This would allow greater usage of Keep Mobile services through optimisation in line with the demand from Social Care and raise value for money by increasing the number of Keep Mobile users. Use of Keep Mobile to provide training services to the Integrated Transport Unit should also be explored. Inclusion in the ITU could also help the promotion of the Keep Mobile service through active engagement.

Retaining the service within Environment, Culture and Communities would allow the management of the service to continue as an alternative to the public bus services currently provided.

A suitable business case would need to be developed if this centralised approach was agreed. This would include details of resource, budgets and vehicles. This would take place after the Executive decision in June 2009. It is anticipated that the new service provision arrangements would begin from September 2009.

This option was considered by the review team to be the best available although it was thought that a good commercial and management opportunities were likely to be obtainable in 2011 when the Keep Mobile service level agreement expired.

9.1 REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS

Produce a robust business case to enable appropriate resource to manage the above services including, budgets, staff and vehicles required. Subject to the outcome of a detailed working model the changes listed below are recommended.

9.1.1 Social Care and Learning Transport:

- Centralise transport provision for clients accessing services at Downside, Heathlands, Waymead, Larchwood, the Family Centre, the Learning Disabilities trial and Bracknell Day Services. This should also include the management of the Youth Services bus;
- All transport bookings for the above centres as well as the Learning Disabilities transport trial to be managed by the Integrated Transport Unit;
- Replace Bracknell Forest Council fleet with more fit for purpose vehicles as leases expire where there is a business need for a new vehicle;

- Continue with the Learning Disabilities transport trial until it can be part of the wider transport provision of the Integrated Transport Unit;
- Manage all regular taxi bookings for Bracknell Forest Council clients through the Integrated Transport Unit.

9.1.2 Keep Mobile:

- Centralise the management of the Keep Mobile Service Level Agreement to the Integrated Transport Unit;
- When the existing Keep Mobile SLA (31st March 2011) and the home to school transport contracts expire (31st July 2011) review all options for how the service might be provided;
- Reduce administration from Keep Mobile by amalgamating separate subsidised fares invoices into one monthly payment;
- Review the subsidised fares element of the grant paid to Keep Mobile;
- Consider using Keep Mobile as a training provider for transport related courses;
- Consider how to further promote Keep Mobile;
- Consider the terms of the SLA to meet the requirements of current demand for services.
- Discuss the results of the consultation with Keep Mobile.

9.1.3 Next Steps

April 2009: Corporate Management Team
 Departmental Management Teams
 Access Advisory Panel
 Development of business case

June: Overview and Scrutiny – Social Care and Learning

July: Executive

September: Implementation of recommendations

10.0 Conclusion

This process has been more detailed than any previous transport best value review and as such has taken over six months to complete. However it has now given the Council some significant information on which it can make a suitable decision about the future of transport provision for the Borough. Subject to a robust business case implementation of recommendations should begin in September 2009 and progress be reviewed after 12 months. Savings are estimated to be in the region of £50k per annum.

During the course of this review savings were identified at Larchwood and the Family Centre by reducing two minibuses down to one (£5k). In addition there are potentially further savings connected to taxi travel within Social care and Learning (£27k).

It is clear that the future delivery of Social Care is going to be very different from current services and it is therefore essential that Bracknell Forest Council can respond to these changing needs. This report and the subsequent recommendations will ensure that the Council is in the right place to be able to respond flexibly to the future needs of its residents.