

Impact Assessment of: Provision of Passenger Transport by Taxi and Private Hire Contractors

Service/ Directorate: Passenger Transport, Resources Directorate

Date Completed: 23rd March 2010

Lead Officer: Julie Hatton

Members of the assessment team:

Name	Organisation	Role on assessment team e.g. service user, manager of service
Julie Hatton	Passenger Services, Leeds City Council	Manager of Service
Dylan Owen	Passenger Services, LCC	Manager of Service
Stephen Priestley	Corporate Procurement, LCC	Manager of contract
Martyn Johnson	Legal, Licensing, and Registration, LCC	Regulator
Sandy Rutherford	Leeds City Council	Equality Officer

Brief description of policy/ service:

The service is for the provision of transportation for older people, adults with learning difficulties, children with special educational needs and children in care of the authority in order that they can access day care, social care or education. The aim of the service is to provide safe access to other services for vulnerable people. People's needs and provision of the services is determined by the commissioning service Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Leeds who ask Passenger Services to organise transport and so is outside the scope of this assessment. Passenger Services transport children and adults on their behalf through a mixture of in house provision and private hire vehicles. Private hire contractors are selected from a contractor framework. The provision of private hire vehicles is designed to supplement the journeys the in house fleet can make and meet client needs. This assessment looks at the service delivered by private hire contractors. Procurement to the contractor framework is covered by a separate assessment.

Brief account of how the impact assessment was carried out:

The operational officers involved in the assessment gathered information and held a meeting facilitated by the equality officer who wrote up the notes. Operational officers then verified the assessment as a true record. Consultation results were included in the fact finding exercise. The latest survey, in 2009, was carried out on

Adult's and Children's Social Services staff. Previously surveys have been carried out with parents and carers and adults receiving the service. These surveys take place on a rolling programme. It was felt inappropriate to invite general community groups as they might not have experience of the service, and parents and/or carers because the service presents itself as a single service with common standards to people who receive the service and so a discussion about just a part of the service would introduce a unnecessary division within the service. As the private hire companies are in competition with each other it was felt inappropriate to invite some of them and impractical to invite them all. Communication with the companies was discussed within the assessment.

Brief description of any adverse affects found:

Drivers do not always understand the needs of clients and so customer care may not always be to the highest standard. People have been left unsupervised even though it is specified in the contract that they should not be, an earliest drop off time will be added to the contract. There have been complaints that drivers may not be able to communicate with clients or have poor road knowledge. All complaints are investigated and monitored and contractors would be warned of poor performance. Information may not be received from commissioning directorates though this is now rare as the service has worked with staff in the commissioning directorates to help them provide the information that is needed. The office is only open from 7.30 to 17.00 through journeys can be at any time of day, this has not led to any complaints and a separate facility exists for out of hour emergency journeys. New clients under the direct choice system may not be informed about the different transport options and therefore may not access the service.

Summary of Actions arising from Assessment

Actions	Responsibility	Timescale
Profile customer base, past and present, according to disability to see if the service can use the information to better tailor the service.	Dylan Owen	June 2010
Complete development of customer charter for older people and distribute this to clients.	Christine Bedford	September 2010
Profile customers, past and present, according to disability to see if there is anyway of predicting a likely level of escorts with BSL who will be required.	Dylan Owen	September 2010
Look at how to provide information to commissioning directorates so that they appreciate the service that can be offered and can provide information to clients as part of direct choice so that they can contact the service for transport.	Julie Hatton	September 2010
Develop entry for Passenger Services including key words on in house providers list on CIS. Investigate methods of advertising in house contract.	Stephen Priestley / Dylan Owen	May 2010
Investigate how to tell all clients or their parents or carers who have a private hire journey to tell them which private hire company is involved and when they should be picked up and delivered home.	Dylan Owen	July 2010

Investigate whether the contract can be changed so that important elements of customer care training can be made compulsory. And whether LCC can assess contractor's plans to cascade the required training to their drivers in the contract evaluation.	Stephen Priestley	April 2010
Carry out mystery shopper exercise or audit on contractors.	Dylan Owen	April 2011
Contract to be amended to include no earlier or later than 5 minutes before activities begin.	Stephen Priestley	April 2010
Find out how much money is spent on private hire by staff on work related journeys (not including the daily commute).	Stephen Priestley	April 2010
Look at feasibility and desirability of setting up service for staff.	Dylan Owen	April 2011
Hold meeting with hackney carriage operators to see if timing issues can be resolved and hackney carriages used for more journeys involving people in wheelchairs.	Julie Hatton	September 2010
Survey contractors to learn their opinion regarding possible improvements that can be made to the service by working together.	Dylan Owen	September 2010
Following from the survey examine ways for two way communication with contractors and implement chosen mechanism(s).	Dylan Owen	November 2010
Send specification to Education Leeds before publication to get their viewpoint.	Dylan Owen	April 2010
Consider (with both council officers and the trade) amending private hire license conditions to include all operators over a certain size having to have a certain percentage of wheelchair accessible vehicles.	Martyn Johnson	April 2012

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