



Leicester
City Council

WARDS AFFECTED
Corporate

Cabinet
Highways and Transportation Scrutiny

8th May 2001
16th May 2001

TRANSPORT CONFERENCE REPORT – MEETING THE NEEDS OF DISABLED PEOPLE

Joint report of Director of Environment, Development & Commercial Services & Director of Social Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to give an 'executive summary' overview of the Transport Conference and seek agreement to the recommendations regarding its distribution and use.

2. SUMMARY

Background

- 2.1 In 1999 the Social Services Department adopted the social model of disability as a framework for planning services for disabled people. It also took action to include disabled people, carers and a range of stakeholders in planning the future vision of services. This was done through an extensive consultation programme.

One of the main issues that came out of the consultation was that the lack of available and suitable transport in Leicester was preventing disabled people and their carers from participating in many educational, employment, recreational and community activities.

Leicester City Council's Social Services Department currently funds and supports the *Leicester City Disabled Persons Representative Group* as a consultation forum and involves them in planning future services. It was this group who put forward the idea of holding a transport conference in the City to address some of the issues.

As part of the Corporate Value for Money Transport Review undertaken by Leicester City Council last year, the Commercial Services Department also consulted with the *Leicester City Disabled Persons Representative Group*.

Following this consultation, the Social Services and Commercial Services Departments came together to work closely with the *Leicester City Disabled Persons Representative Group*, and other disabled people, to hold Leicester's first transport conference which focused on '*meeting the needs of disabled people and their carers*'.

2.2 Transport Conference Steering Group

A steering group was set up to undertake all the preparation work for the conference.

The steering group was made up of a representative from the Leicester City Disabled Representatives Group, an independent disabled person (who is also a carer), Officers from the Social Services Planning Section, Officers from Commercial Services and Leicester City Council's Disability Equality Officer.

2.3 Delegates

90 delegates attended the conference and represented the following groups:

- All existing public transport providers operating in Leicester (E.g. Bus companies, taxi firms, railway companies etc)
- Transport providers within Leicester City Council
- All policy makers in Leicester City Council who had an involvement in transport (E.g. those involved in the Local Transport Plan and Leicester City Council's recent Transport Review)
- Disabled people and their carers
- Day Centre Managers whose service users are affected by transport
- Managers of libraries and sport centers
- Leicester City Councillors
- Community groups and disability and voluntary organisations

2.4 Aims and Objectives

The agreed aims and objectives of the transport conference were:

- To promote an awareness of disabled people's and their carers views about transport
- To promote an awareness of the Social Model of Disability
- To promote an awareness of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995

- To give an overview of Leicester City Council's Transport Review
- To explore ways of improving transport services through the views and experiences of delegates
- To gain commitment from transport and service providers to improve transport services for disabled people and their carers

2.5 Presentations

Presentations on the day included:

- social inclusion by Sue Eato (Planning and Service Development Officer, Social Services, Leicester City Council)
- a disability perspective by Michael Gilhooley (disabled person and carer)
- disability perspective by Glenys Hocking-Davis (disabled person and carer)
- the transport and service requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995, by Colin Herridge (Disability Equality Officer, Corporate Equalities Team, Leicester City Council),
- the Transport Review undertaken by Leicester City Council by John Hackman (Head of Facilities Management, Commercial Services, Leicester City Council)
- the Local Transport Plan by Sean Richardson (Transport Strategy Officer, Environment & Development, Leicester City Council)

2.6 Workshops

The afternoon then included six separate workshops which looked at a variety of issues and was aimed at bringing together the knowledge, expertise and experiences of service providers, voluntary organisations, disabled people and their carers and other agencies and interested parties.

The workshops covered:

- Health and Safety (Facilitator: John Hackman, Commercial Services, Leicester City Council)
- Leicester City Council Transport Services (Facilitator: Pradeep Gadhok, Social Services, Leicester City Council)
- The Role of Transport in Accessing Social and Recreational Activities (Facilitator: Sue Willis, Voluntary Action Leicester)
- Implementing the DDA- the Social Model of Disability (Facilitator: Colin Herridge, Corporate Equality Team, Leicester City Council)

- Availability and Accessibility of Public Transport (Facilitator: Sean Richardson, Traffic Section, Leicester City Council)
- Transport Contracts and Standards (Facilitator: Julie Humphries, Social Services, Leicester City Council).

2.7 Issues raised from the workshops

Many issues were raised during the various workshop sessions and these have now been pulled together in the form of an 'Action Plan' and cover the following issues:

- Training
- Leicester City Council Policies
- Contracts
- Information and Awareness of Services
- Consultation

2.8 Progress on Action Plan

Several aspects in the action plan have now been addressed:

- Social Services have developed and delivered a programme of training on the social model of disability for Social Services Staff. This training has been designed and delivered in partnership with disabled people and needs to be developed and extended to Members, Directors and Senior Managers.
- Commercial Services have undertaken training for escorts/drivers in First Aid, emergency procedures and manual handling. In addition, 'reality' checks have been undertaken by external consultants with regard to vehicle safety, escorts and drivers. Following the final report of the external consultants, appropriate training will also be given to drivers and escorts. In addition, progress has been achieved on the appearance of our own vehicles in that 'ambulance' legends are being removed as and when each vehicle is serviced.

The lead officer dealing with the action plan is John Hackman, Head of Facilities Management, Commercial Services Department.

2.9 Conclusions

The day encouraged partnership working and produced some positive recommendations and creative solutions to the existing problems and barriers to transport for disabled people and their carers. In particular, it was successful in informing, involving and consulting partners on transport and disability issues.

3. **FINANCIAL & LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 The Conference was funded by sponsors and advertisers who either placed advertisements within the conference publications or attended the event.

3.2 There are no financial implications associated with the report, however there will be financial implications attached to the action plan as it is progressed.

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.1 To note the success of the conference and incorporate the positive outcomes into future Best Value Reviews.

4.2 To endorse the document and its publication and wide dissemination.

4.3 To refer the Action Plan to Highways and Transportation Scrutiny Committee to monitor progress of its implementation.

5. **AUTHOR**

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