KPMG

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council

Integrated Social Needs Transport – Review of arrangements and use of resources

May 2008

AUDIT

Contents

1   Executive summary

1.1   Introduction

Integrated social needs transport (ISNT) has become increasingly more important to Greater Manchester organisations over the last two to three years. Greater Manchester organisations have recognised the need for a more integrated, cost effective and accessible transport service. This has resulted in several reviews being undertaken either internally by organisations or through cross-cutting work, such as that led by the Audit Commission. In order for integration across Greater Manchester to take place organisations must first ensure that they are operating effectively.

1.2   Key findings

Bury Metropolitan Borough Council ('the Council') provides both internally and externally procured social needs transport. Whilst there are some positive aspects to the current provision, there are also a number of key issues which need to be addressed. The key findings of this review are:

- The Council can demonstrate some good examples of partnership working, such as community transport services, for example, *Ring and Ride.* The Council has also started to deploy independent travel training on a small scale. Both of these examples could reduce future pressures on the service and there are opportunities to make greater use of these. (Sections 4.2 and 6.4)

- A 'Menu of Travel Options', which details alternative methods of transport, has been developed by the Council, however this has not yet been put to use. There are opportunities to use this to provide information to service users/people with transport needs, who do not meet the eligibility criteria or to promote independent travel. (Section 4.3)

- Eligibility criteria for the services provided by the Council are in place within Children's Services, but not within Adult Care Services (ACS). The eligibility criteria within Children's Services is not successful at targeting the service to those who need them most. Both Children's Services and ACS need to develop eligibility criteria which targets the service appropriately. This should then be consistently applied. Assessments for transport need should be refreshed on a cyclical basis and measured against the eligibility criteria. (Sections 4.4 and 4.5)

- Vehicles owned by the Council for the provision of social needs transport are not used throughout the day. They are used during the peak hours (morning and evening). The Council could benefit from performing a utilisation analysis to assess the usage of the vehicles and to establish whether the vehicles should be used for other purposes outside of the peak hours. (Section 4.5)

1 Executive summary *(Cont.)*

- The Council currently has no performance management arrangements in place in respect of social needs transport. Service Level Agreements, are required to ensure financial and operational information is produced which will allow both ACS and Children's Services to monitor the performance of their services against targets. (Sections 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 6.3, 7.4 and 7.5)

- Services are, in the main, funded from the Council's General Fund budget, however, Children's Services receives a small amount of grant funding. There is no certainty over the future of this grant funding and the Council needs to plan for the withdrawal of this through development of a funding strategy. (Section 5.5)

- The Council has clear arrangements in respect of the procurement of services and vehicles, through use of the Corporate Procurement function. This has led to developments in contracts with suppliers for the services provided. As noted above, there are opportunities to further develop these contract by building in requirements to provide information. (Section 6.2)

- There is an uncoordinated approach to transport arrangements. There are no clear objectives for the service, meaning that ownership for the service/arrangements is not taken, for example responsibilities over health and safety checks are unclear. There are also organisational divisions between the Children's Services, ACS and Environmental and Development Services departments. (Section 7.2)

- The Council has completed some assessments of user satisfaction, however, the approach to this across Children's Services and ACS is not consistent and is not carried out on a regular basis. (Section 7.4)

1.4 Way forward

We will discuss the findings of this stage of the review with officers to agree an action plan to address the key issues going forward. In addition, we shall continue to work with officers to constructively challenge the delivery of action plans.

The second stage of this review will consider the extent to which options available to the Council will address the issues raised in this report.

2   Introduction

2.1   Background

Social needs transport has been defined by the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority (GMPTA) as being 'a response to the transport needs of individuals or groups not met by private or conventional public transport services'. Across Greater Manchester these services are currently being provided by (amongst others) adult and children's care services within local authorities, GMPTA, GMPTE, the ambulance service and other voluntary and private sector providers.

Integrated social needs transport (ISNT) is becoming increasingly important on the agendas of local authorities, as the various different agencies providing services try to work together to achieve a more integrated, cost effective and accessible transport service.   The Audit Commission is leading a cross-cutting review of ISNT across Greater Manchester. Phase 1 of this work had the following key findings:

• Integration of SNT lacked leadership and commitment across all sectors, with duplication of actions in terms of ICT;

• There was no performance management framework in place to monitor performance against;

• Cross area boundaries act as a barrier to integration;

• Organisations were not maximising the use of voluntary organisations;

• Users were generally satisfied with the services available to them.

This review has also been used to feed into the ISNT cross-cutting work being led by the Audit Commission.

1   Introduction *(Cont.)*

2.2   Objectives and scope of our review

The objective of this review was to provide assurances to the Council on the areas in which it is performing effectively and to clearly identify the key issues where further action is required. Our review considered the following areas:

- Accessibility of the SNT services (Section 3).
- Funding and financial arrangements (Section 4).
- Procurement options (Section 5).
- Responsibility for the service (Section 6).

Our review also aimed to highlight areas of good practice.

2.3   Audit approach

Our approach has been to:

- review key documents;
- interview key officers within the accountable body;
- make comparisons to good practice and other councils where relevant; and
- provide constructive challenge and support.

2.4   Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those staff at the Council who have supported this review.

3   Integration

3.1   Definition of integration

"Integration" can be defined as working as a collective towards the achievement of a common objective. In the case of this review, the aim of integration is to enhance the transport options of those who find it difficult to use the conventional public transport network.

3.2   Integration, the Council and wider Greater Manchester

Within Greater Manchester there is a need for integration at two levels. The first of these levels is at the individual organisation level. This means that there needs to be co-ordination within each organisation for the provision of transport services to users. This could include maximising the use of vehicles to ensure value for money is obtained and to ensure that roles are not duplicated within the organisation. The second level is at the Greater Manchester level, including Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Authority/Executive (GMPTA/E), other local authorities, primary care trusts, private and voluntary sector organisations. For example, this could be to procure together to maximise bargaining power, to co-ordinate to ensure services are not duplicated and also to ensure there are services available to meet the needs of users. For example, Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council have liaised with GMPTE to allow them to share GMPTE's routing and scheduling software.

This review considers both of these levels of integration.

3.3   Current arrangements at the Council

Within the Council, the current provision of transport is arranged by Adult Care Services and Children's Services independently. The majority of Adult Care Services' (ACS) provision is commissioned through the Council's transport services, within the Environment and Development Services (EDS) department. Whereas Children's Services transport provision is largely contracted from external transport contractors, with a small number of internal contracts with the EDS department.

4 Accessibility of social needs transport services

4.1 Background

It was noted in section two of this report, the objective of integration of social needs transport services is to enhance the transport options of those who find it difficult to use conventional public transport. Accessibility to transport services is therefore important in the achievement of this objective.

This section highlights the key findings of our review in relation to the accessibility of the social needs transport services within Bury.

4.2 Joint/partnership working

There are some good examples of partnership/joint working in operation, such as ACS and Children's Services making use of the 'Ring and Ride' service. Children's Services have been using the 'Ring and Ride' service to fill existing gaps in the availability of vehicles, however, this is not seen to be a long term solution. There are also restrictions on the use of 'Ring and Ride', as the service will not go outside of the Borough. ACS have also been working with 'Bury People First' to provide independent travel training. There is potential to further develop these relationships and to extend partnership/joint working with other voluntary/public sector organisations.

4.3 Information sharing with service users, families and carers

There are good arrangements in place for communication with service users, for example, details are provided in advance regarding escorts and drivers. This allows expectations of service users to be managed, as if there is a change in escort or driver this can be problematic for some service users if this is not managed carefully.

ACS, through a Transport Review Project Group (consisting of Elected Members, carer and user representatives and transport providers), have developed a 'Menu of Travel Options'. The 'Menu of Travel Options' is a list of alternative transport services that are available across the borough. There is an opportunity to share this across Greater Manchester and to use this as a central tool within the Council. For example, if the eligibility criteria are developed and the service becomes more restricted, the 'Menu of Travel Options' could be used to provide alternative to service users no longer meeting the criteria. The 'Menu of Travel Options' can be used to promote independent travel and could be publicised on the Council's website.

4 Accessibility of social needs transport services

4.4 Eligibility for transport services

Eligibility criteria are used by organisations to allow services to be targeted to those who need them most. There is no formal eligibility criteria in place for ACS, the decision over whether transport is granted is largely the decision of the social worker involved in the case. Children's Services has eligibility criteria in place, however, this is not successful at targeting services to those who need them most. Further work is required by both ACS and Children's Services to develop eligibility criteria, to assist in reducing the pressures on the service and in ensuring that transport is provided to service users who need them most. There are opportunities here to liaise with other Greater Manchester organisations to ensure a consistent approach and to adopt best practice.

Recommendation 1

The Council needs to revisit its eligibility criteria, for both Adult Care Services and Children's Services, to ensure that services are targeted to those service users who need them most. Staff should then be provided with training in the new eligibility criteria, so that the criteria can be consistently applied when assessing the needs of users.

4.5 Use of vehicles

The peak of demand for transport vehicles is morning and early evening for both Children's Services' clients and ACS clients, which makes it difficult to fully utilise the vehicles held by the EDS department throughout the day. This is a common issue across Greater Manchester. One option that has been considered within Greater Manchester to address this problem is to use vehicles for cross boundary purposes and for other gaps in social needs transport not currently provided by local authorities, for example, transport from after schools clubs.

The scheduling of services in ACS is complicated by the nature of the services it provides. For example, the service users on the vehicles in the evening are not necessarily the same as those on the vehicle in the morning. This is also a difficulty when arranging transport for Home to College students, due to the differing start times of college courses. This complicates the ability to plan vehicle usage for maximum usage.

4 Accessibility of social needs transport services

Vehicles are not used for mixed purposes (that is adults mixed with young service users), or indeed for individuals to travel separately, due to the differing complexities of cases needed to be transported. Assessments are carried out initially to determine a user's needs for transport and this will inform whether transport can be shared. However, the Council could consider refreshing such assessments on a cyclical basis, for example along side the annual user assessment, to ensure that it remains appropriate for individuals to travel separately.

Recommendation 2

The Council should consider refreshing assessments of transport needs on a cyclical basis to establish whether vehicle sharing is an option. Where vehicles are used for mixed purposes the Council should consider the need for further training of escorts to ensure they can deal with differing cases.

The EDS vehicles are not used for other purposes outside of the peak hours. A number of the care centres have a vehicle during the rest of the day. These are used for trips with service users. However, this does not account for all of the Council's vehicles, meaning there may be opportunities to use the vehicles for other purposes outside of these hours.

Recommendation 3

The Council should perform a utilisation analysis on the vehicles to establish if and how vehicles can be utilised further.

5 Funding and financial arrangements

5.1 Background

Greater Manchester authorities spend approximately £35-45m per annum on the provision of social needs transport. As a result of this high level of cost, this review sought to understand how the Council funds this expenditure. This review also considered the arrangements in place to manage and monitor costs, to ensure that risks are being effectively measured and mitigated.

5.2 Performance management arrangements

The Council has no arrangements in place for the benchmarking of transport costs. This is a common theme across the Greater Manchester organisations. The Council does not benchmark its internally procured social needs transport provision against its externally procured provision nor does it compare its costs to other local authorities. In order for costs to be compared to other organisations, the level of activity needs to be taken into account to derive a unit cost to ensure a comparable basis is used.

ACS and Children's Services have both experienced difficulties in obtaining information to assist in such a comparison. ACS experienced difficulties in obtaining operational/activity data, although it is understood that this is held by the EDS department. Children's Services also experienced difficulties in obtaining operational data, due to the service being externally procured. This lack of comparison means it is difficult for the Council to ensure that it is receiving value for money from the services being provided. We have raised a recommendation in relation to this in section 7.4.

5.3 Provision of financial information

ACS raised concerns over the timeliness of billing for services from the EDS department. ACS is generally billed towards the end of the financial year and it was not clear during the year what this figure was likely to be. Our review revealed that there was a lack of understanding, within ACS, over what the costs charged to ACS were actually made up of. Clarity is required over these two issues. Clarity over these issues would be gained through a service level agreement between the two departments, as discussed below.

> **Recommendation 4**
>
> *Adult Care Services and Children's Services should agree an approach to the provision of information from the Environment and Development Services department, including financial and operational information, such as the number of miles travelled, number of vehicles used. This agreement should be built into the service level agreement, as detailed in recommendation 4. Children's Services should also build the provision of information into contracts with external suppliers.*

5 Funding and financial arrangements

5.4 Service level agreements

There is no service level agreement in place between ACS and EDS. An agreement was drawn up a number of years ago, however, this was never signed by the two parties. There is also no service level agreement between Children's Services and EDS for the small amount of provision between the two departments. Service level agreements act as informal contracts between two parties, which explains what is expected of both parties to the contract. Typical service level agreements include, the scope of the work, performance tracking and reporting, problem management, payment arrangements and respective duties and responsibilities of both parties. A service level agreement could be used to address the problems raised above, in terms of the provision of operational data and financial information. The agreement could also be used to assess the performance of the internal provision against the expected outcomes.

Recommendation 5

A formalised agreement, in the form of a service level agreement, between Adult Care Services and Environment and Development Services should be developed and agreed by both parties. This will allow the relationship to be more commercial and would assist Adult Care Services in assessing the service they receive. This should also be done for Children's Services on a smaller scale.

5.5 Sources of funding

Social needs transport is, in the main, funded from the Council's General Fund budget. Children's Services receive a small amount of grant, however, there is no long term certainty over these grants and they only cover a small percentage of the whole cost of providing transport. ACS service users are assessed as to what level of payment they will be required to make, however, this is against the whole care package. This rarely is enough to cover the whole cost to the Council of providing the care package.

Control over financial matters can be difficult due to much of the service being demand led and with the uncertainty of future grant funding. The Council needs to consider how it manages this risk.

Recommendation 6

The Council should consider future planning, such as considering how many service users Children's Services currently has, which will indicate the number of future Adult Care Service users. The Council also needs to develop an funding strategy in case of withdrawal of the grant funded elements of transport.

6 Procurement options

6.1 Background

Procurement can be a key element in helping to secure value for money. Arrangements are also needed to monitor the quality of service received against the expectations of the Council and service users. At present there are two differing sources of provision, Adult Care Services' (ACS) transport is provided in-house, through use of Environment and Development Services (EDS), whereas Children's Services' transport provision is externally procured.

6.2 Procurement arrangements

There are clear arrangements in place for the procurement of transport, whether that is the service or the procurement of vehicles. Corporate procurement have worked with Children's Services to develop terms and conditions to be built into contracts, in order to meet the required needs and service standards. Selection of contractors has been carried out after a formal tender process. EDS are invited to tender for these contracts, however, EDS does not have the capacity to meet the demand from Children's Services.

6.3 Benchmarking of the service

Market testing of the provision of transport for ACS from EDS has not been carried out. This may cause a problem for the Council when trying to demonstrate that this service provides value for money. The lack of benchmarking activity, as discussed in section 4, also increases this problem. As noted above, market testing of Children's Services contracts is performed as part of the formal tender process. Market testing is not the most appropriate option however if the Council does not want to externally procure the service, as it may be difficult to obtain realistic comparisons from alternative suppliers if they feel that the Council is not serious about outsourcing. The first step should be to establish whether the Council feels it is getting value for money from the existing provision.

Recommendation 7

The Council should carry out a value for money assessment of its internal provision to establish whether it would be more appropriate to outsource this element of service. If the Council then assesses that outsourcing is a real option, it should carry out a market testing exercise.

Operational data (such as number of journey, miles travelled) is not shared between the EDS transport division and ACS. This has increased the difficulty when trying to benchmark the service. Costs per user are also difficult to derive, as EDS do not retain records on the number of passengers on the vehicles, they have route schedules only, and can therefore can only estimate the number of passengers on the vehicle. We have made a recommendation in relation to how this can be improved in section 5.3 above.

6   Procurement options

6.4   Other options for delivery of transport services

Independent travel training has started to be deployed by Children's Services on a sample of students. Independent travel training can be costly, as the training is time and staff intensive, however, there may be longer term cost savings, as the reliance on ACS may be reduced in future years if students are more independent. This will also help in terms of social inclusion and independence, which are important factors following on from recent Government papers *Independence, Well Being and Choice* and *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*. This is an area with potential for further development within the Council.

Joint procurement with other local authorities has not taken place. Greater integration with other Greater Manchester authorities could result in cost savings due to the greater bargaining power that could be employed by a collective group. Further use of community transport services, such as Ring and Ride, as opposed to taxis could also be made. This is likely to result in savings, as the typical cost of Ring and Ride is £1 per journey, whereas a taxi journey can cost up to £50 for the same journey.

7 Responsibility for the service

7.1 Background

In order to drive the integrated social needs transport agenda forward it is important that there is clear definition and ownership of roles and responsibilities for relevant objectives and strategies within the Council.

7.2 Objectives of transport

Currently, the Council does not have clear strategic objectives for the transport services it provides. The Council has not identified a strategy of transport provision, for example, more independent travel or providing transport for all service users. The Council would benefit from the development of a transport strategy, as this would provide direction for staff and would allow them to take ownership for delivery of the strategy.

Recommendation 8

The Council should develop an overarching strategy for transport provision. This should set out the Council's objectives and desired outcomes for the service and the strategy of how this is to be achieved. Departmental service plans should then be developed to take account of this strategy. Responsibility for actions should be assigned to members of staff who are best able to follow the actions through.

7.2 Organisational arrangements for transport

Our review revealed that there is an uncoordinated approach to and no clear ownership of transport arrangements within the Council. Organisational divisions were evident between Adult Care Services (ACS), Environment and Development Services (EDS) and Children's Services, which manifests in a lack of communication, co-ordination and joint working. The current organisational divisions may hinder attempts to integrate the approach to transport. Change management and management of expectations will be crucial to the success of new methods of working.

Recommendation 9

Responsibility and accountability for transport arrangements and agreed actions needs to be clearly assigned to ensure that any developed action plans or changes implemented are carried forward and followed through.

Recommendation 10

In order for change to occur the Council will need to manage the expectations of officers to gain support and to relieve concerns. The Council also need to manage the expectations of passengers, carers and families over the provision of the service, as there is likely to be resistance to proposed changes.

Discussions with key officers revealed that working in smaller teams, as under the current arrangements, can have benefits, such as providing a more personal service and developing experience and knowledge of users' needs and how to meet these. However, this is not seen as the most efficient means of carrying out duties, as there can be duplication of effort and the current arrangements often mean that a lot of time is spent dealing with transport issues instead of dealing with other duties.

7   Responsibility for the service

7.3   Health and Safety

Concerns were raised over who was responsible for carrying out safety checks on the private contract vehicles. Greater coordination is needed between Children's Services and Corporate Procurement to define roles and responsibilities in relation to this, as there were conflicting views from both sections as to whose responsibility this was. Safety checks are carried out by drivers within the EDS department prior to journeys, where the service is internally procured.

7.4   Quality of provision and user satisfaction

The approach to user satisfaction is different across ACS and Children's Services. ACS noted that user satisfaction surveys were carried out and results have been used to inform reviews of the transport provision at the Council, however, this has not been taken forward. Children's Services last carried out a review in 2004-05. There is a need to ensure that information is up to date and to carry out analysis of the results so that areas for improvement can be identified and to ensure that the needs of users, carers and family members are being met. This could be linked to an annual assessment of needs.

Some of the issues raised in the consultation carried out in December 2005 were that:

- journeys can take too long;

- current arrangements were not flexible, for example, times that transport is available is not user-friendly;

- mobility vehicles were not being used as intended, for example, for transporting service users to day time activities.

No clear performance measures have been established. A number of informal measures are in place, such as service users should not be on vehicles for longer than 45 minutes, there should be no mixed needs on transport, and vehicles should be no older than 15 years at the end of the contract. However, there are no mechanisms in place to ensure that the standards are being met.

Recommendation 11

Performance measures should be developed to ensure that service standards can be developed and monitored. This may allow the benchmarking of services to ensure value for money is being improved.

7   Responsibility for the service

Both Children's Services and Adult Care Services make use of the corporate complaints procedure, which is easily accessible and explained on the Council's internet site. However, it is not clear as to whether this procedure is highlighted to service users. The review revealed that officers do not receive many complaints, and when complaints are received they are generally dealt with by officers and rarely get to the formal complaint stage.

7.6   Performance management arrangements

Our review noted that many of the key officers we spoke to had little or no involvement/awareness of the Integrated Social Needs Transport work being undertaken across Greater Manchester by the Audit Commission. This demonstrates that there is a need to consider how issues raised in such reviews are communicated and followed up within the Council.

There have been a number of in-house reviews of transport at the Council over the last few years, however, there has been no follow through of the recommendation raised in these reports. Clarification of roles and responsibilities and ownership of recommendations in action plans should assist in driving forward future recommendations, as noted in recommendation 7.

8 Examples of solutions to social needs transport issues

8.1 Background

Below we provide examples of how other local authorities have implemented change to overcome social needs transport problems.

8.2 Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council –Integrated Transport Unit

At Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council one section (Environmental Services) has been given responsibility for the coordination of transport for their Adult Care Services and Children's Services departments. The One Stop Shop deals with the transport queries and these are then fed through to the centralised transport section. It is hoped that this will reduce duplication of roles. This has led to greater links being made between the local NHS Trust, to reduce the number of short term admissions into hospital, by providing transport home after A&E visits. Stockport MBC have also been developing greater links with primary care trusts, the North West Ambulance Services and GMPTE.

The North West Centre of Excellence produced a *Good Practice Paper: Integrated Transport Units* in September 2006, which recommended that local authorities should give consideration to the creation of an integrated transport unit to improve efficiencies, have better service delivery and achieve revenue cost savings.

8.3 Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council – Individualised budgets

Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council is piloting individualised budgets. Service users are given budgets and they choose what to spend that budget on. This takes away the onus from the Council to arrange transport as the service user sources this privately. In addition, this also restricts the financial risks of the Council, as additional costs become the responsibility of the service user. This finally increases the independence of service users, as it offers a wider range of choice over the services they receive.

8.4 Coventry City Council - management information

Coventry City Council have put in place arrangements to allow them to collect detailed management information. Each vehicle has been fitted with a tracking device, which tracks how many people are on the vehicle and miles amongst other measures. This is then used for accurate performance information to be used for benchmarking purposes.

8.5 Derbyshire County Council – information provision to users

Derbyshire County Council provides a large amount of information to its residents on its website. This information includes details on community transport arrangements, transport policies and public transport services, such as links to journey planners and timetables. This allows the Council to promote methods of transport, which allow users to be more independent.

9 Next stage of the review and options to consider

9.1 Next stages of the review

The Council has set up a best value review panel to review social needs transport and to drive forward changes felt necessary to improve the existing arrangements. As part of the next stage of this review we will review the process undertaken by the best value review panel. This will entail attending some of the meetings, reviewing key documents and liaising with the best value team as and when appropriate.

Appendix 1: Recommendations and action plan

A best value review team has been established to review social needs transport within the Council. This team will consider and, where appropriate, implement these recommendations through this process.

***	Significant residual risk	**	Some residual risk	*	Little residual risk
	Recommendation				**Priority**
1	The Council needs to revisit its eligibility criteria, for both Adult Care Services and Children's Services, to ensure that services are targeted to those service users who need them most. Staff should then be provided with training in the new eligibility criteria, so that the criteria can be consistently applied when assessing the needs of users.				**
2	The Council should consider refreshing assessments of transport needs on a cyclical basis to establish whether vehicle sharing is an option. Where vehicles are used for mixed purposes the Council should consider the need for further training of escorts to ensure they can deal with differing cases and risk assessments.				**
3	The Council should perform a utilisation analysis on the vehicles to establish if and how vehicles can be utilised further.				**
4	Adult Care Services and Children's Services should agree an approach to the provision of information from the Environment and Development Services department, including financial and operational information, such as the number of miles travelled, number of vehicles used. This agreement should be built into the service level agreement, as detailed in recommendation 4. Children's Services should also build the provision of information into contracts with external suppliers.				***
5	A formalised agreement, in the form of a service level agreement, between Adult Care Services and Environment and Development Services should be developed and agreed by both parties. This will allow the relationship to be more commercial and would assist Adult Care Services in assessing the service they receive. This should also be done for Children's Services on a smaller scale.				***

Appendix 1: Recommendations and action plan *(continued)*

***	Significant residual risk	**	Some residual risk	*	Little residual risk
	Recommendation				**Priority**
6	The Council should consider future planning, such as considering how many service users Children's Services currently has, which will indicate the number of future Adult Care Service users. The Council also needs to develop an funding strategy in case of withdrawal of the grant funded elements of transport.				***
7	The Council should carry out a value for money assessment of its internal provision to establish whether it would be more appropriate to outsource this element of service. If the Council then assesses that outsourcing is a real option, it should carry out a market testing exercise.				**
8	The Council should develop an overarching strategy for transport provision. This should set out the Council's objectives and desired outcomes for the service and the strategy of how this is to be achieved. Departmental service plans should then be developed to take account of this strategy. Responsibility for actions should be assigned to members of staff who are best able to follow the actions through.				***
9	Responsibility and accountability for transport arrangements and agreed actions needs to be clearly assigned to ensure that any developed action plans or changes implemented are carried forward and followed through.				***
10	In order for change to occur the Council will need to manage the expectations of officers to gain support and to relieve concerns. The Council also need to manage the expectations of passengers, carers and families over the provision of the service, as there is likely to be resistance to proposed changes.				**

***	Significant residual risk	**	Some residual risk	*	Little residual risk
	Recommendation				**Priority**
11	Performance measures should be developed to ensure that service standards can be developed and monitored. This may allow the benchmarking of services to ensure value for money is being improved.				**