

**SEN TRANSPORT CAFÉ**  
**16 MAY 2019**

A short presentation was given by Liam Roberts and Colin Hageen about the new SEN transport and the process of bids being sought for new providers from July 2019. This will be circulated electronically. Questions were raised as follows:

Q How many times does a company have to default and how long a period does this involve as it took four weeks for my issue to be rectified

A Any problem is one too many. Please call at the time the problem is being experienced so that this can be managed effectively.

Q If companies could join in along the way would this help?

A Yes. We work across the councils and how we talk to each other about any issues that arise if the company is performing poorly. We work across three boroughs to sort issues out. LR will have more influence, but will work with the provider to try and address issues.

Q If the Dutch auction is being applied, how can we ensure quality assurance is being followed when each company gets in a race to give the lowest price?

A Companies are only allowed to join the DPS to bid for routes if they meet certain quality standards. They need to answer questions about safety, communication and continuity of service to a satisfactory level. Schools are asked each term about how the transport is and whether the child arrived at school in a calm state and was happy to get on the transport at the end of the day. Companies will be visited by a Quality Assurance Officer who will check that their records are up to date and that staff have undertaken the correct training. Quality assurance have a timetabled programme to visit providers to check records.

If there are issues with a company, our contract allows us to not award the contract to them even if they have the lowest price.

Q If you are in the position where transport works well, what happens if the framework changes and things then don't work out so well? I am concerned that the changes may make things worse.

A Any route can change at any time due to changes of staff or changes to children travelling. There is no guarantee that nothing will change. The current framework ends in the Summer of 2019 and changes are unavoidable. We have very few complaints about routes and want this to continue with the new DPS. CH wants to give a good service to children and young people.

Q If the route is being reallocated, when will the families know?

A The routes will be re-arranged and these will be sent out in July 2019 and parents will be notified of these, assuming SEN transport applications have been sent in.

Q Are there any pictures of crew that could be used from these transport providers as they would be really good tools for preparing for new drivers and escorts?

A This is a really good idea. CH will take this request on board when arranging the routes and we will ask for pictures of the crew to be provided.

Q What about support for epilepsy?

A It depends on the child. Some young people need an escort who is aware of epilepsy and has epilepsy awareness training, others require a PA to go on a course to administer medication, others require a healthcare assistant to travel with the child. We would ask the school and parents for a copy of the care plan and if there is a health need.

Q If drivers are not allowed to use mobile phones how can they inform people if they are running late?

A They will need to pull over to make a call or have a hands-free telephone in their vehicle.

Q There is nothing in the Driver and Passenger Assistant Handbook about young people and colleges and can this be put in the introduction?

A LR said yes

Q My child hits and bites and there are six people in the vehicle. How can this be managed?

A Each route has its own individual challenges. CH said that he would need to look at the individual routes. In a case like this, we would work with the contractor to manage the route; we would look at seating plans for children, the placement of the passenger assistant (or assistants) on the vehicle, the PAs' training, the running order of the route, and whether we can improve the route in any other way.

Q If things do not go very well can the parent go in the vehicle with the child?

A If there are other passengers in the vehicle, then we cannot do this because of safeguarding requirements. Where there is only one passenger, this may be possible. The parent would have to check with CH to see how many are aboard the vehicle on that particular route.

Q Will you ask the contractors to get in touch with families to introduce themselves.

A CH will ask the contractors to introduce themselves and their crews over the summer in preparation for September 2019.

Q Can you put "Communication" into the review document?

A CH said yes we can amend this.

Q Is there anything about saying who takes the child in the front door?

A Parents/carers are responsible for taking their child to and from the vehicle. If anyone is required to help it should be the driver.

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