

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
Consultation on Transportation Services for Older Adults and
Adults with Learning Disabilities

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1. Introduction

London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham commissioned The Campaign Company to independently analyse and report on the findings of the consultation on transport services for adults with learning disabilities and older adults in the borough.

The consultation was conducted following complaints that LBHF had received regarding the quality of the service provided by the current provider of the transport. In April 2014, the service was outsourced to a private transport provider and since then, LBHF report that they have received concerns and complaints from older and disabled people and their carers about the service.

All service users and carers of someone who uses day service or taxi transport in Hammersmith and Fulham which is arranged by the Council, have the right to expect a safe, reliable and professional service.

LBHF therefore issued a consultation to better understand the experience of service users and carers of someone using transport better to inform future decisions about the service and hopefully resolve any problems.

2. Methodology

LBHF conducted a paper questionnaire with service users and carers of people that used the transport. 160 copies of the questionnaire were sent out to service users and carers of service users. Two versions of the questionnaire were produced –a standard version and an easy read version for those adults that required it. The results of both have been analysed and reported on together. Local advocacy services were used where required to assist in the completion of the questionnaire.

There were 44 responses to the consultation were received including 8 easy read questionnaires which were completed. This represents a 28% response rate. Two responses were incomplete but their answers have been included where applicable.

The results have been analysed using MS Excel and Nvivo software for open questions. Results are presented in count and percentage form. Where percentages do not add up to 100% this is due to rounding.

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3. Executive Summary

Satisfaction

- 63% of those who responded to the consultation are satisfied or very satisfied with the current transport service. Almost a quarter of respondents (23%) reported feeling neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the service and just 14% expressed dissatisfaction with the service.
- The service is reported as punctual by half of those who responded to the consultation however nearly a third of respondents indicated that the punctuality of the provider is inconsistent, as they can arrive more than 15 minutes early or late on some days but on time on others.

Communication with transport providers

- Just over half of respondents (53%) felt that overall communication of the transport service was excellent or good however nearly a third of respondents (29%) felt it was poor.
- Communication was considered good or excellent in the context of communicating delays of service by 43% of respondents however an additional 29% of respondents reported this as poor or very poor.
- Respondents were split on how they felt regarding the responsiveness of the transport service, 46% of respondents felt that this was good or excellent while 42% felt responsiveness was poor or very poor.

Drivers and Escorts

- The service of drivers and escorts was considered good or excellent by three quarters of respondents.
- Respondents were also positive about escorts' abilities to manage behaviour (68% indicated it was good or excellent) as well as positive about their ability to help service users with equipment (78% indicated it was good or excellent).

Safety and Comfort

- Respondents' opinions were split regarding the comfort and quality of the vehicle, 45% of respondents felt that the comfort and quality of the vehicle was good or excellent however 40% of respondents felt this was poor or very poor.
- Respondents were also somewhat split with regards to the space inside the vehicle: 40% felt it was good or excellent but over a third replied that this was poor or very poor.
- Overall, 70% of respondents thought that the transport was safe, comfortable and dignified.

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Improving the service

- The quality of the vehicles and driving of the transport service was considered most in need of improvement. Respondents specifically mentioned a lack of space inside the vehicles and issues such as reckless driving.
- 53% of respondents felt the service would improve if it was run directly with council staff and vehicles. 53% of respondents to the consultation who feel that the service would improve are equal to 13% of the total number of service users and carers of service users (160).
- Just 8% felt it would result in a worse service if the council ran it directly. 25% felt that it would make little difference either way.
- This option is a much higher proportion than those who actively disclosed dissatisfaction with the service (only 14%). Therefore whilst the majority are satisfied with the service there is a proportion of those satisfied who feel that it could be improved.

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4. Findings

41 of the respondents or the people they care for normally travelled by bus, just one usually travelled by taxi.

Type of transport	Count
Bus	41
Taxi	1

Fig 1: Please confirm whether, since April 2014, you or the person you care for has normally travelled to the day service or college by

Satisfaction with current service

Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they are with the current service. The majority of respondents are satisfied (40%) or very satisfied (23%) with the service. Only 14% were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

	Count	Percentage
Very satisfied	10	23%
Satisfied	17	40%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10	23%
Dissatisfied	2	5%
Very dissatisfied	4	9%

Fig2: Overall how satisfied would you say you are with the current service?

Punctuality

Respondents reported that levels of punctuality are overall good, with 50% of respondents agreeing the transport arrives in time to pick them up and drop them off within 15 minutes of the scheduled time. Nearly a third of respondents indicated that the punctuality of the provider is inconsistent, as they can arrive more than 15 minutes early or late on some days but on time on others.

	Count	Percentage
Yes	22	50%
No	8	18%

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Can't say (can be more than 15 minutes late or early on certain days)	14	32%
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Fig3: Does the transport arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled time when picking you up from home?

	Count	Percentage
Yes	22	50%
No	8	18%
Can't say, (can be more than 15 minutes late or early on certain days)	12	29%

Fig 4: Does the transport arrive within 15 minutes of the scheduled time it is due to arrive at your home in the evening?

Respondents were asked to give their views on a number of measures relating to the quality of service they have received. The questions focused on the quality of communication and responsiveness of the transport company.

Communication with Transport

The majority of respondents were satisfied with the overall communication with the transport company, they commented that it was either good (38%) or excellent (15%). In addition, almost 30% of respondents replied that overall communication with the transport company was either very poor (21%) or poor (8%).

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	6	15%
Good	15	38%
Adequate	5	13%
Poor	3	8%
Very Poor	8	21%
Don't know	2	5%

Fig 5: Overall communication with your transport company

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Several respondents reported satisfaction with communication when there were delays in the service. 43% of respondents described this aspect of the service as good (29%) or excellent (14%). Again, however, almost 30% of respondents expressed that communication when there are delays in service is very poor (17%) or poor (12%).

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	6	14%
Good	12	29%
Adequate	6	14%
Poor	5	12%
Very Poor	7	17%
Don't know	6	14%

Fig 6: Communication when there are delays in picking up or dropping off you or the person you care for at the day service or home

When asked about the responsiveness of the transport company when difficulties have arisen respondents opinion was split. 42% of respondents commented that this aspect of the service was poor (17%) or very poor (25%) however another 46% of respondents described the service as good (38%) or very good (8%).

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	2	8%
Good	9	38%
Adequate	3	13%
Poor	4	17%
Very Poor	6	25%

Fig 7: Responsiveness of transport company when any difficulties have arisen

Drivers and Escorts

Most of the respondents were satisfied with the ability of the drivers and escorts to help people on and off the bus, 41% commented that this service was good and another 34% said the service was excellent. Just 9% of respondents described this aspect of the service as poor.

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	15	34%
Good	18	41%
Adequate	5	11%
Poor	4	9%
Don't know	2	5%

Fig 8: Ability to help you or the person you care for on and off the bus

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Again, the majority of respondents described the ability of escorts to understand and manage any behavioural challenges of their service users as good (44%) or excellent (24%). Only 9% of respondents described this aspect of the service as poor and another 12% of respondents didn't know.

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	8	24%
Good	15	44%
Adequate	4	12%
Poor	3	9%
Don't know	4	12%

Fig 9: Ability of escorts to understand and manage any behavioural challenges you or the person you care for may have in the bus/taxi

When we asked how well the escorts were able to help service users put on seatbelts and deal with other equipment such as wheelchairs, a large majority of respondents replied that this aspect of the service was either good (40%) or excellent (38%). Just 5% said that this aspect of the service was poor and further 10% of respondents did not know about the quality of the service.

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	16	38%
Good	17	40%
Adequate	3	7%
Poor	2	5%
Don't Know	4	10%

Fig 10: Ability of the escorts to help you or the person you care for to put on seat belts or handle other equipment such as wheelchairs, aids etc

Again respondents' satisfaction was generally high with regards to the driver and escorts' ability to communicate with the service users whilst travelling. 65% of respondents described the quality of this service as good (41%) or excellent (24%) where just 10% of respondents commented that this service was poor. An additional 12% of respondents did not know about the quality of this service.

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	10	24%
Good	17	41%
Adequate	5	12%
Poor	4	10%
Don't know	5	12%

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Fig 11: Ability of the driver or escort to communicate with you or the person you care for whilst travelling

Safety and comfort of buses and taxis

Just over half of respondents described the ease to get on and off the busses (specifically relating to ramps or steps) as good (37%) or excellent (14%). However, another 22% of respondents described this aspect of the service as poor (11%) or very poor (11%).

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	5	14%
Good	13	37%
Adequate	6	17%
Poor	4	11%
Very Poor	4	11%
Don't know	3	9%

Fig 12: Easy to get on and get off the bus (steps, ramps, etc.)

When asked about the comfort and quality of the vehicle provided by the transport service, less than half of respondents commented that this was good (40%) and just 5% of respondents commented that it was excellent. Another 40% of respondents commented that the comfort and quality of the vehicle was either poor (26%) or very poor (14%).

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	2	5%
Good	17	40%
Adequate	5	12%
Poor	11	26%
Very Poor	6	14%
Don't know	2	5%

Fig 13: Comfort and quality of the vehicle

Almost 60% of respondents commented that the security of seats and seatbelts was good (51%) or excellent (8%). Around a fifth of respondents described the security of the seats and seatbelts as adequate (19%) with a further 13% of respondents describing these as very poor (8%) or poor (5%).

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	3	8%
Good	19	51%
Adequate	7	19%
Poor	2	5%

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Very Poor	3	8%
Don't know	3	8%

Fig 14: Security of seats and seat belts

Respondents were fairly evenly split when asked if there was adequate space to move around inside the vehicle. Although several respondents described space inside the vehicle as good (33%) or excellent (7%), over a third of respondents reported that space inside the vehicle was either poor (19%) or very poor (16%). Almost a quarter of respondents commented that space to move around inside the vehicle was adequate (23%).

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	3	7%
Good	14	33%
Adequate	10	23%
Poor	8	19%
Very Poor	7	16%
Don't know	1	2%

Fig 15: Adequate space to move around

Respondents were overall satisfied with the safety of the doors and handles, nearly 70% described these as either good (59%) or excellent (8%). Just 5% of respondents felt that the safety of doors and handles was poor and another 16% described them as adequate.

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	3	8%
Good	22	59%
Adequate	6	16%
Poor	2	5%
Don't know	4	11%

Fig 16: Safety of doors and handles

When asked about the ability to safely park within walking distance of the day centre or house, over two-thirds of respondents felt that the quality of this provision was either good (56%) or excellent (12%). Only 9% of respondents described this provision as poor and another 16% of respondents described the ability to park safely and close-by as adequate.

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	5	12%
Good	24	56%
Adequate	7	16%

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Poor	4	9%
Don't know	3	7%

Fig 17: Safely parking within reasonable walking distance of your day service centre or your home (or the person you care for)

When asked whether, overall, the transport feels safe comfortable and dignified, almost three-quarters of respondents said that this aspect of the service was either good (58%) or excellent (12%). Only 10% of respondents felt that the service was either poor (5%) or very poor (5%) and another 19% of respondents felt that the transport was adequately safe, comfortable and dignified.

	Count	Percentage
Excellent	5	12%
Good	25	58%
Adequate	8	19%
Poor	2	5%
Very Poor	2	5%
Don't know	1	2%

Fig 18: Overall, does the transport you or the person you care for receive, feel safe, comfortable and dignified

Improving the service

When asked to rank four different ways of improving the service in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 4 the least important. The most respondents (15) felt that the quality of the transport and driving was the most important area for improvement. 84 respondents felt that the ability of escorts to understand their, or the person they care for's, needs was the least important area for improvement.

	1	2	3	4
Communication	10 or 8%	12 or 10%	36 or 30%	64 or 52%
Punctuality	12 or 11%	18 or 17%	18 or 17%	60 or 56%
Ability of escorts to understand and manage my needs or the person I care for	6 or 5%	12 or 9%	30 or 23%	84 or 64%
The quality of the transport and driving	15 or 15%	10 or 9%	30 or 29%	48 or 47%

Fig19: rank how important each of these aspects of the service is, where 1 is the most important and 4 is the least important.

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When asked what other suggestions or comments they had about improving the quality of the home to day service or college transport service.

- 20 respondents answered this question
- A quarter of these comments expressed general satisfaction with the quality of the service.
- Several respondents raised issues regarding discomfort in the vehicle such as lack of space or a seatbelt fastened too tight.

“Transport very uncomfortable: size of seat and space.”

- Some respondents noted that the quality of the service depends on the escort and the driver, some complained that certain drivers have been rude or aggressive:

“the escort was also rude and aggressive, rushing Audrey and making her really upset.”

Some of these same respondents, also made suggestions that the drivers and escorts should be trained to better manage the service users.

“I have marked a lot of questions as poor but this is dependent on the driver or escort. Some are very poor but some are good. Drivers/escorts should have some training to deal with people who are vulnerable or confused and need reassuring.”

- A few respondents specifically mention that drivers should notice speed-bumps and slow down accordingly.
- A further few respondents made comments regarding timing and punctuality, with reports that the service has been both too early and too late.

Possible change to a council provided service

When asked whether they thought running some or all services directly with council staff and vehicles would result in a better service, just over half of respondents (53%) replied that they thought that it would. Only 8% of respondents felt that running the

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service directly from the council would actually result in a worse service. A quarter of respondents felt that the running of the services directly by the council would make little difference either way and a further 15% felt that they didn't know whether it would make the service better or worse.

	Count	Percentage
I feel this is likely to result in a better service	21	53%
I feel this is likely to result in a worse service	3	8%
I feel this will make little difference either way	10	25%
Don't know	6	15%

Fig 20: Currently we use private providers to operate transport. A possible plan could be to run some or all of the transport services directly with council staff and vehicles. Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

Finally, we asked whether respondents had any other views or comments on the proposal to transfer services or aspects of the service to the council.

- Just 10 respondents answered this question.
- Of these 10, two respondents were happy with the service as it is:

"Very happy with current service. Thank you!"
- A couple of respondents expressed an active preference for the service to return to the council:

"The service was much better when it was run by the Council before."
- One respondent made the point that the quality of the service depends on the staff:

"All transport depends on the people actually collecting and delivering regardless of who pays."
- While another emphasised the need for stability and routine in the service:

"Older people don't like change. A mature, secure work force is the way forward. Where are Gilly, Denise and Sharon, Yvette, agency Bill and agency

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Beverley. The 'baby' was thrown out the bath water. By all means keep nice Marc, James etc. but no "Johnny come latelys" – stability"