

Home-School Transport Meeting

27th March 2013

Gil, Michael, Diana, Reza, Gail (PH), Adrian (DV), Debbie, Rachel and Sasha

Gil retiring 19th April, Michael taking over role. Michael.nix@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Feedback and Actions:

1) Budget/contract:

Gil confirmed no intention to cut transport budget for SEN in 2013/4 and unlikely in 2014/5. Fixed term contract – most have another 2 years to run, some another 4 years. Each contract has service specification.

In future years' agreed school heads and parents need to be involved in renewing contracts and specs.

Transport team needs to focus on monitoring the service currently and ensuring it's the best it can be.

Could look at handing budgets to schools to manage some of the transport budgets themselves e.g. Hillside looking at this.

Contracts charge for 'bums on seats' so if children ill/not getting on – they shouldn't be charged.

Contract monitoring – we'd like to see interim contract review – given 6 months into contract.

ACTION: Can Gil provide contract monitoring report pls.

2) Licences/Vehicles:

Some cars licenced via Lewes not B&H. Not much we can do about the size of vehicles from taxis to minibuses. Need to licence securely.

Reports of dirty cars which have been used in the night e.g. cigarette butts, food containers etc

ACTION: Gil to follow this up as not acceptable

3) Needs/risk assessments:

- Improve risk assessment information about needs of CYP to transport company puts more pressure on schools to provide this information. Adrian concerned about doing these if he can't then influence the delivery of the service and also there are differences of opinion in levels of risk
- Previous company used a 'passport' system to ensure they knew needs of child. Parents asked to fill in an information sheet at start of year but it was not clear who to send it to and it was not chased up. Need to ensure current providers get this information.
- Gil to consider if SEN team could gather, co-ordinate and communicate needs. Look at reviewing structure – moving responsibility from transport to SEN team?
- Possibly use 'RACH passport' system? **ACTION: Amanda to forward format to Gil**
- We'd like to see risk assessment if using one taxi, one driver, one escort, 5 kids – what happens if accident/break down. Do they have contingency plans – Gil has seen these.

4) Communication:

- Need clear demarcation on who's meant to be doing what regarding the needs assessments

ACTION: Gil to confirm

- No communication regarding drivers changing, need to introduce selves **ACTION: Could company produce a photos/name sheet?**
- Not being told when the taxi will arrive

5) Complaints Procedure:

- Need to communicate to/and support parents if there is a need to complain to council e.g. driving off without seatbelts, pushing door shut
- Parents who have complained to taxi company have been told if they complain again they won't have transport to school – underhand threatening. Parents totally rely on service and told if unhappy they would have to take child out of service.

6) Training:

- Company agreed to attend but would need to be paid for from Council – **ACTION: Amaze/Adrian to deliver – develop agenda and quote cost**

7) Independent travel training:

- Need to provide more incentives for this
- Needs more flexibility
- Gil is negotiating with bus company about scholar pass extending to 24/7 pass – **ACTION: Rachel to forward comments to Gil.** If a child attends secondary school then they are entitled to one if they live over 3 miles. This will be a great saving for families.

8) Transport Personal Budget Pilot:

Parents have the option to have a PB to hire own driver/escorts – e.g. Reza paying £200/wk but only getting £100 from pilot. Why are they being given 20% less than cost from Council? **ACTION: Ask Jacqueline why? May need different levels of payment depending on needs – may need discretion?**

9) Positives:

- Community Transport :
 - o very good service now, with minibuses/appropriate transport – can separate kids if needs be
 - o standard text 5 mins before pick up
 - o consistency
 - o communication with the escort
 - o rings if running late
 - o can be flexible – understanding of special needs
 - o clear line of accountability

Steve Healy's report on Council-run transport recommendations:

Group to feed back on these recommendations – to Rachel to co-ordinate by 18th April.

- a) Council should only provide transport where assessment forms are properly completed to allow for risk/needs assessments to be done

Sounds sensible and safe – but need to be clear who is responsible for drafting these e.g. SEN team, with input from school/parent. Rachel suggested whether the new RACH Hospital Passport template could be used as many CYP will have these and are designed to be used by multi-professionals. Need to consider how to implement this – who will go through current

needs assessments to determine which are incomplete. Will parents be supported to provide more info if required? Could they be sent completed ones to comment on/add to?

b) Schools and Amaze should be involved in reviewing transport assessment process and forms.

Amaze wouldn't have capacity to do this on individual basis but happy to feed into the design of process

c) Relocate transport budget to within SEN team

Yes makes sense

d) Locate some of transport budget with schools

Might make sense – but lose ability to get best deals possibly with regard to economies of scale. However, could schools use own minibuses and save money?

e) Incentives for schools to operate independent travel training?

f) Council to co-ordinate independent travel training resources and expertise? Yes

g) Transport team to check school registers against invoices and site visits to check compliance? – Yes!

h) Council to seek discounted spot purchase rate? – Yes but need to retain focus on quality more so than cost

i) Advertise wider than B&H? – Yes but need to retain focus on quality more so than cost

j) Provide per capita costs? Yes please can you provide this info for the last 5 years as well as total home school transport budgets for same period?

k) Personalisation built into assessments for transports? – Yes but we need to understand the point at which economies of scale would be lost to maintain council run provision. We believe most families want the council transport service to continue and wouldn't want to see it fail (if families starting to select personalisation option as so dissatisfied with in house provision)

l) Disaggregation of budget must be based on current/fixed budget levels