

Brighton 22/01/2020

PaCC submission for the HTST Members scrutiny panel 23/01/2019

PaCC continue to represent the broader home to school transport community to ensure that a fit for purpose service is operational in Brighton and Hove and that an adequate budget is provided for this statutory service. We list our ongoing concerns.

Impact on Education and Home Life for Families

A small number of families report that CYP are regularly arriving late to school/college. Performance data relating to timekeeping is available and must be used to rectify these issues. Regular lateness impacts children's behavioural stability, siblings getting to school on time, parent carers working lives, family finances & mental health.

Communication with Families, Central Management and Running of the Service

Parent carers' continue to expect that communication is both clear, relatable & timely. PaCC reps' feedback, that parent carers' may need to make numerous calls to rectify a HTST issue, and any lack of replies to calls/emails clearly add to ongoing stress. Clarity for parent carers' is needed around how concerns and complaints are logged, together with response times. Some families remain confused as to who is effectively 'in charge' and who issues should be reported too. A published issues, complaints and monitoring process would help here.

Impact on schools at the present time

Parent carers at the hubs report that there are still students who are upset/unsettled by their arrangements and who are losing out on their day and this can impact their peers. Parent carers are aware that the transition arrangement at the hubs, between taxi and school at the beginning and end of the school day remain temporary, an update is needed. Parent carers report concerns regarding the impact on school's finances, and again ask for clarity going forward.

Safeguarding & Medical/Behavioural Training (Compliance)

Transparent comms re safeguarding and training processes remain a priority for parent carers. It is essential that all of the early training and safety issues are now evidenced by BHCC to be satisfactory and that good processes are in place to mitigate ongoing risk.

c/o Amaze, Community Base, 113 Queens Road, Brighton, BN1 3XG

• tel: 01273 234862 • email: admin@paccbrighton.org.uk • www.paccbrighton.org.uk

Assessment for Eligibility, & Delivery of Suitable Service (Compliance)

Going forward a CYP/parent carer centred application system must be co-produced with PaCC. The need for parent carers' to email councillors, MPs and/or escalating to the Assistant Director questioning both the delays around application processes and/or eligibility decisions by BHCC, must be minimised. Revised satisfactory processes must be in place for September 2020.

PaCC question whether the DPS approach has increased risk and depersonalised provision, and ask how this will be mitigated going forward. PaCC would welcome a seat on the HTST panel, we recognise that parent carers sit on the SEN panel and that officers welcome the expert parent carer voice.

Customer Care

Parent carers' report some operators do not appear to have received training & awareness around sensitive handling and there is ambiguity over the door to door role between VPAs/Drivers. Parent carers have reported children being ignored, without even the basic human interaction of a 'greeting' in some instances. PaCC asks what is in place to monitor 'Customer Care' and we highlight the need for a benchmark of "good standards".

Route allocations and how these are determined

PaCC continue to challenge the need for appropriate vehicles. Parent carers feedback the detrimental impact of 'fewer larger vehicles' in terms of compliance, safety & wellbeing. Some routes still feel cramped and unsuitable. PaCC reports that some parents are afraid to complain. Parent carers request an update on the role of Edge.

Impact on the budget for home to school transport

PaCC reports significant concern about the budget overspend. In the climate of austerity, overspends are perceived as catastrophic by the broader community. PaCC ask officers and members to reassure the community, that both budgets and contracted HTST provision will offer a fit for purpose and sustainable service

Parent carers' also express concern around saving proposals in the LD budget for 18-25s Transport. PaCC requires clarity around this proposal and we will respond accordingly.



a voice for parent carers in Brighton and Hove

Genuinely Effective Co-Production

Moving forward, time must be allocated to ensure meaningful co-production with PaCC, to ensure that community confidence is restored prior to and beyond Sept 2020. The impact of the early failure to co-produce has been enormous to both the wider community and the PaCC team.