

## Personal budgets in door-to-door transport services

Transport Committee

The London Assembly's [Transport Committee](#) has launched an investigation into London's door-to-door transport services. This investigation will be led by Keith Prince AM, and will focus primarily on the idea of introducing personal travel budgets for door-to-door service users.

This paper invites organisations and individuals to submit views and information to the Committee, giving you the opportunity to influence our recommendations. We pose a number of key questions to be answered.

### Door-to-door services

Door-to-door transport services are specialist services designed for people with mobility issues, who have difficulties using other forms of public transport. There are currently several different types of door-to-door service available in London, including:

- Dial-a-Ride
- Taxicard
- Capital Call
- Community transport

Transport for London (TfL) is one of the key providers and funders of door-to-door services. It directly operates the Dial-a-Ride service, provides the majority of the funding for the Taxicard service, and funds and commissions the Capital Call service. London Boroughs also have a significant role, commissioning and funding Taxicard and community transport.

The wide range of providers of door-to-door services includes TfL, licensed taxi and private hire operator, and a number of community transport providers.

The Transport Committee has investigated door-to-door services several times in recent years, in response to concerns from service users about issues such as poor reliability and availability, lack of coordination and rising costs. Most recently, in January 2015, the Committee published a [report](#) calling for the integration of door-to-door services, with joint commissioning across services and a single membership and booking process.

TfL conducted a further [review](#) of services in 2015-16 and announced a series of measures to bring about greater integration, including a single set of eligibility criteria and a single journey booking process across services.

### Personal travel budgets

A strategy for door-to-door services published in 2009 by London Councils recommended that individual travel budgets be introduced, although this was not taken up by TfL. In the Transport Committee's 2015 report we proposed that TfL considers the introduction of personal budgets as a possible reform, beyond the immediate priority to integrate services.

There has been a move toward 'personalisation' of public services in recent years, which includes the introduction of

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personal budgets. They are already widely used in social care, and are being piloted in the NHS.

*A personal budget for door-to-door services would most likely mean that service users are allocated a certain amount of money, which they can spend with their chosen service provider.* This is already a feature of some door-to-door services, particularly Taxicard and Capital Call. In contrast, Dial-a-Ride is provided free at the point of use.

Personal budgets would have the benefit of giving more control to service users, and could help make door-to-door services more efficient. Some of the risks of the system may include the possibility of increasing demand for door-to-door journeys from infrequent users, and a possible reduction in the viability of bus-based services like Dial-a-Ride.

There is no single model for how personal budgets would work in door-to-door services. For instance, TfL and partners would need to determine whether to provide cash to service users, or a ‘virtual budget’ controlled by the user but held by others. Other elements to be determined are whether there would be any restrictions on the providers that users can choose for a door-to-door journey, and whether a personal budget would be optional or mandatory.

### Key questions

In this investigation there are a number of specific questions the Committee is seeking to answer, as set out below. Respondents should address any questions where they have relevant views and information to share, and feel free to cover any other issues they would like the Committee to consider.

### General questions

- 1. What would be the main advantages and disadvantages of introducing personal travel budgets in door-to-door services?**
- 2. How would introducing personal budgets affect the financial efficiency of door-to-door services?**
- 3. How would introducing personal budgets affect the quality of service received by service users?**

### Service user views

- 4. To what extent do door-to-door service users want to be able to use a personal budget for these services?**
- 5. What are the challenges of personal budgets for more vulnerable service users, such as those with a cognitive impairment, and how could these be overcome?**

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### *Good practice*

- 6. What lessons can be learned about personal budgets from their use in other sectors, particularly social care?**
- 7. Are there any other cities that have introduced personal budgets for door-to-door services? What lessons have been learned?**

### *Implementation*

- 8. What would be the main challenges of implementing personal budgets in door-to-door services, and how could these be addressed?**
- 9. To what extent would implementing personal budgets rely on greater integration of service provision than currently exists?**

### *Demand for services*

- 10. To what extent would providing all service users with a personal budget increase demand for services, including from those who currently use services infrequently?**
- 11. To what extent would the introduction of personal budgets affect usage of bus-based services like Dial-a-Ride and community transport?**

### **How to contribute to the investigation**

We would welcome submissions from any organisations and individuals with views and information to share on this topic. Submissions should aim to address any of the questions outlined above, and other issues you think it important for the investigation to cover.

We are keen to hear from service users, organisations working with disabled people, Transport for London, London boroughs, providers of door-to-door services and other expert and stakeholders. Please respond by **9 January 2017** using the details below.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Email submissions</b>	transportcommittee@london.gov.uk
<b>Postal submissions</b>	Richard Berry, London Assembly, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA
<b>Further information</b>	020 7983 4000
<b>Media enquiries</b>	020 7983 4228

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<sup>1</sup> We will publish written submissions online unless they are marked as confidential or there is a legal reason for non-publication. We may be required to release a copy of your submission under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, even if it has been marked as confidential.

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### About the Committee

The Transport Committee examines all aspects of the capital's transport system in order to press for improvements for Londoners. The Committee monitors how the Mayor's Transport Strategy is being implemented, and scrutinises the work of Transport for London and other transport operators.

Committee Members are:

Caroline Pidgeon, Chair (Liberal Democrat)  
Keith Prince, Deputy Chair (Conservative)  
Kemi Badenoch (Conservative)  
Tom Copley (Labour)  
Florence Eshalomi (Labour)  
David Kurten (UK Independence Party)  
Joanne McCartney (Labour)  
Steve O'Connell (Conservative)  
Caroline Russell (Green)  
Navin Shah (Labour)

You can find out more about the Committee's investigations and read our reports here:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/london-assembly/transport-committee>

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