



Learning Disability Partnership Board
Being Connected - Travel
Tuesday 16 April 2024
10:15am – 12:15pm at St Chads
Minutes



	Welcome and introductions – the co-Chairs Councillor Sharon Burke and Em Pearson welcomed the attendees to the meeting.
	The meeting agreed the minutes of the last Learning Disability Partnership Board which took place on 16 January 2024.
being connected transport	Independent Travel Training Rachel Akhtar, the Independent Travel Trainer Coordinator at Leeds City Council spoke about Independent Travel Training. Rachel confirmed that she works closely with David Crane. Rachel confirmed that she works in the children's service at Leeds City Council and supports people to get to school or a day opportunity if they want to travel on public transport, rather than be driven or take a taxi. Rachel confirmed she would carry out a risk assessment for each individual. A Travel Trainer would then work with the individual to plan a route.

There are 7 new Travel Trainers in post, and one vacancy to be filled.

Rachel confirmed that the training doesn't have a set timescale, and that the programme is designed for each individual according to their need. Some people will only need 1 or 2 weeks of support, for example if they already know the route and have a good understanding of road safety. Someone else could have more time, one individual was given 6 months of support to help them manage their significant anxiety.

Rachel confirmed that support is available for people attending a community activity, as long as it would be a long-term placement, or a place they attended regularly.

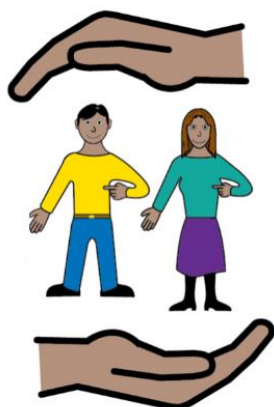
Rachel confirmed that the travel training is not appropriate for everyone. An assessment is carried out with the individual alongside their parent carer. After this assessment travel training would only be offered if it was assessed to be appropriate. The individual may be encouraged to give it a try, but it is recognised that some people are at risk of not being safe travelling independently, even following training.

Rachel confirmed that travel training is a 'spend to save service', but only for those who want to and can do it.

David Crake, Social Worker on the Adult Travel Project at Leeds City Council, confirmed that for adult travel training, there are 2 key criteria people must have:

1. The individual is already on Leeds City Council funded transport.

2. The individual has received a referral from social workers or care management for travel training.



Travel Ambassadors update

David Crake, Social Worker on the Adult Travel Project at Leeds City Council provided the meeting with an update on Travel Ambassadors.

David confirmed that before the Covid lockdown There were 7 to 8 Travel Ambassadors.

The Travel Ambassadors look at access to places like Leeds train station, and look at the accessibility of bus routes. Travel Ambassadors are consulted on changes and updates, for example on Leeds' bus station.

There are currently 5 Travel Ambassadors now.

David shared a power point presentation created with Thomas Chalk at Through the Maze to get information on Travel Ambassadors out to more people. The presentation will be shared with the minutes.

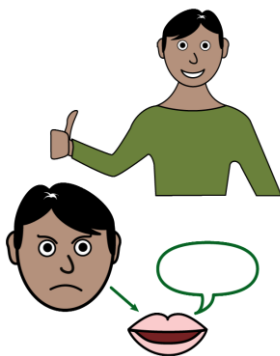
David confirmed that a Travel Ambassador doesn't have to be someone who has had Travel Training, but does have an interest in travel, have tips they want to pass on, and concerns they want to raise.

The presentation listed what skills are looked for in Travel Ambassadors:

- Good communication skills and good presentation skills
- Be able to speak up for people with a learning disability and their families and carers
- Be able to work with people who have a learning disability or other needs

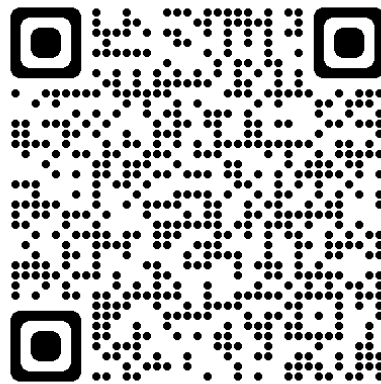
- They need to know about places in Leeds.
- They need to know about local transport in Leeds.
- They need to know about apps that give travel information for Leeds.

Please get in touch with David at David.Crake@leeds.gov.uk to come and have a chat with people (in person or on the phone) about the opportunity. It is a volunteer position. Travel ambassadors all agree they feel more confident and valued for being involved.



Travel compliments and complaints video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qwimuz_1OQ&t=3s



David Crake, Social Worker on the Adult Travel Project at Leeds City Council shared the attached video.

David confirmed that before the Covid lockdown, Travel Ambassadors pre covid would visit day opportunities to have conversations with people about their experiences on the bus, and they found that making complaints and compliments wasn't very easy. The Travel Ambassadors would take the

complaints and compliments forms to these sessions and help people complete the forms and then deliver these to the bus station.

It was felt that it would be better to put together a video that takes you through the process for making a complaint or compliment.

David would like to get the video shown as frequently as possible. The video took about 4 days to make on mobile phones and was filmed in several locations including the West Yorkshire Mayors Office, Leeds Playhouse and the Bus Station. The meeting agreed the video is a real achievement.

Rachel Akhtar, the Independent Travel Trainer Coordinator at Leeds City Council agreed to add the link to their twitter page.

David confirmed that most of the feedback from the video has been positive, but there are lessons to be learnt. The video was made with no budget and relied on people's time. Contacts have now been made with the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's media team, this will allow for future videos to be higher quality. The meeting agreed it is important to get the info out and the video needs to be shared more widely.



Learning Disability Awareness

David Crake, Social Worker on the Adult Travel Project at Leeds City Council gave an update on the next steps around Learning Disability Awareness for transport providers.

David confirmed there would be some video work with the Travel Ambassadors with input from Asking You.

The meeting agreed that access onto the buses was really important, especially for wheelchair users. The meeting recognised the impact of having shared space for wheelchairs and pushchairs, as a driver can ask someone to move but they don't have to move if they don't want to. The meeting also heard that sometimes bus drivers don't want to put the access ramp down and they'll drive past the bus stop, or they put down the ramp with an unhappy face.

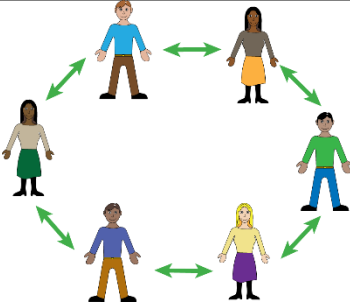
The meeting agreed that the attitude of the driver can be a big impact on your day.

David confirmed that work was taking place to develop more videos which will be part of the online training for drivers.

The meeting also agreed there needed to be an increase in awareness of orange wallets, which are to let the driver know that the passenger might need a bit more time.

The meeting was reminded that there are also travel cards that say things like 'please wait until I am seated' available on metro's website.

David confirmed that Erika Ward from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority is working in partnership with the Travel Ambassadors, Advonet and Pyramid in these training videos.

	Cllr Kevin Ritchie reminded the meeting to complain when something happens like a ramp not being provided as drivers need to be reminded of their responsibilities.
	Collaborative working updates • William Merritt Centre • Older People's Network • Physical and Sensory Impairment Network • Royal Mencap • Pyramid Nicky Lines Autism and Learning Disability Digital Inclusion Coordinator at Pyramid Nicky was unable to attend this meeting so this agenda point will be added to the agenda of the next meeting in July 2024. David gave an update reminding the meeting that the William Merritt centre offer lots of mobility support. William Merritt offers a free assessment in your own vehicle and see how you are doing in terms of driving and to check you are safe, they also offer a follow up session. William Merritt also have adapted vehicles that you can try out that allow. William Merritt is an accessible building and has changing places toilet facilities.



Carers Reference Group - feedback

A standing agenda item for the Carers Reference group to feedback to the Board.

The statements below were read out to the meeting:

“The Carers reference group send their apologies for todays meeting and would like to request that the time of the meeting changes because family carers cannot make a 10.15am start because transport doesn't start arriving for their loved ones until 10am at the earliest. This doesn't give carers time to catch the bus. Taxis are too expensive. Please can all meetings be Hybrid to give people choice?”

Rosie Robinson Boardman from Leeds City Council confirmed that there are 4 Learning Disability Partnership Board meetings each year. 2 of these meetings take place on zoom, and 2 take place in person.

Rosie confirmed that previous attempts at hybrid meetings had been unsuccessful because people online found it difficult to hear the speakers in the room, and people in the room found it hard to hear the people online. The budget for the in-person board meetings covers community rooms that do not have the appropriate technology to attempt hybrid meetings.

Rosie confirmed that the start times of the board meetings would be amended to start at 10.30am.

“Family Carers would like to point out the problems with transport if someone is going to Respite. Luggage

is not allowed. Only one small bag to go under the seat can be carried. This isn't large enough for someone who is going to Respite for a week or two. Family Carers are having to take the luggage separately this incurs costs of a taxi or in one instance someone carrying it on two buses and two buses home and then having to do the same for the return journey. On one occasion an alternative was kindly given that the person waits for the transport to return to pick both the person and the luggage up at the same time. This is not good for the person sitting and waiting in all day. A wasted day. Can this please be raised as an ongoing problem?"

Aidan Smith, Leeds City Council agreed to take the feedback to Passenger Transport Services and find out why the luggage cannot be taken, and what can be done flexibly in these cases.

David Crake confirmed it was likely to be due to the health and safety requirements and being able to effectively secure the luggage.

Following the meeting the following response was received:

- There is a published guide that will be circulated with these minutes that is provided to drivers regarding luggage on passenger transport vehicles.
- Two bags would be OK as long as the driver has space (i.e. the number of other people also travelling on the day)
- If more than one bag, of the type described on the shared document, are required please email CSD.passengers@leeds.gov.uk to check if there will be room.

	• Please email this address as early as you are able to allow there is as much time as possible for the transport team to be as flexible as they are able in the transport arranged.
	People's Parliament - feedback A standing agenda item for the People's Parliament to feedback to the Board. The following feedback form the People's Parliament was shared to the meeting: “ Bus passes • Bus passes not able to use before 9:30 • Orange wallets are not recognised by drivers • Bus passes should be usable before 9:30 • There should be more awareness of the orange wallets for drivers Unreliable buses • Buses are cancelled last minute or very late • Buses can be too small when it is busy • We want more bus services and more wheelchair spaces on buses Rude drivers • Not waiting for people to sit down before pulling off • They take people's pass off of them and put it on the machine rather than letting them do it. • They can refuse to put down the ramp and be grumpy about putting it down

- Don't like the way bus drivers talk to or about people with learning disability
- Also issue with taxi drivers, they are rude and don't understand disabilities
- We feel that bus drivers need more training to work with people with disabilities
- We want taxi drivers to also have training

Accessible information

- We are not told if the bus we are on has broken down if we are on the top deck
- We do not hear back after making a complaint
- Information about changes to routes and delays is not accessible when you are on the bus
- We would like the next bus stop to be announced on all buses
- We want the writing to be bigger on screens on buses and in the bus station
- We want more information on delays and diversions when you are on the bus

More police and security on buses and in bus station

- We like that the buses are safer and that it is easy to find a police officer or security guard in the bus stations
- We want more plain clothed officers, safer travel team members, uniformed police and security in the bus stations and on the buses"

The meeting thanked the people's parliament members for their feedback.

Cllr Burke confirmed franchising is coming in, under Mayor Brabin, (the current system of bus companies

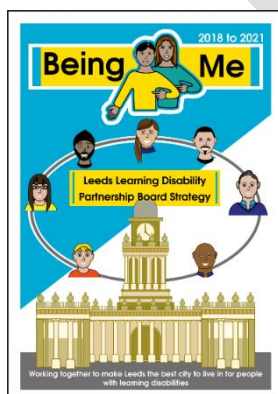
controlling services is ending), and David Crake also confirmed that there are changes to buses in Leeds, which will be bigger, better vehicles.

It was suggested that the West Yorkshire Mayor be invited to a future board meeting.

The meeting agreed that at peak hours there are huge queues at bus stops, and people with mobility needs should be able to move to the front of the queue with preferential boarding. David suggested signs could be put in place at bus stops asking people to be mindful of the needs of those around them.

The meeting agreed that screens showing the next stop and an announcement of the next stop can be added.

David confirmed that the learning disability awareness being developed for bus drivers would become a template to deliver the same training to private hire companies. David confirmed this will be a big piece of work as there are so many operators in Leeds as well as those coming in from surrounding areas.

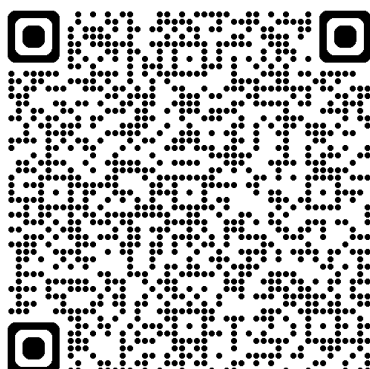


Being Me Strategy and Strategy Update

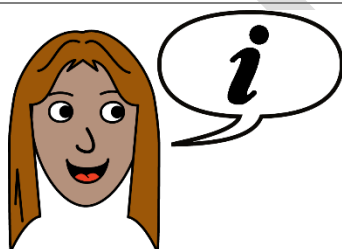
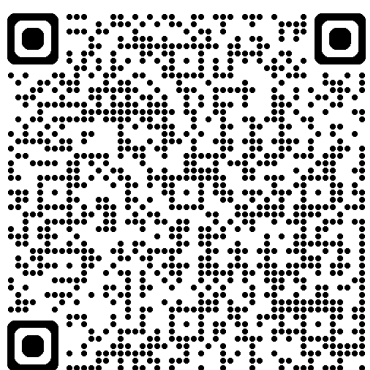
Rosie Robinson Boardman, Senior Commissioning Officer at Leeds City Council brought copies of the Being Me Strategy and strategy Update to the meeting. These were previously shared at the learning Disability Partnership Board on 13 July 2023.

Rosie confirmed a new strategy would be produced in 2025.

The Being Me Strategy is available online here: [Leeds-Learning-Disability-Partnership-Board-Strategy-2018-2021-1.pdf \(through-the-maze.org.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/media/1000000/Leeds-Learning-Disability-Partnership-Board-Strategy-2018-2021-1.pdf)



The 2023 Being Me Strategy Update available online here: [Being-Me-Strategy-Update-2023.pdf.pagespeed.ce.ZAurfCrLoG.pdf \(through-the-maze.org.uk\)](https://www.leeds.gov.uk/media/1000000/Being-Me-Strategy-Update-2023.pdf.pagespeed.ce.ZAurfCrLoG.pdf)



Any Other Business

Margaret Wilkinson, Chair of Leeds Involving People raised concern about the layout on the roads where a cycle route is immediately in front of the bus stop or between the bus shelter and the bus. David Crake confirmed that these are called 'floating bus stops' and that Travel Ambassadors did look at these stops when they were built. It was found that they work for some people and don't work for other people. They

have fed back the challenges they cause for disabled people. Cllr Kevin Ritchie confirmed that concerns regarding floating bus stops have been passed onto the Highways department, who state they are the best way to deliver bus and cycle routes, but will look into ways to slow bikes down.

Carol Benson from Aspire suggested attendees start planning their travel routes to Picnic in the Park in Learning Disability week on Monday 17 June.

Sarah Wheatley from Connect in the North confirmed that there are still a few stalls available the market event on Tuesday 18 June. Sarah confirmed that there are more people and more organisations having stalls this year as the opportunity has been opened up to more than Being Social themes. Sarah also confirmed that the march will start at Council Chambers at 12.15pm and head to the Market.

Next meetings and locations:

Tuesday 16 July 2024 on Zoom
10.30am – 12.30pm
Being Connected Social

Tuesday 15 October 2024 at Hillside, Beeston
10.30am – 12.30pm
Being Connected Employed

Tuesday 14 January 2025 on Zoom
10.30am – 12.30pm
Being Well

Tuesday 15 April 2025 VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED
10.30am – 12.30pm
Being Safe

	Tuesday 15 July 2025 on Zoom 10.30am – 12.30pm Being Connected – Travel Tuesday 14 October 2025 VENUE TO BE CONFIRMED 10.30am – 12.30pm Being Connected - Social Tuesday 13 January 2026 on Zoom 10.30am – 12.30pm Being Connected - Employed
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