

## **Joint Working proposal – BTP and Choice Support**

### **Introduction:**

BTP is to join forces with a charity called Choice Support to provide Independent Travel training to vulnerable adults.

Choice Support is a leading social care charity that supports disabled and disadvantaged people to take control of their lives. They are constantly developing ways to encourage independence for vulnerable groups.

This partnership will directly link to the strategic objective of the force:

1.1 Focus – Protect vulnerable people on the railway network and work with the rail industry and other partners to reduce their impact on the network.

### **The Role: Independent travel –volunteer buddy scheme**

This partnership will aim to identify vulnerable individuals that need assistance with independent travel. Groups could include those with sensory impairments, those with mental health issues, learning disabilities, physical disabilities. Choice Support work directly with the target groups above and support over 900 service users across the country. A number of them struggle to make the most of their community due to lack of confidence, independence and safety fears over public transport.

The aim would be to protect vulnerable groups on their commute, keep them free from attack and increase their independence and confidence when travelling.

Although not directly linked with police teams this project could have a high impact and fits with the ethos of neighbourhood policing. It will also act as a connector to the community and be a visible presence.

Choice Support can provide a small focussed referral group to act as a start up, with the potential for the scheme to grow nationwide.

### **Identification of need:**

This service will be aimed at giving vulnerable adults the physical, mental and emotional tools to feel empowered and confident within their surroundings. Although this service will not be tackling a particular crime, it will be looking at the nomadic nature of hate crime and reducing the effects it has on vulnerable individuals who find it more difficult to assess risk, effectively manage within a confrontational situation or cope with the after effects of crime whether it be directly happening to them or just seen through the media. This is a service that will look to reduce the opportunity for crime by removing the vulnerabilities for people through the power of knowledge and understanding of the potential dangers within their locality. In a broader sense it will also look at gradually instilling confidence in service users to make them less vulnerable when utilising transport and allow them to access services and facilities more readily.

### **This will be done in the following way:**

Service users will be matched on a 1:1 basis with a BTP Independent Travel Volunteer.

The pair will meet for 2 hours a week. All volunteers will be asked to commit to the scheme for a minimum of 3 months but the actual duration of the match will depend on the individual needs of the service user.

The pair will complete a 'personal travel plan to independence' with key objectives and goals. This will include:

- Knowledge of personal safety in and out of the home e.g. how to look confident, keeping belongings safe etc.
- Area Mapping – Personalised to Service Users locality and frequent journeys
- Meeting key safety and community contacts within the borough
- Travel Training –which covers journey planning and what to do if exposed to an unexpected event or anti-social behaviour
- How to report a hate crime e.g. if you have been a victim or a witness of hate crime.

The project will be piloted using **10** service users in the Greenwich area with the potential to expand this after a 3-6 month pilot.

### **The partnership agreement:**

#### **Those involved:**

Thomas Doukas – Choice Support Involvement Manager  
Pippa Gascoigne – Choice Support Involvement Manager  
Greg Tythe – Choice Support Development Manager  
Teresa Bedziejewski – BTP volunteer Manager

#### **BTP Will provide:**

- A pool of fully trained volunteers who can be matched to selected service users who would benefit from the scheme. Volunteers will be recruited from a national recruitment website. They will be subject to an interview, vetting and reference check to ensure they are suitable for the role and can meet the specified commitment (see attached role profile)
- A training package to include an induction into BTP, independent travel plans (utilised from TFL), and boundaries.
- General overarching support of volunteers with particular emphasis on any problem resolution required.
- Report and monitoring tools – pre-scheme questionnaire to gather baseline data as well as diary sheets to record activity and progress.

- An evaluation of the service after the pilot.
- Funding of volunteer travel expenses

### **Choice Support Will provide:**

- 10 service users in the Greenwich area that are suitable and would benefit from the scheme.
- Input into interviewing of volunteers to assist with the matching process.
- Basic disability awareness training plus any additional training such as mapping, challenging behaviour and Safeguarding of Vulnerable adults.
- Support to both the volunteer and the service user during their initial introduction meeting.
- Offer regular and ongoing support to volunteers both via email, phone and face to face.
- Advice and any problem resolution required in regard to the service user during the scheme.
- Support and provide alternative services to the service user once the programme ends.
- Any expenses incurred by the service user that will not be covered by their personalised budgets.
- A venue for training the volunteers.
- A celebration event at the end of the pilot for all parties involved.

### **BTP and Choice Support will:**

- Have open communication regarding the progress of the project and any issues that may arise
- Share the reporting and monitoring tools in order to demonstrate the benefits of the scheme to both organisations.
- Undertake any agreed press work relating to the scheme and ensure that it meets the criteria of both marketing departments.

If both organisations adhere to the above then it is hoped that the following would be achieved for:

### **Service Users:**

- Journey planning skills on all forms of transport.
- Practical/real time experience of journeys.
- An understanding of personal safety whilst using public transport and travelling.
- An understanding of how to report a hate crime
- A record of the journeys they have achieved and the progress they have made.
- An increased knowledge of transport systems in their area.

- In increased confidence in themselves and a greater sense of independence.
- Better access to and knowledge of the services/facilities in their area.
- Development of social skills
- A deeper insight into the work of BTP.
- Friendship and support

### **Volunteers**

- An opportunity to make a difference in an individual's lives and contribute to the local community.
- A chance to develop new skills and experiences.
- An opportunity to learn more about supporting and working with those who have disabilities.
- Possible CV/career enhancement.
- A greater insight into both Choice Support and BTP as organisations.