

Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS)



Report on

Roundtable discussion on National Audit Office report on
Motability

Date of discussion: 5th March 2019

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1. Attendees

Linda Bamford, Convener of MACS and chair of the roundtable discussion.

Paul Atkinson, a Director of Motability, who joined the organisation in May 2018. He was previously in the RAF.

Bernie Cowper, Motability Scheme Oversight Manager, who has seven years' experience with Motability.

Maureen Morrison, Operations Manager, Spinal Injuries Scotland, which is a disabled person's organisation (DPO) with around 2000 members. Maureen although eligible for Motability, is one of those choosing not to participate in the scheme.

Joanna Martin, An Ambassador with Spinal Injuries Scotland and Motability scheme user.

Fraser Sutherland, member of MACS, who links MACS to DPOs and is also a member of MACS Roads, Infrastructure Active Travel work-stream.

Emma Scott, Disability Equality Scotland (DES) Operational Manager, a member led organisation, covering all disabilities and working to achieve full access and inclusion for disabled people in Scotland. DES also closely works with Transport Scotland and heavily participates in the implementation of the Accessible Travel Framework.

David Hunter, MACS Planning and Strategy Workstream co-lead and lead on Motability.

Simon Hodgson, Director of Carers Scotland.

Marianne Scobie, Deputy Chief Executive, Glasgow Disability Alliance (GDA) an organisation controlled by disabled people (DPO). GDA supports disabled people of all ages and impairment groups, providing free and fully accessible learning and opportunities to participate in consultations which contribute to policy development, including transport for disabled people. Marianne is a disabled person and eligible for Motability but chooses not to participate in the scheme.

Richard Leckerman, Development Coordinator (Social Care) Glasgow Disability Alliance. Richard supports disabled people to build skills, confidence and opportunities around social care issues. Richard is a disabled person and Motability scheme user.

Hilary Stubbs, MACS Vice Convener who also leads on Ferries and Aviation related policies. Hilary has been a Motability user since 1989.

Catriona Macfarlane, Report author, from Licensing Scottish Government

Aga Lysak, MACS Secretary

Claire M Smith, MACS Sponsor and Head of Accessible Travel, Transport Scotland.

2. Overview of MACS remit

MACS overall aim is to consider such matters relating to the needs of disabled persons in connection with transport, as the Committee think appropriate, and to give advice to Scottish Ministers.

Four of MACS overarching areas of activity were linked to the roundtable discussion:

- To give Scottish Ministers advice on aspects of policy, legislation and practice affecting the travel need of disabled people.
- To take account of the broad views and experiences of disabled people when giving advice.
- To encourage awareness amongst disabled people in Scotland of developments which affect their mobility, choices and opportunities
- To promote the travel needs of disabled people with designers including transport planners and operators so that these are fully taken into account in the development of vehicles and infrastructure and delivery of services.

3. Purpose of the roundtable discussion

This discussion was facilitated to assist MACS with gathering evidence, further insights and the views of disabled people to assist them in providing advice to Ministers on the Motability Scheme.

This was as a result of the National Audit Office (NAO) report on Motability, which pointed out a number of serious weaknesses and causes of concern as follows:

- Charging customers significantly more (£390 million) for leases than was necessary;
- Accumulation of over £1 billion unplanned profit above forecast over 10 years;
- A business model which will continue to generate excessive profits in the future;
- Unjustified levels of executive pay, bonuses and lack of transparency;
- Issues around governance, accountability, diversity etcetera;
- Lack of representation from representative users and from Scottish members.

In response to the report, and to gather further insights and information, MACS wished to explore the following:

1. The views and opinions of Motability customers in Scotland in relation to:

- If Motability arrangements overall provide sufficient accountability to the public, and to Motability customers in particular?
- If Motability arrangements deliver the best possible service and value for money to the public, and particularly to its customers in Scotland?

2. What changes to the structure and functioning of Motability might be necessary in order to provide Scottish stakeholders with appropriate influence on the management of the Motability Scheme?

3. How could level of charging, which result in large unplanned profits for Motability Operations be avoided moving forward?

4. What should happen to the surplus funds already generated, including the recent donation of £400 million to Motability Charity?

5. The role of OSCR /Charities Commission.

To facilitate the round table discussion MACS brought together DPOs and Stakeholders in Scotland to discuss the findings of the National Audit Office review of Motability and how Motability meets the needs of its Scottish customers.

Motability, as a service provider, were invited to afford them the opportunity to give an update of the current situation and to hear and discuss the needs of Motability customers in Scotland.

As stated, the roundtable discussion was in response to the NAO report and press reports and to put forward issues customers had with Motability in Scotland. The aim being to focus discussions on these areas to allow MACS to be able to better advise Ministers and ensure the voices of Motability customers underpinned the Ministerial advice.

The morning roundtable discussion took the format of an overview of the current position in relation to MACS remit. This included a summary of the NAO key findings.

This was followed by a presentation from Motability, giving an overview of the Motability Scheme and a response to some of the NAO Report findings.

The afternoon sitting took the form of a question and answer session and discussion. The main questions and answers are attached as Appendix 1.

MACS provided all attendees with a briefing pack prior to the roundtable discussion in line with their remit; to encourage awareness amongst disabled people in Scotland of developments, which affect their mobility, choices and opportunities.

4. Summary of the National Audit Office Report Findings

Background

In May 2018, a report by the House of Commons Work and Pensions and Treasury select committees raised questions about: the structures and governance of the Motability scheme; government support for the scheme; the levels of reserves in Motability Operations; the remuneration of its senior staff; and the relationship between Motability and the Department of Work and Pensions. Along with the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Committees recommended that the National Audit Office (NAO) should carry out a review of the Scheme. It was agreed with Motability that the Comptroller and Auditor General would conduct examinations into the “economy, efficiency and effectiveness with which Motability parties have used their resources in discharging their functions.

Review

The National Audit Office reviewed the governance and financial affairs of the scheme and concluded that Motability provides an important and much valued service, however the review findings criticised some aspects of the organisation. The findings included:

- Overall customer satisfaction was very high.
- Motability Operations has generated £1.05 billion of unplanned profit since 2008.
- Motability’s governors have often exceeded recommended tenure limits.
- Motability has limited formal influence over Motability Operations’ executive remuneration arrangements.
- Remuneration for Motability Operations’ executive directors has been substantial and linked to performance targets set at levels that have been easily exceeded since 2008.

- The full value of a separate incentive scheme for Motability Operations' chief executive has not been disclosed previously.
- Motability Operations has chosen a more prudent risk management approach than other leasing companies.
- Motability Operations' prudent approach means it is holding more reserves than other car leasing companies.
- The Motability scheme exclusively benefits from certain tax concessions associated with the direct transfer of the mobility components of qualifying allowances from the government.

5. MACS Concerns

MACS first became aware of Motability issues in 2018 from the media and the roundtable heard some of the concerns expressed by MACS members and Motability customers in Scotland.

It was confirmed that publication of the NAO report had caused further concerns, including the reserves policy, executive pay, governance arrangements and subsequent transparency issues.

It was recognised that customers from Scotland are a higher number than would be expected as a proportional share. MACS is of the opinion Scottish Government (SG) needs to become a significant stakeholder alongside the UK Government, given that they will shortly be taking over the responsibility for some of the benefits affecting Motability, which makes the SG a key stakeholder.

MACS stated that they recognised the value of the service, but that the customer base in Scotland had significant unique challenges, including geographical and demographical difference to the rest of the UK, which have not been taken into account. Among their concerns were:

1. **Value for money** – Motability Operations exceeded its profit targets (planned and unplanned). It had also made a substantial donation to Motability charity, without which the profit would be even bigger.

This discussion was also linked to the level of executive pay and bonuses again, without which, would have made the profits greater. During the discussion on executive pay there was a strong belief that past pay and probably future pay - which is ultimately derived from disabled peoples' benefits - would remain excessive and should be set at more appropriate levels.

It was stated that Disability Equality Scotland's weekly snapshot poll found that 98% of 400 respondents shared these concerns.

There was also discussions that confirmed that Motability had not planned for the transitions from Disability Living Allowance (DLA) to Personal Independence Payments (PIP) and again it was stated that as Motability had substantially financed transition packages (without this

being part of their financial projections) this again would have led to further unplanned profits.

It was also stated that as the DLA to PIP transferrals conclude this level of financial support would not be required hence generating even greater profits if the underlying business model did not change.

Questions were asked such as:

- Is it right that disabled peoples benefits should contribute to such surplus?
- What is going to happen to £400 million donation?
- How is it going to be spent?
- Will it be spent on the people who have contributed to the scheme?
- Should that money be accumulated in the first place?
- How will customers, people with disabilities and/or disabled people's organisations be involved in the decision making process of how the funds are used?

During the roundtable there was little response to these issues other than deference to the decisions being made by Motability Trustees, which appeared to be in isolation and without active consultation or engagement with Motability customers or stakeholders.

There was a view by those in attendance (with the exception of Motability) that the excess profits made by Motability operations, even if passed on to the Charity, are effectively a compulsory surcharge, or 'charity tax', on Motability customers. As such, some participants felt that any benefits from this fund should be restricted to those who have contributed to it, although others disagreed.

2. **Service in Scotland** - Customer views: Questions were raised regarding:

- What is the level of service, customer satisfaction in Scotland and the pattern of uptake to the scheme?
- Why was there very little information obtained or published based on geographical usage?
- Have rural areas in Scotland (and customers differing needs) been taken into account?
- How do we know that the needs of Scottish Customers?

- Can more information be gathered about how many are happy with the scheme in Scotland?

It was noted that the levels of customer satisfaction with Motability are reportedly exceptionally high, with their market research claiming that it is consistently at 98%.

However, this seems at odds with the personal experience expressed by many Motability customers, for example dissatisfaction with the service at dealerships.

The conclusion being that insights and understanding of customer experience at the 'coal face' are not well communicated through the Motability system, from the customer experience at the dealership through to the Motability Operations management and on to the Motability charity.

On probing by MACS it became apparent that Motability customer satisfaction of 98% was based on a survey of 600 of Motability's over 600,000-plus customers. This is less than 0.01% of their customers. The group were fairly shocked to learn this and fairly critical of this fact.

The use of a telephone survey method was criticised for failing to be inclusive and potentially putting pressure on customers to answer positively in fear of losing their vehicles and benefits. DPOs reported a perception amongst disabled people that Motability is "run" by the Department of Work and Pensions and people stated this as reason for not complaining as it may lead to a benefits review.

Further concerns were raised by DPOs that many Motability customers had been told by dealership staff that a good satisfaction survey would ensure the return of the good condition bonus for their vehicle (£500). These concerns were raised verbally and in the DES Poll. The poll and comments are attached as Appendix 2.

Motability's representatives did not accept that Scottish customers had any unique challenges or characteristics beyond those faced by the customer base as a whole. However, many issues faced by Scottish customers were raised (noted later in this report).

3. What is the future of Motability in Scotland? Some of the areas that attendees asked to be considered included:

- The current 3 years lease (could shorter or longer be considered)?
- The level of and reduction of advance payments, including asking if advances payments could be reduced and made consistent, especially between manual and automatic vehicles and for hybrids?
- Linking good condition bonus to the future advances payments and the return of advanced payments at lease end.
- How will Motability develop its service moving forward?
- What does the future hold and how does Motability intend to continue i.e. will it be the same, can customers be meaningfully consulted?
- Is the pattern of dealerships, and choice of suitable vehicles adequate across Scotland (we understand that for example, there are none in Orkney, but three in Shetland)?
- Can the number of dealers offering 'Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles' be increased (there appears to be only one for all of Scotland)?
- What are the views of people who lease scooters, wheelchairs, etcetera through the scheme (not investigated by NAO)?
- Could the scheme fund cycles or wheelchair "add-ons" for those that consider them a mobility aid that could assist with active travel?
- Members who live in remote areas or on island have added expenses bringing vehicles in for service and repair.

The representatives from Motability agreed to take these questions away confirming that they were in a transition period and that it was good to hear these questions being raised.

Action: The discussion Chair (Linda Bamford) gained agreement to meet again, as a stakeholder group, to follow up on these issues with the representatives from Motability. A timeframe of 6-9 months to meet again was agreed

4. **Accountability and Governance** – Questions were raised regarding:

- How could Motability customers in Scotland influence the scheme? Pointing out that there should be more people representative of Motability's customer base appointed to Board.
- Asking for confirmation on how people are appointed for Motability Charity, or Motability Operation.
- How Motability approach the need to be accountable to their users?

- How are trustee vacancies filled and does the recruitment reflect the recommendations of Lord Holmes.

It was confirmed that Motability accepted the findings of the governance review, however the recommendations were not published resulting in customers being unaware of what will happen and if the recommendation had been implemented to drive improvements. Motability confirmed that they would not share the governance review recommendations with stakeholders or customers.

MACS view is that the Board of Motability needs to be more diverse including the gender balance, representation from BEM, Trustees from Scotland and Wales and Trustees representative of their customer base.

5. **Change** – The NAO said Motability needs to change and it would be good to hear from representatives how this will come about. It was noted that Motability has accepted all the recommendations of NAO Report and the recommendations from their governance review albeit there was an unwillingness to share the governance review recommendations and as such an inability to confirm when they had been implemented.

6. Update from Motability

Paul Atkinson from Motability gave an overview of the scheme and a presentation. This was to raise awareness not to address the concerns raised by MACS. The following was covered.

Background

- Motability is a national charity set up in 1977.
- The Motability Scheme enables disabled people to use government funded mobility allowances to lease a new car, powered wheelchair or scooter.
- Currently over 625,00 disabled people use the Motability Scheme.
- The benefits that can be used to pay for the Motability Scheme are:
 1. Higher Rate Mobility Component of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)
 2. Enhanced Rate of Mobility Component of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
 3. War Pensioners' Mobility Supplement (WPMS)
 4. Armed Forces Independence Payment (AFIP)

How the Scheme Works

- Customers choose to use their qualifying allowance to meet the cost of having a car, powered wheelchair or scooter.
- Non-drivers can lease a car as a passenger.
- Parents or carers can also apply on behalf of a child aged 3 or above.
- Customers lease a new car for 3 years with insurance, road tax servicing tyres breakdown cover included
- A wide range of adaptations and wheelchair accessible vehicles are available
- A similar Contract Hire Scheme is available for people who wish to lease a scooter or powered wheelchair instead.
- The scheme is directed and overseen by Motability, a registered charity, and administered on a contract basis by Motability Operations
- The scheme works closely with all major manufacturers and is supported by a network of more than 4,500 dealers across the UK.

- Other key suppliers include adaptations and conversion companies, and providers of insurance, roadside recovery and tyre replacement.

How the Motability Scheme Delivers Value for Money

The aim is: affordable, worry free motoring for customers. The Scheme benefits from:

1. Scale and purchasing power from vehicles, insurance etcetera
2. Zero rated VAT on cars leased by the Scheme
3. Direct receipt of the customer's mobility allowance from the Government

Motability Scheme Operational Objectives

- To provide value for money
- To ensure sustainability and stability of the Scheme
- To operate efficiently and deliver a cost effective proposition.
- To provide a universal service offering, accessible to all recipients of the qualifying allowance, regardless of their personal circumstances, location or means
- To provide customers with the choice of a wide range of vehicles at consistently competitive and affordable prices
- To deliver excellent customer service and to understand how disability affects customers' needs
- To provide customers with worry free mobility through an all inclusive leasing package

The Impact of PIP on the Motability Scheme

- Over 195,00 customers have joined the Scheme using a PIP award
 - 136,000 customers reassessed from DLA to PIP have retained the upper level of mobility support.
 - 104,000 customers reassessed from DLA to PIP who have not retained the upper level of mobility support and as a result have to leave the scheme. Of these 11,000 have since re-joined the scheme following a successful reconsideration or appeal.
 - 39% of customers reassessed have had to leave the Scheme.
- DLA to PIP Transition Support

Customers who joined Scheme before the end of 2012:

- a. If a car is returned within 8 weeks of DLA payments ending the customer will receive Transitional Support Payment (TSP) of £2,000 or
- b. If car is returned within 26 weeks of DLA payments ending the customer will receive TSP of £500.

Customers who joined Scheme during 2013:

- a. If car is returned within 8 weeks of DLA payment ending the customers will receive TSP of £1,000, or
- b. Car returned within 26 weeks of DLA payments ending will the customer will receive TSP of £250

For customers who joined the Scheme after 2013 if car is returned within 8 weeks of DLA payments ending the customer is not eligible for a transition support payment.

National Audit Office Review- Recommendations

Motability should:

- a) Develop and publish a long-term strategy. It is to set out how it should spend the significant income it expects to continue to receive from Motability Operations to best use.
- b) Address all of the findings of its recent governance review and report transparently on the changes it makes as a result. It should publish an update on this in early 2020, once all changes have been implemented.
- c) Commission external benchmarking on the level of reserves held at Motability Operations based on comparable companies in similar industries on a global basis, both regulated and unregulated. Such benchmarking should go beyond establishing adequacy and should also assess how conservative the level is relative to that held by the company's peers.
- d) Carry out a review of the performance framework for the scheme, recognising that it is in a uniquely advantaged position and that targets, including those linked to Motability Operations' executive directors' remuneration, have continuously been exceeded for many years.

Motability Operations should:

e) Provide greater ongoing transparency through its annual report and accounts about the total value of the performance bonuses it pays to its executive directors, including the cumulative value of its long term incentive plans, and performance criteria used to determine these bonuses.

f) Review its approach to forecasting to understand why it has consistently underestimated profit over the last decade, so that it can better plan for the future distributions of profit.

The Government should:

g) Review the value and impact of the support it provides for the scheme at an appropriate frequency, in light of its overarching objectives for mobility allowances.

h) Work with Motability and Motability Operations to enhance promotion of the scheme, and to support more extensive research into eligible people who do not use the scheme.

7. Summary

Motability is a success story but there are identified issues around value for money, excessive profits, governance and accountability, transparency, meeting customers' needs and meaningful engagement to inform their strategy and planning moving forward.

Motability and Motability Operations are aware of and looking at these issues as a result of a governance review and a review conducted by the National Audit Office.

At the roundtable discussion, representative from Motability agreed with attendees that good and effective communication is key.

There is definite customer and stakeholder confusion regarding the relationship with Motability the charity and Motability. More needs to be done to emphasise the difference that one provides vehicles and is a charity and is an entity in its own right. Many of the important areas covered by Motability and Motability Operations are unknown to customers and this type of information has to be disseminated. Ways to achieve this and improve customer engagement should be looked at.

The current customer satisfaction measures have little meaning, are not inclusive and should be developed with Motability customers to ensure areas of greatest importance to customers are measured. Customer satisfaction surveys needs to reach more than 0.01% of their customers.

Motability are going to work to enhance the promotion of the scheme and support more extensive research into eligible people who do not use the scheme as this currently sits at approximately two thirds of people that are eligible choosing not to use the Motability Scheme for their vehicles.

Motability has accepted the recommendations of the governance review and is moving towards implementing these recommendations with 24 of the 44 recommendations having already been implemented.

However, Motability will not share these recommendations so successful implementation is hard to measure and adds to the lack of transparency around the organisations.

The Motability representatives considered all these comments to be worthwhile and would take them back for consideration.

There were suggestions from various groups on how to apply the recent donation from Motability Operations, these included:

Adaptations for disabled people not on the scheme. They could aim to assist people who do not benefit from the scheme (because they don't want to or have lost qualification to the scheme) by giving grants for adaptations to their own existing cars e.g. hand and foot controls, hoists.

Reducing advanced payments. The scheme is obviously generating more profits than planned and these profits could be used to off-set advanced payments particularly for motability customers requiring automatic vehicles due to their disability.

Supporting disabled people e.g. regarding hate crime. Disabled people can be targeted. A third party reporting centre could be established, or information leaflets and signposting to nearest 3rd Party Reporting Centre could be available in all Motability dealerships. This would involve raising awareness of 3rd Party Reporting within dealerships. It was also suggested that some of the money could be used to make a positive campaign around disabled people, led by DPOs. It was felt there was considerable negative aspects around disabled people and accessible transport e.g. around the use of blue badges and parking and with dealerships and motability customers.

Improving communication. Dealerships could have stands with information leaflets. There is a newsletter for people who are part of the scheme but disabled people who are not part of the scheme do not benefit from this. Could organisations, including Scottish DPOs, be put on the mailing list?

Involving motability customers in the design and delivery of dealership training.

Involving motability customers in the design of satisfaction surveys and employing disabled people to conduct the surveys.

Leasing more than one item. Could you open up an opportunity to lease more than one item? e.g. a car and a powered wheel chair?

At the end of the meeting, Motability announced that they were planning to open an office in Scotland. This had not been made public previously.

As stated previously Motability is in a transitional period and it was decided that this group should reconvene in 6-9 months to reassess the position. Motability representatives indicated that they would be delighted to attend.

Appendix 1 - Record of question and answer

Concerns over the Satisfaction Survey Questions

Qu. Concerns were raised over the veracity of the survey giving an overall satisfaction rate of 98%

Answer. Approximately 600 customers are surveyed every 6 months carried out by market researchers.

Some of the other points raised in discussion:

- Are there follow up surveys to obtain people's experience of complaints?
- Are they measuring the right things for customer satisfaction? i.e. samples of people at different stages of the lease procedure, what people need and want from the scheme?
- Are the 600 people anonymous?
- Why do they only survey 0.01% of their customers?
- Who designed the survey questions and what is asked?
- Why was only a telephone surveys method used with concerns raised around this not being inclusive?

Anecdotal evidence was given of users being told by dealerships when they went to renew their car, if they gave a good review that they would receive their good condition bonus.

Answers. This was news to Motability and they would take these comments and questions back with them. They advised that manufacturers also do surveys and this may be why the dealership said this.

Qu. What format does the survey take?

Answer. It is a telephone survey. It used to take 45 minutes, however, this has now been reduced to 30 minutes. The customer is asked if they are comfortable before they start and they can have an appointee complete the survey on their behalf if they wish.

It was pointed out that this mode of survey did not suit all impairment groups and was not inclusive and for many their preferred method to give feedback.

Motability agreed to take these comments away and investigate the situation.

Qu. Have the research questions been designed by disabled people at the concept stage or has it been designed by non-disabled people?

Answer: Motability designed it themselves. It was noted that IT systems had to be resolved to take account of disabled people and inclusive communication.

Group Questions

Qu. Motability is a cross border charity. Most of the big charities register in both Scotland and England. What oversight of the charity is there in Scotland?

Answer: Motability Operations dealership network deals with customers in Scotland. The charity is a national organisation but there is no office in Scotland, Northern Ireland or Wales and no intent to register with OSCR.

Qu. What happens if there is a complaint against the charity?

Answer: It would probably be dealt with by the English Charities Commission.

Qu. Most of the big charities register in both Scotland and England. Why not Motability? Is it just operational work or does the charity work in Scotland as well?

Answer: Motability sought legal advice. As there is no physical presence and they do not fund raise in Scotland they do not need to register in Scotland. The only charitable work they undertake in Scotland is to give Scottish people grants.

After note: It was noted that Motability sell fundraising raffle tickets in Scotland.

Qu. Are the board of governors satisfied with diversity?

Answer: The point was conceded that it needs to be more diverse with the board of Governors but this has to be tempered by also having the correct people on the board.

Qu. How do you get on to the board of Governors?

Answer: The nomination committee searches when there is a need for a new governor. They look for people who meet the specific requirements in order to obtain a wide range of skills. A recruitment consultant sources the candidates.

The nomination committee consist of current Trustees of the Board.

Qu. Should the board have regional representation? It was pointed out that Lord Homes report on the constitution of a charity board said it should be a representative of the general population and a representation of the people who use the service. Further it was pointed out that Scottish Government Boards have set a target of 50% male and 50% female members and that it was good to have a mechanism for customers to connect with the board.

Answer: Three of the governors have been or are customers. They are not there to represent customers although they are scheme users.

It was pointed out that the perception of customers is that the board of governors does not represent the customer base. The group strongly felt that there should be stronger links with people who are using the scheme, including a user rep(s) on the Board.

Motability noted this.

Qu. Many of the base level cars are not suitable for wheelchair users. There are very few automatic cars and people with spinal injuries need automatics with hand controls. How can Motability respond to this without charging high advanced payments?

Answer: Any manual vehicle should have the equivalent automatic available. The automatics are priced higher than manual cars but they should be available. It may be a supplier issue. Motability Operations want more automatic vehicles.

Qu. There have been experiences of dealerships saying that an automatic version of a particular vehicle was not available because they were too expensive. How does Motability Operations respond to this?

Answer: Motability Operations said that the advance payment goes up if it is an automatic car. This should be between £500- £750 at a push.

There was an example given of this being £2,000 and Motability Operations reiterated this should not be the case.

Qu. Many members need automatics due to their impairment and they feel that they are being penalised. The profit being made does not sit well with this. Will this be considered moving forward?

Answer: Through Motability (charity) the customer can apply for a grant for support payment. This is means tested. Group did comment that it seemed unfair to means test this when such high profits.

Comment from the Chair - Charitable grants were not readily known about and very restrictive including to older people in receipt of state pension only, as the state pension does not qualify for a means tested grant application. This is worrying given our ageing population and in failing to provide support for older people living on low or restricted incomes.

Answer: Motability will re-start a mailshot through the DWP to raise awareness of grants.

Qu. There are concerns being expressed at poor customer service experiences by Motability advisers in dealerships. Can Motability Operations respond to these concerns?

Answer: Accredited dealerships need to sign up to the provision of being an adviser regarding both vehicles and services. They are required to send people on a dedicated programme. It is an obligation to attend. Motability write all the training material but we are unclear whether we supplied all the training. Dealers are incentivised to attend customer service training.

Question: How is the training decided, designed and delivered? Is there input from disabled people as there are concerns about the quality of the training and how dealerships support disabled people? One

person's experience indicated that the salesman felt he had been demoted to be selling Motability cars.

Answer: If you give a list of the issues to Motability and they will respond. Motability Operations felt it was very advantageous to hear first-hand experiences. Motability asked if the customers had complained to Motability Operations?

Comment- No, the customer had no complained to the dealership as they didn't know how or who to complaint to.

Answer: Motability responded by advising that customers should complain in the first instance to the dealership and if they did not receive satisfaction from them they should contact Motability Operations.

Qu: Should some of the profits be invested in training?

It was expressed that the customer has no commercial relationship with the dealers and that they feel privileged to receive a Motability car and they do not want to complain. It was also pointed out that customers do not want to complain in fear that they will lose Motability and "they do not want to rock the boat". There is considerable confusion regarding the relationship between Motability and the Department of Works and Pension.

Qu. Why is the State Pension not treated as a benefit for Charitable Grants?

Answer: The charity has more money to spend on charitable grants but it needs to make sure that the money is used carefully. This results in the charitable grants being means tested. If you have a need for a wheelchair accessible vehicle and a state pension you can apply for a charitable grant. You are not automatically entitled to receive it and your income will be means tested but you can apply to see if you meet the criteria. Note: The criterion is in receipt of benefit and the state pension is not deemed a means tested benefit.

Qu. How much are you prepared to find out about the customer base in Scotland?

Answer: This was the beginning of hopefully making good progress by meeting people today, however, Scotland could not be favoured over others but it should be looked at.

Note: There was no acceptance that Scottish customers have any challenges or characteristics that are different to the rest of the UK customer base as a whole.

Qu. The needs of Scottish motability customers outside towns and cities have to be considered. Rural Scotland has limited dealerships and there are limited suitable vehicles for some rural terrain. There are also disparities e.g. no dealerships in Orkney but three in Shetland. Can there be some sort of relationship with local garages?

Answer: Motability Operations thought that there was some sort of special relationship with islands. They will check the position.

Qu. The surplus, in planned and unplanned profits, is coming from the Motability customers so why should this not be used to assist Motability customers.

Answer: There are two elements to the funding stream

- Price driven by volume purchasing power and this gives the customer good value, and
- VAT concession

The Trustees of Motability will be deciding where money will be spent and this will not necessarily all be on Motability customers. It is the Board decision where to spend the profits and likewise with the Motability Charity.

Appendix 2 – Disability Equality Scotland weekly poll on Motability

Overview

Disability Equality Scotland is a national charity working to achieve full access and inclusion for disabled people in Scotland.

We promote access in its widest sense. This includes access to the built and natural environment and access to the same opportunities as are enjoyed by others in our communities thus promoting a life of dignity, respect and independence. This extends beyond physical access to include access to information, access to inclusive communication and inclusion in decision-making, whether with planners over inclusive design or transport providers about accessible travel.

Our aim is for every disabled person to have the opportunity to participate in a fulfilling life and for their voice(s) to be heard.

We represent the views of individuals with any type of impairment, as well as disability organisations and groups who share our values.

We are a membership organisation and as such listen to the views of disabled people and champion on their behalf. We work to influence the policies of the Scottish Government, which affect how disabled people live, and work to encourage others to be inclusive and informed in their attitudes towards disabled people.

We are also the umbrella organisation for all disability Access Panels in Scotland and the principal provider of support and guidance to the Access Panels presently representing disabled persons at a local level throughout Scotland. Access Panels are committed to improving access and equality in its widest form, which means access to the physical environment, Education, Housing, Health, Transport, Leisure & Recreation and Social Justice amongst other areas.

Roundtable meeting 5 March 2019

Disability Equality Scotland received an invitation to attend a roundtable discussion by the Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) on the topic of Motability. We know our members are users of the scheme and upon reading the briefing notes associated with the National Audit Office report, we felt it important to gather the views of our members.

We ran a weekly poll question, whereby a simple 'yes or no' question was sent to our membership. The question was informed by the briefing notes and read, "Are you concerned by the high level of reserves (£2.62 billion), CEO salary (£1.7 million) and bonuses (approximately £2 million) of Motability's commercial arm, Motability Operations?"

We received an overwhelming response, with our highest ever number of respondents to a poll (392 respondents) demonstrating how much of an emotive subject this is for our membership. The results were as follows:

- YES – 98% (384 respondents)
- NO – 2% (8 respondents)

In summary

Overwhelmingly, our members did not agree with the unjustified levels of executive pay and bonuses associated with Motability Operations. Our members were particularly concerned and, in some cases, angered on a number of points:

- That the high salaries and bonuses are funded from disabled people's benefits, when many disabled people are struggling to make ends meet.
- There was a strong view that Motability is taking advantage of disabled people's need for a car by charging customers significantly more for leases than was necessary.
- The vast amount of reserves should be used to reduce the costs to disabled people of using the scheme.
- A concern that Motability staff are not in touch with the needs (and challenges) of disabled people, particularly in Scotland and that now benefits have been devolved, there is perhaps a stronger argument for Social Security Scotland to be involved.

- A view that there needs to be far stronger governance and accountability for this level of spending, with specific reference to the Scottish Government stepping in to have a stronger governance role in the running of Motability or a Motability Service for Scottish customers.

Some of the key comments made by our members:

“Disgraceful display of greed. Think what a difference this money could make to disabled people’s lives.”

“Shocking abuse of peoples benefits to pay extortionate salaries. I always thought Mobility was a charity or non-profit making but hearing this scandal I won’t be renewing my lease.”

“Unfortunately I have to use Motability as I wouldn’t get credit for a vehicle as on ESA. That doesn’t mean they should be allowed to abuse the fact that I have no options and make this profit from me. Wish I could leave but I feel trapped due to income.”

“The money being spent on ludicrous salaries and bonus should be used to reduce lease costs and abolish advanced payments.”

“One of the Directors of Motability (Dr S Duckworth) has said they intend spending the profits they have made from the lease charges to Motability customer on people who are not Motability customers. This is not acceptable and they have no right to take from us to give to others.”

“Motability are out of touch with the needs of Scottish customers. I phoned to ask about dealers for Wheelchair Accessible Vehicles and told yes they had them in Scotland and my nearest was Newcastle!”

“Motability needs a total overhaul of governance with a better representation of their customers on their board. I noticed none of the governors are from a low income or working class background and this is evident in how out of touch they are with the needs and struggles of disabled people.”

“The Scottish Government should run its own scheme "Motability Scotland" and I have every confidence that would do a far better job and ensure that only disabled people benefitted from the scheme.”

In conclusion

Overall our members felt that Motability have been unaccountable for too long and have abused the payments they receive through disability benefits. This has allowed them to pay large and unjustified salaries and build up a bank of reserves, instead of reducing payments for disabled people. There was a strong view that the Scottish Government should step in, and set up a system for Scotland to work in partnership with the new devolved social security arrangements.

Appendix 1: Full comments from weekly poll question

The following shows the full comments from 184 of the respondents who chose to qualify their response with a comment.

‘Are you concerned by the high level of reserves (£2.62billion), CEO salary (£1.7million) and bonuses (approximately £2 million) of Motability’s commercial arm, Motability Operations?’

YES – 98% (384 respondents)

“How can this possibly be justified?”

“Disgraceful display of greed. Someone needs to be accountable for this level of spending. Think what a difference this money could make to disabled people’s lives.”

“I have just read the audit office review and Motability response to the findings and it appears they are more focussed on hiding things and defending these obscene salaries and the lack of governance than actually making the changes required. The current Chair isn’t going to accept the need for change and change things. He needs to go to let someone new manage the charity and implement the changes needed.”

“Disgusting level of greed. Whoever is responsible for allowing this needs to be removed from position immediately and the CEO should be ashamed.”

“The CEO salary and bonus is a ridiculous use of charity money and should be under severe scrutiny and stopped. It is an abuse of charity income no one deserves over 2 million in income.”

“Disabled people benefits come from tax-payers money. This level of salary and bonuses should not be allowed to be paid as the organisation is wholly funded from disabled people’s benefits. Shocking greed. The government need to fix this. If not the UK government then the Scottish Government should fix it for mobility customers is Scotland.”

“Disgraceful use of people’s benefits.”

“I won’t be renewing my car if this is where my money is going.”

“I was told by the salesman when I went for my new car that if I gave him an excellent review he would ensure I got my good condition bonus back. I did to get my money as he stood over me while I filled in the survey but this type of pressure no doubt skews the satisfaction percentages.”

“The CEO and Chair of Motability need to resign and someone needs to go in and fix the governance.”

“Abuse of Motability cars. For example, people who live in a care home while their parents use that person’s car for their own needs. Meanwhile The disabled persons funds pay for a taxi so the disabled person can go out. I’ve witnessed this scenario and know it happens a lot.”

“I wouldn’t take my scheme car but I live in an area that has no bus service and taxis are too expensive. I also don’t have a high enough income to get finance for a car. This doesn’t mean I should get charged more by a charity than it costs to provide my car. Motability should not be looking to make profits or pay these extortionate salaries and bonuses to its staff.”

“They should be ashamed of themselves.”

“This is a disgraceful use of people benefits.”

“The Scottish Government need to fix this for people in Scotland. I was involved in the experience panels that were used to set up benefits that have been devolved. They did an excellent job with this and our social security system is way better than south of the border. They can do the same with the car scheme.”

“Shocking abuse of people’s benefits to pay extortionate salaries. I always thought Mobility was a charity or non-profit making but hearing this scandal I won’t be renewing my lease.”

“Yes and they should be concerned too!”

“These salaries are obscene. Charity status and government support is meant to be for assisting people that need it not lining the pockets of fat cats. I would love to see them try to manage on the income people who are disabled get.”

“Having read through the audit office review it is clear that there needs to be much more transparency and better governance around this and that government (UK or Scottish) need to have a stronger role to avoid this level of internal corruption.”

“This is disgraceful.”

“Could the experience panels used for devolved benefits be used to sort the lease scheme next?”

“This is blatant misuse of our money and the pay and bonus is disgusting considering our benefits are paying this.”

“With the Scottish SG and Scottish Social Security Commission now being formed should they not be responsible for a scheme for Scotland?”

“What are the government doing? This is scandalous and an abuse of disabled people’s benefit.”

“This scheme should almost run itself with guaranteed income from benefit payments and existing long-term relationships with all the car manufacturers and importers in the UK. A retired CEO or similar could do it on a voluntary basis.”

“The amount of money held in reserve is obscene. I understand that the CEO should receive a salary commensurate with the role and that a bonus is standard practice for executives, but both the salary and bonus seem excessive. I'm also concerned by the large 4-figure advance payments required on many medium- to family-sized cars. Could some of the bonus money or reserve money be used to offset this? I rely on

my car to be able to leave the house but having to find the funds to pay a four-figure sum every three years is hard and I know I'm not alone in this. Motability is a good scheme, but the salaries and bonuses, the cash reserve and the demands made on service users all require reassessing.”

“The board responsible for allowing this salary and bonus and the overcharging that has accumulated this level of reserves a compliant in the mi management of the charity. They should stand down or be removed. This isn't clever business. This is mis-management and over charging disabled customers. Their competitive lease cost is due to the tax breaks and government support they receive so why is the CEO getting a bonus for mismanagement and why are they board allowing this?”

“The money being down on ludicrous salaries and bonus should be used to reduce lease costs and abolish advanced payments.”

“I have noticed Motability are trying to defend their greed by stating they have a 99% satisfaction. When I get a new vehicle my dealer always says if I give a positive review of his service he will make sure I get my good condition bonus. Is this where they are measured customer satisfaction? if so then it is being manipulated by sales staff to get good results. I have had 3 mobility cars and this has been said to me at every exchange by the car dealership sales staff. I have gave a positive review to get my money back as it was suggested that if I did I would be more likely to get my good condition bonus. In hindsight this is fraud and manipulating satisfaction levels.”

“Why do people have to exchange their allowances for a car or scooter is there no some way with the vast amount of reserves that a disabled person can be allowed to keep the benefit they're entitled to as well as if depending on criteria the person can be entitled to a car or scooter. The chief executive of mobility operations is on a whopping amount of a salary. Does he own a car and is he disabled? Where does fair come into this. People with disabilities suffer enough and face enough difficulties. Give them a chance, give them their rights, their equal rights and no more discrimination!”

“Only real advantage is insurance as it is now cheaper to lease a car through normal channels. What are reserves held for? Lack of

automatics is disgraceful as majority of spinally injured people need hand controls.”

“The base level vehicles are crap and not suitable for most people. Sort this and it will improve customer satisfaction.”

“We have had discussion on one of our disability forums and people thought that the Scottish Government would take over the Scottish element of the scheme when benefits were devolved. We feel they would do a better job and certainly be more transparent, not allow such ridiculous salaries and ensure better governance arrangements were in place including being registered with OSCR.”

“Could the reserves be used to return advanced payments to customers?”

“It seems there are a lot less automatic medium sized cars available unless you have the money to pay a high non -refundable up front payment. To discover that there are £billions in reserve and £millions paid to executives it seems a rather strange way to run a "charity" which is meant to benefit those with specific needs.”

“I would love to hear the justification for such high salaries and reserves.”

“Yes, some outrageous numbers for running a 'charity' where the money should be heading toward those it was intended for.”

“These are extraordinary figures. What is the charity protecting against? Are CEOs for charitable concerns so hard to come by?”

“I have been upset and angry at the attitude of the Chair of Motability. This man is so out of touch with the disabled people’s needs. In saying that the CEO of the scheme isn’t much better considering the salary he takes and his bonus. I wonder how much they would have in reserves if they paid an honest salary with no bonuses, no charity donations from the schemes profits and no back handlers to dealers. This is the tip of the iceberg and the attitude of the Chair, Directors and CEO smacks of a cover up. Total Lack of transparency when it should all be above board and transparent if their wanting to help disabled people. I have shared this with my disability group and hope they will all respond as we have

been talking about this for months now and we are all angry and the Mia management of such a valuable scheme.”

“I am a wheelchair user and I also use a mobility scooter. I can never get a car that is suitable to carry my kit without paying over and above the basic lease cost at the start of each lease. You never get this money back and over an average lease your benefits pay over £7,000 in lease costs and they benefit from the low mileage resale. Your mileage is capped or you are penalised so Motability get a higher resale value.”

“I think this salary is far too much especially since the money is coming via profits made from car leases.”

“The Motability scheme is a vital lifeline for those of us with paralysis who require adaptations to our vehicles, and the worry-free motoring that such a lease scheme allows. However, to think that we have to scrimp and save for a huge initial payment for a car (automatic transmissions always demand a more expensive initial payment - if you're paralysed you can't drive a manual - go figure!) not to mention the massive initial costs of a WAV... all the while these bonuses are going straight to the pockets of those at the top? It's sickening! The Motability Scheme needs a total overhaul - we can't access affordable adaptations during the lease (disabilities aren't always static, but if your needs change, impacting the adaptations needed how can Motability justify it being £9 at the start of a lease for a transfer plate yet over £400 during the lease?!) and if we want to extend the lease (because the vehicle is suitable for our needs, has been well maintained and has a low mileage; who wouldn't want to extend it?!) the extension isn't reflected in the monthly payment: Motability still takes the entire benefit amount, and doesn't refund any of the initial payment to reflect the extension... now we know why though don't we; there are executive pockets' to fill! We need a government enquiry to explain how this has been allowed to happen and to assess how initial payments for those of us with the need of an adapted vehicle can be reduced. There are “disabilities” that qualify for this scheme by way of having access to Enhanced or Higher Rate PIP/DLA - but very few of them actually require fixed adaptations to the vehicle. Those of us who have need of fixed adaptations are at a financial disadvantage compared to those customers for the reasons listed above - Motability Ops could make a start to righting their wrongs by making the scheme more affordable for customers like us.”

“I’m watching the Martin Lewis show wondering if he can get people back PPI can he get us back our over payments on our leases which have funded these salaries etc.”

“I have had a letter stating that Motability will automatically get this years increase on my pip which if between £15-£20 a month. This should be paid to me not them. I have already agreed my lease payment as all my existing benefit and if I didn’t get more PIP then there would be nothing to take so the finance can’t be based on this.”

“I though Scotland would have it own scheme now that PIP has been devolved.”

“I seen news of this a couple of months ago and assumed it was the tabloids exaggerating. Has since learned that is it actual and evidenced fact. This level of salary and the bonuses are shocking and disgraceful.”

“I need an automatic due to nerve damage from a spinal injury. They are never available unless you pay an advanced payment and this is unfair.”

“I can’t get my wheelchair into any of the cars available without a down payment so always end up having to use my saving to get a car that takes my chair. This is frustrating especially when you see the money being wasted.”

“These are shocking salaries and profits being made from disabled people. Motability should be ashamed.”

“Unfortunately I have to use Motability as I wouldn’t get credit for a vehicles as on ESA. That doesn’t mean they should be allowed to abuse the fact that I have no options and make this profit from me. Wish I could leave but I feel trapped due to income.”

“I am glad Spinal Injuries Scotland shared this poll to let me have my say. I need my wheelchair for independence and the base cars are never big enough or have enough storage for my wheelchair meaning I always have to throw money down the drain on advanced payment to get a car that works for me. I am angered that I am scrapping together advances payments on top of my monthly PIP all being taken and Motability are paying these salaries and bonuses and accumulating so much of disabled people money in profits. As a charity should they not

have lower salaries and be not for profit especially when all their funding is direct from disabled people.”

“I am interrogated as to what my needs are to get help towards paying a ridiculous deposit amount for the cheapest car that meets my needs. They like to remind you that they are a charity and can't help everyone. Strikes me that they could with all the money being reserved and given out in bonuses.”

“They could charge less for the vehicles.”

“Why are the salaries so high? Why, why, why?”

“I have just received the lifestyle magazine as a I have a Motability vehicle. One of the Directors of Motability (Dr S Duckworth) has said they intent spending the profits they have made from the lease charges to Motability customer on people who are not Motability customers. This is not acceptable and they have no right to take from us to give to other of their choice.”

“Motability are out of touch with the needs of Scottish customers. I phoned to ask about dealers for. WAV and told yes they had them in Scotland and my nearest was Newcastle.”

“Is the Scottish Parliament responsible for this mess and if not can the Scottish Government step in? These salaries and bonus are disgusting. Motability cars are paid from disabled folks benefits and this money should not be getting used to pay salaries and bonuses of this level. Is this the same as all the MPs sanctioning and reducing disability benefits then claiming hundreds of thousand of pounds a year in expenses for themselves. We know who are the scrounges here.”

“Shame on Motability and Motability Operations. This is a scandal.”

“These funds should be being used to reduce the costs of WAVs got those with more severe physical disabilities.”

“Absolute disgrace that people with disabilities fork out the level of upfront payments when Motability is making obscene profits like this. Surely, they should be investigated by the monopolies commission. Senior managers have easily achievable targets for which they receive

huge bonuses, no wonder when there's no competition! Time for an overhaul.”

“These figures are far too high. Of course there should be a comfortable level of reserves, but this is not acceptable.”

“Why can't people over 65 qualify???”

“My lease renewal is due September 2019 and knowing the findings of the NAO Report I will not be renewing my lease. I am fortunate enough to be able to have enough money to go it alone and I know from my network that many people default to a Motability car because they can't afford a car any other way because of their low income, lack of savings or poor credit history. My reason for not renewing my lease is because I don't want to be part of a charity that abuses their remit and preys on people with disabilities. I would suggest that this is also why around 60% of disabled people who are eligible DO NOT take up the scheme. It's more attractive to people who have no options and unfortunately the Governors of Motability and CEO of Motability Operations are using this vulnerability to line their own pockets. Government needs to address this and ensure customers do not get ripped off because of their vulnerability and to line the pockets of Governors and senior managers of Motability. This should be a not for profit government scheme with salaries that reflect a civil servants pay scale.”

“Disgusting use of people's DLA. The CEO and his boss should be ashamed.”

“Absolutely, why do people, in this sector, need bonuses like that.”

“It's a disgrace. This money only comes from over charging/not passing on discounts to the most needy. Disgusting!”

“Could & should do much more for disabled drivers e.g. waive fees on autos required rather than choice; waive WAV fees; widen grant criteria so more qualify.”

“Fantastic scheme but some MP needs to push for a more robust enquiry into the finances and salaries we always hear outcry on the news about fat cats in industry but this is a charity funded by government, taxpayers and peoples hard earned money.”

“This is totally unacceptable and appalling.”

“Money and power. Both ingredients of greed. The excuse is that the CEO works hard for his money. Don't we all? I don't get a bonus of £1.86million. What does he do with all this money? Oh, that's right, hoard it and keep yourself in luxury. Sad.”

“As a long time Motability scheme user, I appreciate the advantages, but with these levels of pay and reserves, must question if the deposits and cost of adaptations or WAV prices are as low as they could be.”

“Thought the Motability scheme was to benefit disabled people not these unscrupulous scroungers living the high life off peoples disability benefits.”

“I had to hand my car back because it took all my DLA and I couldn't afford petrol and it annoys me that my rental costs could have been reduced rather than pay these high salaries and bonuses and build their bank accounts up!”

“Shocking salary & bonuses, it is an obscenely disgraceful, all the time we are asked to fundraise for this charity, we would buy any raffle tickets we couldn't sell out of our benefits never again!!!”

“Automatics, estates and cross over cars should be available without a down payment as this is what wheelchair users and people with poor mobility need.”

“Disgusting. Pass the money back or why don't they reduce the lease or at least give a better service.”

“Great scheme which kept my gran mobile.”

“If Motability think they are providing such a good service, why do so many people who are eligible not take a Motability car? Maybe because it's money down the drain and as this information shows that money every month if funding these huge salaries and bonuses.”

“I need a WAV to get some independence back but can afford the advanced payment so stuck in the house unless someone can take me out. Make my blood boils that managers are getting paid all this money and they have so much stashed away and they won't help me get a

WAV because my wife works. We have no spare money every month as I get my PIP because of my wife's earnings. So unfair. Who needs over £2million a year as a salary!"

"I Am a Motability customer and I am shocked and angered that this is what my benefits are being used for while I struggle to make ends meet."

"This is very concerning and these levels of pay and bonuses are a disgrace for an organisation that is meant to help disabled people."

"I think the Motability scheme is as corrupt as the managers taking the big bonus. A good few people who have cars are not disabled enough to get the benefit and people who need it are totally means tested and get rejected."

"The Motability scheme should be, in no way whatsoever, tied to the abysmal PIP system. What if you need adaptations but have your PIP taken away? Also, the wheelchair aspect of it should be more freely available, as other providers have much less options and are often very expensive Motability should be disabled people led and function much in the way that disabled peoples organisations function, should be devolved to local level Motability should be devolved to Scotland."

"How is this level of pay and bonuses justifies and who sets the level?"

"Who agrees and approves this level of pay and reserves?"

"These reserves would be better used belong and caring for people on disability."

"That's obscene surplus could be spent elsewhere to help disability services and older people's services or used in a more environmentally friendly way to assisted transportation."

"They are obviously receiving too much income to have reserves of that level. As they are a charity, should that money not be used to support people with disabilities - many are struggling to get by on a daily basis."

"This is a corrupt organisation, never wanted a Motability vehicle despite being eligible, too much evidence out there of their dodgy methods of working and a lot of very unhappy people. Who has allowed this individual this salary in the first place and who has sanctioned this bonus plus who has allowed this corruption to amass such reserves? Those in

the Government responsible need sacking and all pension rights lost as does the individual in Motability. Should also face prosecution.”

“Lord Sterling is an arrogant upper class example of the people who should not be involved in supporting disabled people as he is so out of touch. Watching him give evidence he has no remorse for this contempt and the poor governance and is solely focussed on protecting “jobs for the boys” including why they are allowed to self-appoint to their board with governors in the pals club and from the House of Lords. This board does not have the ability to represent the customers. Posh boys stealing our money.”

“Can Scotland not run its own scheme now that we have social security Scotland?”

“Given that the Motability scheme is for disabled people, are these people not embarrassed to take this salary and bonus out of the pockets of disabled people.”

“I am a Motability customer and value the service but I am not happy at the salaries and bonuses being paid from my money. Very unsatisfied customer.”

“I would say what a joke but this is far from funny.”

“This is shameful. The board of Motability need to stand down or be removed.”

“I have met Linda Bamford a few times and she is the Chair of Disability Scotland and Spinal Injuries Scotland. She also Chairs MACS. I have every confidence in her to do the right thing to protect the interest of disabled people in Scotland. She volunteers many hours to make improvements and help disabled people in Scotland and is always down to earth and honest. Never makes a promise she doesn't deliver. I am sure she would be Chair of a notability Scotland as a volunteer and make sure we get a good service and our money doesn't get used to support huge salaries and bonuses. Lind Bamford is disabled, honest, hardworking and comes from a working class background. She uses what she has learned from being disabled to help others and always listens and appreciates our needs.”

“I have spoken to my DPO about this to see if they can do anything as this is shocking. I will also be speaking to my MSP about this.”

“This is not an acceptable use of disabled people money.”

“Scotland can do and is better than this! Why is this being allowed to happen. Please help protect us.”

“Fix this Nicola Sturgeon and make this one of your flagship policies like you did with social security reform and the concessionary card for disabled and older people.”

“The Chairman, governors of notability and Amber Rudd need to be held accountable table for this disgrace.”

“Yes they provide a good service but evidence shows we are also paying through the nose for it to pay over the top salaries and bonuses.”

“Motability do not understand the type of car you need living in rural Scotland and the base level cars are not suitable.”

“I need an automatic car which isn’t covered in a base model so have to pay more on top of my monthly payments. If Motability are making so much profits then why not write off advanced payments. Not everyone can afford them which means some people can’t get cars that are fit for purpose.”

“Reading the NAO report and Lord Sterling arrogant attempts to be anything but transparent, why are we paying incentive to car dealership to buy from them especially as notability vehicles equate to 20% of the new cars bought in the UK yearly.”

“Why are we paying so much in advanced payments when the scheme is running at such a profit level. I need to lay an advanced Payment as the base level cars are not fit for purpose.”

“Scottish Ministers need to take this in hand and sort it for the people of Scotland.”

“If so much profit is being made why are the lease costs not being reduced to give some money back to customers?”

“This is a total disgrace.”

“Who has allowed this to happen? They should be sacked.”

“If we are over paying so much, evidenced by the ability to pay these types of salaries, bonuses and the reserves, then will our payments come down now?”

“Does this mean that we can get some money back from our PIP as we are clearly over paying?”

“I note that they have given £500m to a charity this year and notified them to expect the same each year. This is gross mismanagement and shows that even though they know how much profit they are making from disabled people, they have no intention of doing anything about it other than pay inflated salaries and bonuses and give the money away. Give it back to customers!! And reduce lease costs moving on!! I am so angry- how can we do something about this!”

“It is unfair that limited walkers get a car with little or no deposit but those that need adaptations (those with greater need and less likely to be earning a wage) have to pay huge amount of deposit to get a car suited to their needs which makes it almost impossible for them to use the scheme.”

“I think the scheme is great but surely the amounts given as salary’s and the reserves should be filtered down to the disabled who have to find sometimes quite large deposits for a suitable car.”

“If so much planned and unplanned profit is being made will lease costs be reduced and advanced payment abolished.”

“Will people receive refunds to distribute the £2.62 billion of reserves?”

“Will these salaries and bonuses be reduced and in line with public sector pay scales as the money comes from the public purse?”

“Use the money for what it was intended for.”

“What would they do without the vast tax exemptions they are getting and the monopolies? These tax exemptions are to assist with reducing the lease costs for disabled people not to build reserves and pay vastly over inflated salaries!”

“What is OSCR doing to protect Scottish people’s interests as this is meant to be a charity that benefits disabled people not over charges them to pay massive salaries and bonuses and build reserves while people go hungry, use foodbanks and stay at home because they can’t afford fuel to go out.”

“Our Scottish Government need to take over and provide a service for Scotland that doesn’t rip Disabled people of to pay fat cat salaries and provide jobs for the boys for their point of self-appointed governors.”

“This scheme us supposed to be a lifeline for those in need with sever mobility issues NOT to make people richer at the detriment of the scheme.”

“We need someone with integrity to take charge fix this.”

“How can this guy honestly look himself in the mirror each morning. No morals.”

“Total scandal! Whoever is managing this should step down or be removed.”

“I lease my wheelchair (TGA Whill model C) via Motability. It is expensive. It concerns me that people are not benefiting from their own money. If Motability is able to sit on profits (which is what this basically is) while disabled individuals are struggling, they are clearly over charging vulnerable people.”

“Surely a charity should feed resources back into the reserves for the users and not benefit executives.”

“Motability offers a valuable service but not apparently value for money.”

“What is OSCR doing to protect Scottish interests as there is a substantial customer base in Scotland.”

“Why does the CEO need to be paid this much and what are the bonuses for? What are they going to do with the reserves? I hope it solely benefits their customers.”

“I had low mileage on my last lease car when I returned it and worked out that over the 3-year period I had paid £180 per mile! I am assuming this supplemented the fat cat salaries even though I gave my car back as I can't afford to fuel it. I also read Lord Sterling comments re buying food and was disgusted. How out of touch is this man. I have to use foodbanks and some extra money each month from a reduce lease would have helped me buy food but I suppose it's okay to leave me hungry and pay inflated salaries and bonuses for fat cats and build reserves from disabled people's benefits.”

“One word – disgusting.”

“Shocked by this level of pay and the reserves. Will disabled people get money back or cheaper leases?”

“This is a disgrace, the £2.6 Billion should be paid back into the scheme by lowering the costs charged on deposits for new vehicles!”

Another example of the rich stealing from the poor!

“This not only concerns me but shocks and horrified me that this money is coming from disabled people benefits. Who is responsible for this and what is being done to get this sorted?”

“This is shocking and a total disregard for those they are trying to help. If they are able to make enough money to pay these salaries and build this level of reserves, then why can't they reduce the lease costs.”

“The Scottish Government need to control this for the people of Scotland and bring with their control scrutiny and transparency. Anything the UK Government manages or has a duty to oversee is a shambles because as we have seen disabled people don't matter to them. Thankfully our Government in Scotland have different values and a human rights based approach, looking after disabled people so please let them deal with this with humanity and transparency.”

“Excellent scheme for users. Because it is charity does not mean that salaries shouldn't be on par with similar organisations. Bonuses and reserves appear to be excessive.”

“It's for the public not the greedy.”

“That £2.62 billion should be used to help offset the high cost deposits required for most auto cars.”

“This is ridiculous the amount of money being the CEO is taking as bonus shame on you.”

“The deposit on automatic vehicles can be very high.”

“I feel very emotive and angry and this level of money being paid from disabled people benefits and the reserves being hoarded. Who ever is responsible for this need to be removed from their position for mis-management.”

“How is this allowed to happen? How has let this happen?”

“Disgraceful should be run by a not for profit charity with a cap on executives wages and no bonuses. Should be more than one provider for the scheme all seems like a bit of a con. Wonder who is pocketing the backhanders.”

“I really can’t believe this is his salary. Why? Who is allowing this?”

“Motability Scheme should be a not for profit with salary caps. No one should profit from other people’s disability, especially with the figures quoted above.”

“It misleads people, it's thought of as a charity when it's a business - in it to make money, such they're doing very well!”

“How can this happen. Motability customers struggle daily with balancing their finances. Who is responsible for allowing these obscene salaries and bonuses to be paid from disabled people benefits? This is an outcry!”

“This is shocking and totally unacceptable. Can the Scottish Government fix this for disabled people?”

“Disgraceful and another show of greed and preying off of disabled people. The Scottish Government can do much better than the UK Government and should take this in hand and manage a Scottish Motability, with disabled peoples needs at the centre and with people not being over charged to line the pockets of the wealthy. Come on

Scotland's Ministers - step up and sort this. You did it with Social Security Scotland so do it with Motability."

"I think this is shocking and disgraceful. How can the CEO of Motability be paid more than our Prime Minister! This is money taken from disabled people benefits. Shocking greed and preying on disabled people. The government need to get this sorted!"

"Totally underworked and grossly overpaid."

"I think it is a ludicrous amount of money to be released as a salary. just think how many vehicles that would provide to those who are in need of them?"

"Disgusting that his millions in bonus is even larger than his enormous salary!"

"I complained to my MP early last year about this. Lining their own pockets, it was disgusting. The reserves could easily have been used to reduce the substantial down payments that I and others need to make as we do not have the option to transfer onto a car seat. Those that are confined to wheelchairs and require a WAV would have either a wider choice like others or the ability to get one at all. I am aware that there is a grant option that can be applied for but I believe that is very restrictive. Furthermore, I was initially refused permission to transfer my private registration plate from one Motability to the other as they said it could cause offence! My registration plate number is C4 FKD, the C4 is the level of my spinal injury break and the other letters represent "f*cked". Black sense of humour that is rife within the spinal injuries' community. Motability is not accountable to anyone it seems, I intended to use freedom of information legislation to see of any vehicles being damaged because of the registration plate, but unfortunately they are beyond the reach of the legislation. It was only after the intervention from my MP and my threat to go to the media that they declined. Decisions being made by tinpot dictators. As you can guess, I have some concerns about them although to be fair the staff are always very courteous."

"I use the Motability Scheme. But I did not know about the amount paid to its CEOs and bonuses. These amounts are obscene. Charities are supposed to be for helping the public, not to enable individuals to become fat cats. £100k is more than enough to pay out and there should be no bonuses. If I were CEO, I would not take that."

“This is money from the public purse that should be benefiting people whose mobility is compromised. It’s immoral.”

“Motability as a scheme does a very valuable job and I have had a car through them since 1989 but it sickens me to see the profits and salaries made at my expense.”

“It is sadly further indicative of the pay & financial scandal right across the UK charity sector. Having sat on the finance & audit committees of several-, I can tell you the benefits these executives earn is shocking. And this is one of the worst! As for reserves-it is prudent to have 3 months operating costs & financial stability for audit purposes. But Motability it is outrageous & immoral. Betts should be ashamed and an urgent audit review carried out.”

“This is an obscene salary and bonus being paid directly from the pockets of disabled people, many of whom struggle on a daily basis to make ends meet. I have followed the developments around Motability since these horror stories came to light and I am disgusted at the greed or the CEO and Motability Governors especially in condoning these levels of remuneration and bonuses and allowing these reserves to be built up and held without even considering the difference £10-£20 a month in a reduced lease cost could have on a disabled persons life style. I am also horrified at the arrogance of Lord Sterling and his quote around disabled people would only spent any money they reduced from the lease costs on food! How dare he make this statement. Motability needs a total overhaul of governance with a better representation of their customers on their board. I noticed none of the governors are from a low income or working class background and this is evident in how out of touch they are with the needs and struggles of disabled people. Lord Sterling needs to go and the Board needs a total refresh including having someone represent the needs of Scottish Motability customers. In Scotland you get a poorer service than in other parts of the UK and base level cars do not meet many people needs resulting in people having to also pay advanced payments. How can they look themselves in the mirror knowing they are reaping benefits straight from the pockets of disabled people? Shame on them all. The UK and Scottish Government need to step up here and do something and stop all this greed and arrogance. The Scottish Government should run its own scheme "Motability Scotland" and I have every confidence that would do

a far better job and ensure that only disabled people benefitted from the scheme and not mercenary fat cats from the House of Lords etc.”

“Why are these people paid such high wages they should not be, nor get any bonuses. The money is to help people not for this. Lot total. Greed it has to stop now.”

“The salary, bonus and reserves are extreme even for an organisation of that size. Much of this money could be invested in the charity arm of Motability to support grants for adaptations and finding the most appropriate car for disabled people.”

“People should be able to use wherever garage they want. And any dealer should be able to apply to be registered to supply notability cars. Overpriced Monopolies gave gleaned far too much from the system.”

“They are penalising disabled drivers and charging them thousands in advance payments whilst refusing grants to those in need so they can pay their bosses their bonus.”

“With myself who is learning to drive, and don't get the higher care rate of DLA, it's not fair that they have saved nearly £3bn and not even helping people who like myself have autism but not eligible for this.”

“I am delighted with the service I receive from the scheme however I do think the bonuses are excessive on top of the very generous salary.”

“The scheme (which I use) is excellent but people should not be allowed to exploit it to make personal fortunes.”

“Our advance payment is now three times the price we paid for our first; it's disgraceful. Advance payments are ridiculous.”

“It is an excellent and socially worthy scheme, but disappointing that the CEO has abused the salary scheme personally, and also mismanaged the operational funding. He should be dismissed immediately and be denied these gross personal benefits. The reserves should have been used to reduce costs for customers within the scheme.”

“Reserves and executive pay much too high. This has to urgently change to restore confidence in Motability.”

“I am concerned about both firstly doctors and others who help people don't earn large salaries. So why should the person who is responsible for the mobility scheme earn anything like this. Would have thought that a figure of 80k was more likely or accepted by the public. While I understand the need for reserves, I would have thought it should be nowhere near this figure. There are many people who think that the mobility scheme is unfair when they see how much money people pay for a car due to being on benefits. Compared to the price they might pay for a similar car. The news of this type of salary and large reserves does not help make any better!”

“No charity or its employees or board members, etc. should be allowed to be on the make to this extent! Staff have to be paid and there will be inevitable expenses but this level of stated rip off is purely extortion and should be considered criminal with associated consequences for all those involved! This is extortion not just of the Government but also of disabled people! I am eligible for a Motability vehicle and have been for many years but have never accepted one. Several years ago I researched their organisation and methods of doing business when I was considering having a Motability vehicle and quite frankly did not like what I was reading and it does not surprise me to find their CEO, etc. is ripping off the Government and disable people in this way, may he very slowly rot in hell! Staring first with handing the money back, losing his job and then spending a very lengthy spell in one of Her Majesties Prisons. This organisation needs ripping apart, its corruption exposing and putting in the hands of someone who can manage it legitimately and sincerely and willing to be very closely monitored by a Government oversight authority.”

“I believe the criteria for the scheme needs to be looked at again. It is obscene that CEO's should receive bonuses as such!”

“Reform is long overdue and representation from Scotland is badly needed.”

“The reserves could well be used to reduce initial payments on many vehicles.”

“Bonuses and reserves etc are horrifying. Know of someone recently whose wife died - car was for her, but driven by the husband. The widower has COPD and cannot keep car while he applies for it to be changed to him. He has to hand over the car a short time after her

funeral and then start the whole process of applying again - Bureaucracy gone mad! More than likely they will have all his details.”

NO –2% (8 respondents)

“If you want highly effective leaders in your c level executive team you have to pay comparative rates. The bonuses could be deemed as excessive and absolutely should be decided by a fully impartial overseers dependant on meeting strict and realistic targets. Much of the negative comments fail to address the effect of future volatility on the Motability "fleet" which consists of over 600k vehicles, when put into context the reserves are on the higher side but far less excessive than they ordinarily seem. In addition a frequent complain relates to the upfront cost of WAVs, seems to fail to realise the relative high cost of these highly specialised vehicles and the comparative low research value at least end. Overall the scheme provides users (such as myself) the ability to have transport at a very reasonable rate with absolutely minimal hassle”.

“The NAO report also concluded that 79% of the reserves are actually the cars that disabled people are driving around in. If only people read the whole report rather than relying on summaries written by newspapers with agendas. Should disabled people give their cars back so the reserve number isn't as high? I think not. The salary/bonus are high though”.

“Great scheme; works well.”