

* Name of proposal/policy	Home to School Transport Review	* Budget number	16-006-04
* Service area responsible	Place – Environment, Planning & Transport	* Cabinet meeting date	14 th February 2017
* Name of completing officer	Alison Parry	* Approved by Director / Assistant Director	Tony Ciaburro
* Version	1.0	* Date	2 February 2017

PART A

* Section 1a: Description of proposal under consideration/development	* Section 1b: Is this new or existing? Does it link to current provision?
<p>A review of Home to School, and Post 16 Education Transport to ensure existing policies are appropriately applied, remove any discretionary services which are currently being provided but where the child is no longer eligible due to changing circumstances, and to consider alternative, more cost effective delivery of transport provision.</p> <p>The scope of the review covered the following areas;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analysis of the current policies and entitlements to school transport to see if there was scope to bring these into line with national standards; • a review any discretionary transport that is being provided above the current policy standards; 	<p>Under the Education Act 1996, local authorities must make transport arrangements if they consider it necessary to facilitate a pupil's attendance at school. Our policies apply the national criteria and also include some discretionary elements. For post-16 students, there is no legal duty for the Council to provide free transport but the Council recognises the need to support all young people, including those from low income families and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.</p> <p>This is not a change to policy, but a review to ensure the policy is applied correctly, including reviewing discretionary provision in individual cases.</p>

- an assessment of the appropriateness of the current fees and charges for non-entitled pupils
- any other innovations and /or new ideas that could result in savings to the Council

Initial work on this matter has identified the potential to achieve efficiency savings, with £600K proposed to come out of the base budget in 2017/18. It was intended that this would be followed up by a fundamental review of transport provision in the current context. These further future potential savings would be tied in with the Total Transport project. Some difficult choices might be necessary, but these would be informed by public consultation and could also be subject to scrutiny.

Potential options in addition to the findings from the initial review include:

- route review for mainstream transport – where road / pavement changes mean routes are no longer considered unsafe (eg. footpaths in place in new developments) meaning that the Council is no longer required to provide free transport
- consideration of the use of Personal Transport Budgets to encourage/ support parents of children with Education Care Health Plans (ECHP) to take children to school themselves
- ensuring there is no duplication of provision e.g. provision of home to school transport to young people who have access a vehicle provided by the Motability scheme for their benefit
- consideration of the establishment of an Independent Travel Training scheme aimed at improving independence for children/ young people with an ECHP/ learning difficulty – teaching them the life skills to travel independently e.g. by bus (instead of taxi) walking or cycling

All options would be subject to consultation and would go through the normal Cabinet decision-making process.	
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*** Section 2: How does this align with the Council Plan/ corporate priorities/ partnership strategies and plans/ Next Generation Council?**

Delivers increased wellbeing and/or safeguarding by ensuring that...	✓
People of all ages are safe, protected from harm and able to live happy, healthy and independent lives in our communities	✓
People have the information and support they need to make healthy choices and achieve wellbeing	
People achieve economic prosperity, in a healthy, low carbon economy which gives access to jobs, training and skills development	
Communities thrive in a pleasant and resilient environment, with robust transport and communications infrastructure	
Resources are utilised effectively and efficiently, in coordination with partners and providers	✓

Does it align with any NCC/ partnership strategies and plans? (if so, please list below)
Current Home to School Transport Policy and Post 16 Education Transport Policy

Does it support the transformation into a Next Generation Council? (if so, please explain below)
N/A

*** Section 3: If this relates to a statutory duty, please give details of the relevant legislation below:**

The County Council has a statutory responsibility to provide school transport under the Education Act 1996 and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Northamptonshire Home to School Transport Policy sets out the circumstances in which it will provide transport to meet these obligations.

Section 4: Have other alternatives been considered?

N/A

* Section 5: Financial / resource implications	
a) Costs (e.g. invest to save)	Any upfront investment costs to be covered by in-year savings and supported by a business case.
b) Staffing implications	To be considered as part of the Review.
c) Savings	£600k

Section 6: Has a similar initiative/proposal been implemented elsewhere? What were the benefits or risks? Are there lessons that can be learned?

THIS SECTION HAS REPLACED THE EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT FORM AND MUST BE COMPLETED TO DEMONSTRATE COMPLIANCE WITH THE EQUALITY DUTY

* Section 7: Who will be affected by this proposal? (this may be service user data, or be based on a particular geographical area or more general population data depending on the proposal) Include demographic information where this is available e.g. breakdown by gender, age, ethnicity, disability etc. BIPI can support with the provision of data. You may include staff, partner organisations and any other stakeholders who might be affected by the proposal.	
Data Source (include link where published) and summary of what it tells us for example “X number of people use this service, X are male, Y are female etc”	Why is this relevant to the proposal?
NCC is required to provide transport for c.9000 children and young adults to get them to school. NCC currently spends circa £14.95m per annum comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mainstream: £6.7m • Post 16: £0.55m • Special Education Needs: £7.6m • Excluded Pupil Transport: £0.16m 	As part of the Home to School Transport Review, various options will be considered based on a detailed analysis of service users, existing policy application etc which will be subject of a Cabinet Report and equality impact assessment.

* Section 8: Based on the above information, will this proposal have an impact on the following? ✓ the relevant box for each line and then expand on the reasons why in Section 9				
	Positive	Negative	Neutral	Unsure
<u>Age</u>				✓
<u>Disability</u>				✓
<u>Gender reassignment</u>			✓	
<u>Marriage and civil partnership</u>			✓	
<u>Pregnancy and Maternity</u>			✓	
<u>Race</u>			✓	
<u>Religion or Belief (or No Belief)</u>				✓
<u>Sex</u>				✓
<u>Sexual orientation</u>			✓	

* Section 9: Initial impact	
* Section 9a: From your analysis in section 8 above, please explain the positive implications	
N/A	
* Section 9b: From your analysis in section 8 above, please explain why you have categorised any of the implications as neutral	
We have no reason to believe that a review of the application of the Home to School Transport policy would have a particular impact on anyone due to gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race or sexual orientation.	
* Section 9b: From your analysis above, please explain the negative implications	* Section 9c: What actions have you identified to mitigate any negative implications?
N/A	N/A
* Section 9d: From your analysis above, please explain the areas where you are unsure of the impact	* Section 9e: What actions have you identified to fill gaps in information?

<p>In the first instance, we need to better understand the current service users and their eligibility against the criteria set out in the legislation. This will allow us to understand whether pupils in receipt of NCC provided transport remain eligible, whether against the national criteria or against the discretionary criteria in our policies.</p>	<p>Analysis has been commissioned to support initial report.</p> <p>If the review finds that a pupil's circumstances have changed and they no longer qualify for education transport, provision will not end before the end of the academic year in order to allow parents and carers to make alternative arrangements.</p>
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* Section 10: Internal considerations: are there any implications for the following?		
	✓ or X	If there are any implications, please explain them here and identify any actions you may need to take as a result
Staff	✓	Staffing will be considered as part of the Review
Financial (NCC)	✓	Proposal will generate savings for NCC on the transport costs currently associated with these policies
Legal	✓	The policy/application of the policy will need to be carefully reviewed with support from Legal Services to ensure that NCC meets all legal obligations. If this proposal results in NCC withdrawing transport services it had previously provided, legal advice will be required to ensure this is carried out safely, fairly and within the law.
NCC Policy	✓	Depending on the outcome of the Review regarding which proposals to take forward, the policy may need changing
Performance	X	
Data quality / information security	X	
IT	X	
Strategic assets	X	
LGSS / federated bodies	X	
Procurement	X	
Project support	X	

Other (if appropriate)	X	
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* Section 11: External considerations: are there any implications for the following?		
	✓ or X	If there are any implications, please explain them here and identify any actions you may need to take as a result
Community impact	X	
Impact on the consumer (e.g. communication needs, access, rurality, complaints)	✓	Depending on decisions taken, if a transport service is withdrawn it may affect an individual's access to services, based on their previous levels of access. However, any changes would be carried out by applying the criteria set out in legislation and the withdrawal of services would be carried out safely and fairly. Parents and pupils would have due notice to enable them to make alternative arrangements e.g. for the beginning of the new academic year.
Reputation	✓	There is the potential for negative public reaction (or more specifically from service users who may be at risk of having transport services withdrawn)
Political	✓	With the risk of reputational damage and negative public reaction, this could result in complaints to councillors.
Partners	X	
Human Rights	X	
Health impact – individual	X	
Health impact – wider community	X	
Economic impact - individual	✓	If anyone who was previously in receipt of free or subsidised transport from NCC no longer receives it, they may find that they have to pay to continue to access transport.
Economic impact – wider community	X	
Community Safety impact	✓	It will be important to ensure service user safety if NCC's provision of transport is removed.
Environmental impact	X	

Consultation	✓	Specific consultation may be required for some elements beyond the budget consultation
Other (if appropriate)	X	

Based on the impacts and considerations above, please identify the RAG status

RAG Status	Overall RAG	Time	Proposal Delivery	Cash Saving	Risk	Issue	Dependency

* Section 12a: What are the risks associated with NOT implementing the proposal? (tick if applicable)	✓	* Section 12b: What actions have you identified to mitigate the risks? Will anything in the current arrangements need to be changed to acknowledge this risk? Is implementing the proposal the only way to mitigate the risks?
Non-compliance with legislation or NCC policy		N/A
Financial	x	Assessment of Policy options will be undertaken. Political approval for the changes will be sought.
Change in performance/ data quality/ information security		N/A
Reputational/ Political		N/A
Increase in complaints and/ or legal challenge		N/A
Other		N/A

* Section 13: Budget Delivery Programme Highlight Report information – total amount allocated to savings proposal 2017-18 through to 2020-2021; profiled budget; 2017-18 action plan extended savings narrative; cost code information	
Total amount allocated to savings proposal 2017-18	
2017-18 (£000)	600

Impact of saving within the budget profile			
Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
		300	300

	Milestone	Owner	By when
1	Cabinet Report on alternative proposals	L Hagger	June 2017
2			

*** Section 14: Do you need to undertake further work (e.g. consultation, further proposal development, further equality analysis) based on the impact and actions identified above? If yes, set this out below and then carry out the work and complete Part B:**

Further analysis to fully understand current service users, as set out above.

This proposal will form part of the overall budget consultation process. Any feedback received (as well as any further intelligence gathered in the course of developing the project) will inform a final analysis of the impact of the proposal which will be considered by Cabinet and Council in February when taking a final decision on the budget. The EqIA will be updated accordingly.

In addition, where any pupils are found to no longer qualify for transport provision, they will be informed on an individual basis.

If the review finds that elements of the policy should change, this would be subject to a separate consultation.

PART B

Section 15: Consultation, follow up data and information gathered from actions identified above	
	What does this information tell us?
This proposal formed part of the overall budget consultation process.	We received no comments specifically on this proposal.

Section 16: Final impact analysis (taking the findings from Part B into account) – including review date if required

Pending the outcome of the review, we conclude at this stage that for some groups (age, disability and religion/belief) the impact is unsure, and neutral for other groups.

The detailed review will allow us to fully understand who is currently in receipt of home to school transport and where this is over and above the statutory minimum. Any changes to the provision of home to school transport will be carried out in accordance with the legislation governing this duty, and the Council will be mindful of the impact of changes on the children, young people and their families involved.

There will be separate consultation if the review finds that the policy should change, which will be subject to its own impact assessment.