

DRAFT DOCUMENT

Individual Executive Member Decision

Title of Report:	Home to School Transport Policy and post-16 Transport Statement Consultation
Report to be considered by:	Individual Executive Member Decision
Date on which Decision is to be taken:	
Forward Plan Ref:	ID

Purpose of Report: To seek approval to consult on the Home to School Transport Policy and the post-16 transport statement (statutory requirement).

Recommended Action: To approve the consultation on Home to School Transport and the post-16 transport statement.

Reason for decision to be taken: Statutory requirement

Other options considered: None

Key background documentation: Home to School Transport Policy, Post 16 Statement, Farepaying Scheme,

Portfolio Member Details	
Name & Telephone No.:	Councillor Dominic Boerk
E-mail Address:	dboerk@westberks.gov.uk
Contact Officer Details	
Name:	Caroline Corcoran
Job Title:	Service Manager (Access, Planning and Trading)
Tel. No.:	01635 519030
E-mail Address:	ccorcoran@westberks.gov.uk

DRAFT DOCUMENT

Implications

Policy: The Local Authority must publish the policy and the post-16 statement on its website

Financial: The removal of discretionary transport by catchment will be phased in and could eventually deliver £90k per year. It currently 390 pupils out of a secondary cohort of 11583. Depending on parental choices in relation to transport as a result of this change, full year savings of £57k-£99k p.a. could be anticipated.

Personnel: None

Legal/Procurement: The documentation meets the legal requirements.

Environmental: None

Property: None

Risk Management: one

Equalities Impact Assessment: Yes

Consultation Responses

Members:

Leader of Council:

Overview & Scrutiny Management

Commission Chairman:

Ward Members:

Opposition

Spokesperson:

Local Stakeholders: School, parents and public consultation on website.

Officers Consulted: Rachael Wardell, Ian Pearson, Communities Directorate Leadership Team

Trade Union: N/A

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council		<input type="checkbox"/>
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position		<input type="checkbox"/>
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months		<input type="checkbox"/>
Item is Urgent Key Decision		<input type="checkbox"/>
Report is to note only		<input type="checkbox"/>

Footer to be completed by Strategic Support

West Berkshire Council

Individual Decision

date of meeting

DRAFT DOCUMENT

Supporting Information

1. Background

- 1.1 West Berkshire Council's Home to School Transport Policy sets out the circumstances in which it will provide free transport to children and young people travelling to school or college. It therefore relates to West Berkshire residents of statutory school age (from the term following 5th birthday to the end of Year 11).
- 1.2 West Berkshire Council's post-16 Transport Statement sets out how the Council will meet the requirements of the statutory guidance for post-16 pupils.
- 1.3 Local Authorities are required by law to provide help for some pupils but may also provide help for others on a discretionary basis, such as through the Farepayer Scheme.
- 1.4 The Council reviews its Home to School Transport Policy, post-16 Transport Statement and Farepayer Scheme annually and is required to consult on proposed changes. This consultation includes the Home to School Transport Policy 2015/16 as the Council is re-consulting on this policy following clarification amendments. The changes are outlined in section 2 below.

2. Transport Consultation – summary of changes

Clarification and Amendments - 2015/16 Home to School Transport Policy

In response to queries from parents, the Council has amended the wording of the policy to provide more clarity:

- Parent's responsibilities – these are now highlighted throughout the policy for ease of reference.
- The information that is required to allow us to consider applications for transport under the *temporary medical condition* or *parental disability* clauses is now explained (page 5)
- The definition of an *Available route* has been expanded to provide more information on what is considered (section 9)
- In relation to *Appeals* (section 18), the content has been updated to provide a clearer explanation of the grounds for an Appeal and to explain the process where we need to ask for additional evidence.
- In relation to *Complaints* (section 19), the content has been updated to provide a clearer explanation of when a representation from a parent is a complaint and when it is an Appeal.

These changes do not affect entitlement.

DRAFT DOCUMENT

Amendments have been made:

- In relation to *Pupils attending a Pupil Referral Unit*, the content has been updated to reflect current practice. (Page 6)
- In relation to *Pupils permanently excluded from school*, the content has been updated to reflect current practice. (Page 6)
- In relation to *post-16 students with a statement of Special Educational Needs*, the content has been updated in the light of the SEND reforms. (page 9-10)
- In relation to *children with a Statement of Special Education Needs/EHC Plan*, the content has been updated in the light of the SEND reforms (pages 6, 9-10, 14-15)

Change of Entitlement - 2016/17 Home to School Transport Policy

The 2016/17 policy is the same as the 2015/16 policy except:

Removal of secondary catchment transport provision

The Council proposes to remove the discretionary criteria to provide transport for secondary students to their catchment school but will continue to provide transport to the nearest school to their home address (subject to meeting the relevant criteria).

This change means that, in the future,

- Where the nearest school and the catchment school are the same school, entitlement will not be affected.
- Students could still qualify for free transport to their *nearest available* secondary school (e.g. under the distance or low income criteria, if this applied to their circumstances).
- Students wishing to travel to their catchment school, if this is not their nearest school, could apply for a Fare Payer place on the school bus, under the rules of the Fare Payer Scheme – a fee is payable. The bus may be over-subscribed and a place is not guaranteed.

This change does not affect primary pupils.

In line with national guidance, this change is being phased in from September 2016. This will apply to all new transport applications - new students when they start secondary education or existing students if they change their secondary school route. Current secondary students who receive transport will continue to be entitled to free transport on their existing route until the end of Year 11.

Changes to the Fare Payer Scheme

The 2016/17 Scheme is the same as the 2015/16 Scheme except:

- Discount for siblings is reduced from 20% to 10%.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 There is no decision to be made and therefore no Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken (EIA stage 1 completed below).

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 It is recommended that permission to consult is granted to ensure the Council meets its statutory requirement.

DRAFT DOCUMENT

APPENDIX A

Equality Impact Assessment – Stage One

Name of item being assessed:	Home to School Transport Policy and post-16 Transport Statement for - Consultation
Version and release date of item (if applicable):	
Owner of item being assessed:	Caroline Corcoran
Name of assessor:	Caroline Corcoran
Date of assessment:	

1. What are the main aims of the item?
To consult on the Home to School Transport Policy and post-16 Transport Statement

2. Note which groups may be affected by the item, consider how they may be affected and what sources of information have been used to determine this. (Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation)		
Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this.
Age	Positive impact	The policy applies to all children of statutory school age. The proposed policy includes provision for Post 16 students.
Age	Increased costs for some families	The removal of the discretionary provision for secondary pupils going to their catchment school could affect families who then have to either transport the student themselves, or who purchase a farepayer place on the school bus. This change will affect future students. The discount in the Farepayer Scheme for siblings has been reduced. However, those on low income may not be affected as they may still qualify under the Low Income criteria. All families can request to pay fares in instalments.
Disability	Positive impact	The policy contains criteria for pupils with a disability and the circumstances where transport may be granted in the case of parental disability.

DRAFT DOCUMENT

Gender	Positive impact	Gender is not a distinguishing factor in the application process and allocation of school transport.
Race	Positive impact	Race is not a distinguishing factor in the application process and allocation of school transport.
Belief	Positive impact	Belief is not a distinguishing factor in the application process and allocation of school transport.
Location	Positive impact	The policy takes account of urban transport difficulties and seeks to ensure that rural pupils and students are not disadvantaged
Further comments relating to the item:		

3. Result (please tick by double-clicking on relevant box and click on 'checked')	
<input type="checkbox"/>	High Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Medium Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Low Relevance - This needs to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No Relevance - This does not need to undergo a Stage 2 Equality Impact Assessment

For items requiring a Stage 2 equality impact assessment, begin the planning of this now, referring to the equality impact assessment guidance and Stage 2 template.

4. Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	
Stage Two not required:	

Name: Caroline Corcoran

Date: 20/05/2015