

**Decision Report - Executive Lead Member  
Decision**

Forward Plan Reference: N/A

Decision Date – 7 Dec 2023

Key Decision – No



## **Review of Education Travel Policy**

Executive Member(s): Lead Member for Children, Families and Education

Local Member(s) and Division: All

Lead Officer: Debbie Reed

Author: Debbie Reed, Commissioning Officer for School Transport

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## **Summary / Background**

1. The Department for Education (DfE) has recently published new statutory guidance for Home to School Travel which has necessitated the need to review our Home to School Travel Policy (named Education Travel Policy) to ensure it is still compliant and lawful and add in further information regarding Independent Travel Trainers. The discretionary elements of our policy are minimal and still relevant and so will remain.

## **Recommendations**

2. That the Lead Member for Children, Families and Education agrees to approve and publish the Education Travel Policy as set out in Appendix B.

## **Reasons for recommendations**

3. The Education Travel Policy is a statutory requirement and needs to be updated and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure compliance.

## Other options considered

4. No other options have been considered as Somerset Council would not be compliant if we did not review at this stage.

## Links to Council Plan and Medium-Term Financial Plan

5. Somerset Council Plan 2023-2027
  - A Fairer, Ambitious Somerset – the Policy sets out options for school travel assistance and for those students who require financial assistance.
  - A Flourishing and Resilient Somerset – through promoting access opportunities, this helps to support the education sector. To ensure all children have access to education by providing travel support for those who are entitled and that all children are assessed correctly for this.

## Financial and Risk Implications

6. There are no specific financial implications arising from the new transport policy as it does not make changes to eligibility. However, following a review earlier this year, there is a programme of work that is being implemented to improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of school travel arrangements which focuses on increasing take up of independent travel training, personal budgets, reviewing routes and improved commissioning arrangements.
7. Provision school travel arrangements is a statutory duty that is funded by the council. For 2023/24 the budget for expenditure on home to school transport is £12.9m and for SEND transport is £10m.
8. The current risk score and projected risk score as a result of the proposed decision using the Councils RAG matrix and guidance from the Risk Management Policy is as follows:

|            |   |        |   |            |   |
|------------|---|--------|---|------------|---|
| Likelihood | 1 | Impact | 1 | Risk Score | 1 |
|------------|---|--------|---|------------|---|

## Legal Implications

9. There are no legal implications, the Policy complies with the requirements of relevant legislation and statutory guidance.

## **HR Implications**

10. There are no direct human resources implications as part of this report.

## **Equalities Implications**

11. The Policy will have protections in place for families as no entitlement is affected.

## **Community Safety Implications**

12. There are no community safety implications with the changes to the policy.

## **Climate Change and Sustainability Implications**

13. The Policy would support the Council's climate commitment.

## **Health and Safety Implications**

14. There are no Health & Safety implications with changes to the Policy.

## **Health and Wellbeing Implications**

15. There are no Health and Wellbeing Implications with changes to the Policy.

## **Scrutiny comments / recommendations:**

16. The proposed decision has not been considered by a Scrutiny Committee however the Scrutiny Chair has been consulted.

## **Background**

17. The Home to School Travel Policy was robustly reviewed, consulted on and amended in 2018. New DfE Guidance has been published and our policy is still compliant, concise and clear we have added in some additional information for Independent Travel Training to highlight the service that we offer.

18. There is no additional entitlement that we need to introduce as part of the new Guidance and the main points from the guidance are as follows:

- Qualifying schools to which home to school travel can be arranged and the timings the LA must provide travel assistance (start and end of the school day)
- Additional wording for preferred school for children with EHCP's
- Parental responsibility and expectation
- Pick up points can be used for SEND children
- Detailed information re extended rights and working tax credit
- Comprehensive information re Travel training
- Clarity on the use of additional addresses providing support to LA' s by stating we do not have to provide assistance to and from other addresses
- Discretionary travel arrangements must be in the local policy

## Background Papers




New DfE guidance for Home to School Travel can be found [here](#) or Appendix A.

## Assurance checklist

|                                     | Officer Name           | Date Completed                             |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Legal & Governance Implications     | David Clark            | 13/11/23                                   |
| Communications                      | Peter Elliott          | 16/11/23                                   |
| Finance & Procurement               | Nicola Hix             | 05/12/23                                   |
| Workforce                           | Alyn Jones             | 29/11/23                                   |
| Asset Management                    | Oliver Woodhams        | NA   |
| Executive Director / Senior Manager | Rob Hart               | 30/11/23                                   |
| Strategy & Performance              | Alyn Jones             | 29/11/23                                   |
| Executive Lead Member               | Cllr Tessa Munt        | 16/10/23                                   |
| <b>Consulted:</b>                   | Councillor Name        |  |
| Local Division Members              | All                    | To be notified on publication of decision. |
| Opposition Spokesperson             | Cllr Frances Nicholson | 08/11/23                                   |
| Scrutiny Chair                      | Cllr Leigh Redman      | 08/11/23                                   |

## Somerset Equality Impact Assessment

Before completing this EIA please ensure you have read the EIA guidance notes – available from your Equality Officer or  
[www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment](http://www.somerset.gov.uk/impactassessment)

|   |  |  |  |          |   |
|---|--|--|--|----------|---|
| Organisation prepared for (mark as appropriate)   |  <p><b>Somerset</b><br/>Council</p> |  |  <p><b>NHS</b><br/>Somerset</p> |          |  <p><b>NHS</b><br/>Somerset<br/>NHS Foundation Trust</p> |
| Version   |  |  | Date Completed   | 16/10/23 |   |
| Description of what is being impact assessed  |  |  |  |          |   |
| Non-Key Decision for the New Home to School Travel Policy   |  |  |  |          |   |
| Evidence  |  |  |  |          |   |
| What data/information have you used to assess how this policy/service might impact on protected groups? Sources such as the <a href="#">Office of National Statistics</a> , <a href="#">Somerset Intelligence Partnership</a> , <a href="#">Somerset's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA)</a> , Staff and/ or <a href="#">area profiles</a> ,, should be detailed here |  |  |  |          |   |
|   |  |  |  |          |   |

**Who have you consulted with to assess possible impact on protected groups and what have they told you? If you have not consulted other people, please explain why?**

**Analysis of impact on protected groups**

The Public Sector Equality Duty requires us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations with protected groups. Consider how this policy/service will achieve these aims. In the table below, using the evidence outlined above and your own understanding, detail what considerations and potential impacts against each of the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty. Based on this information, make an assessment of the likely outcome, before you have implemented any mitigation.

| Protected group | Summary of impact   | Negative outcome         | Neutral outcome          | Positive outcome                    |
|-----------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Age             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the cohort of service users is children and young people we need to ensure that there is sufficient capacity and suppliers of vehicles for home to school travel to meet their needs.</li> <li>The policy recognises that the children can get to school safely or that transport is available if it is considered beyond walking distance.</li> <li>Recognition of the impact of bullying and where there is severe and sustained bullying travel assistance will be considered where the bullying requires a move to an alternative school</li> </ul> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

|                                       |  |                          |                          |                                     |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Disability</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ability of disabled parents to request a walking route assessment where they are unable to accompany their child/ren because of their disability.</li> <li>• School transport is accessible based on needs.</li> <li>• Recognition of the needs of children with SEND and disabilities</li> </ul> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Gender reassignment</b>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of the impact of bullying and where there is severe and sustained bullying travel assistance will be considered where the bullying requires a move to an alternative school</li> </ul>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Marriage and civil partnership</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific impacts identified</li> </ul>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Pregnancy and maternity</b>        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific impacts identified</li> </ul>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| <b>Race and ethnicity</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognition of the impact of bullying and where there is severe and sustained bullying travel assistance will be considered where the bullying requires a move to an alternative school</li> </ul>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| <b>Religion or belief</b>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No specific impacts identified</li> </ul>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |

|   |   |                          |                          |                                     |
|---|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sex   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognition of the impact of bullying and where there is severe and sustained bullying travel assistance will be considered where the bullying requires a move to an alternative school</li> </ul>       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Sexual orientation  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recognition of the impact of bullying and where there is severe and sustained bullying travel assistance will be considered where the bullying requires a move to an alternative school</li> </ul>       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Armed Forces (including serving personnel, families and veterans) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific impacts identified</li> </ul>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            |
| Other, e.g. carers, low income, rurality/isolation, etc.          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families in receipt of free school meals or who receive Universal Credit or the maximum rate of working tax credit have the ability to receive assistance based on the criteria of the policy</li> </ul> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

### Negative outcomes action plan

Where you have ascertained that there will potentially be negative outcomes, you are required to mitigate the impact of these. Please detail below the actions that you intend to take.

| Action taken/to be taken | Date        | Person responsible | How will it be monitored? | Action complete          |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
|                          | Select date |                    |                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |

If negative impacts remain, please provide an explanation below.



None identified

**Completed by:**

**Debbie Reed**

**Date**

**18/10/23**

**Signed off by:**

**Date**

**Equality Lead sign off name:**

**Angela Farmer**

**Equality Lead sign off date:**

**19/10/23**

**To be reviewed by: (officer name)**

**Review date:**

