



## Transport, Economy and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17 April 2019

### Report of the Corporate Director Children and Young People Service

#### SEND Home to School Transport 2018 Policy Change

##### 1. Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update on the implementation of the Home to School Transport Policy adopted May 2018.

##### 2. Key Background Information

- 2.1 Home to School Transport is a legal duty placed on local authorities to provide travel assistance of eligible statutory aged children, to enable them to access education. North Yorkshire County Council also adopt a policy statement of extending this assistance to include young persons of 16-19 years of age (post 16). This included young adults with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP), who are continuing in education beyond participation age (Post 19).
- 2.2 The cost of home to school transport for children with special educational needs (SEN) has been rising dramatically in the last three financial years (2014-15 to 2016-17).
- 2.3 A detailed analysis of SEND home to school transport has revealed that there has been an overall increase in pupil numbers on SEN home to school transport of 22% from March 2015 to March 2017
- 2.4 This has also resulted in an increase in the demand for transport provision across all age ranges but in particular, a 66% increase in the number of post-16 and post 19 pupils who are using the service.
- 2.5 Based on those trends in SEND continuing and the annual year on year growth estimated at 18% per annum, it was estimated that by 2020 the forecasted spend will be £13.2M. This will continue to increase to £18.4M by 2022, and potentially could reach £30M by 2025.
- 2.6 The authority took the decision to respond by reviewing the areas within the policy which could be influencing this additional growth.

### 3. Option Appraisal

3.1 The policy changes adopted in May 2018 comprised of 3 key proposals:-

3.2 *Proposal 1: Removal of the FREE transport statement for SEND Post-16 to 18 students with an EHCP from September 2018, to bring it in line with mainstream transport arrangements.*

This proposal influenced a number of young people to review their transport options instead of automatically selecting the “free” option previously offered by the authority

In total 70 young people made alternative arrangements with a saving of £316k

Mid-year checks showed that these young people were still continuing in education.

3.3 *Proposal 2: Recognise SEND Post-19 students as adults in education, and identify unmet transport need in line with Health and Adult Services social care assessment.*

The young adults impacted by this policy update were contacted to request a transport assessment to be undertaken. From the 109 identified:

- 40 left education as no further progress would be made.
- 5 have now moved into Work Based Learning and directed to the Central Government funded – Access to work fund
- 10 have declined the assessment and will be using own or alternative methods of transport.
- 11 have been assessed as not requiring support.
- 43 have received assistance.

The saving from the 66 adults no longer in transport provided by the authority is £300k

3.4 *Proposal 3: Promote Parental Transport Allowance to SEND sole-occupancy provision with a realistic enhancement to reflect the young person transport need (for those eligible for transport assistance under statutory duty)*

Local authorities can offer parents an allowance as a form of travel assistance. Historically this has been set at 30p. Feedback from parents both prior and during the consultation was this amount was too low.

Following the increase to 45p per mile, an increase in the number of new application for transport assistance have been negotiated into PTA.

Existing solo traveller has been faced with little interest and despite 2 attempts of communicating with parents to offer the parental allowance – those in receipt of transport are reluctant to accept the offer.

The total saving for this proposal compared with the authority arranging transport provision is £287k

- 3.4 The total saving against doing nothing has achieved £905k in year 1.
- 3.5 The growth in post 16 and post 19 transport provision has not only stabilised but as shown in Appendix 1, reduced to the same level as 2015/16.

#### 4. Key Implications

##### 4.1 Local Member

The implementation of the policy was county wide. The SEND Transport Manager by request has provided updates to each of the Area Constituency Committees during the first year implementation.

All

##### 4.2 Financial

The rationale behind the changes to the policy in 2018 were to both provide more consistency across the mainstream and SEND provision but to also take corrective action to reduce the significant budget pressure.

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total	Actual to date.
Proposal 1	166	108	162	163	599	£316k
Proposal 2	59	129	272	0	460	£300k
Proposal 3	353	397	0	0	750	£287k
Total	578	634	434	163	£1.8m	£905k

As shown, we are ahead of schedule in relation to post 16 and post 19 provision. This was due to more post students opting for college or public transport and in Post 19 the above expected savings were due to a number of Education Health Care Plans concluding and the person either moving onto either a supported internship/apprenticeship, university or social care provision.

The Parental Transport Allowance has not impacted on existing transport provision as we had hoped. It has, however, provided an acceptable offer for new applications to transport assistance. In which we have seen some growth in uptake compared to previous years

##### 4.3 Legal

The local authority has a duty to provide transport assistance for eligible statutory aged pupils. The first 2 proposals were focussed on the discretionary offer provided by the local authority.

Whilst there is no legal duty to provide discretionary transport, North Yorkshire by the nature of its geographical and rural environment, have selected to maintain a discretionary element to Home to School Transport.

#### 4.4 Environmental Impacts/Benefits

The impact of 136 young people no longer requiring home to school transport from the local authority has a positive environmental impact on the number of vehicles the authority are placing in circulation to meet the statutory duty.

### 5. **Conclusion**

- 5.1 The first year implementation has stabilised the numbers of pupil's growth in discretionary transport provision for 2018.
- 5.2 The parental transport offer is attractive to new applicants but the authority is facing reluctance from existing transport users
- 5.3 Significant growth is still apparent in the statutory aged children (5 to 16 years) for both mainstream and SEND. For this reason the home to school transport policy for statutory aged pupils has been reviewed for areas above the statutory requirements, and is currently in consultation on 7 proposals until 16<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

### 6. **Recommendation**

- 6.1 That the progress made in the first year of implementation of the Home to School transport policy 2018 is noted by Members.

### 7. **Reasons for Recommendations**

- 7.1 The implementation of the policy has not had a detrimental impact on the ability of young people accessing their education.
- 7.2 The policy changes has had a positive influence on the home to school transport expenditure.

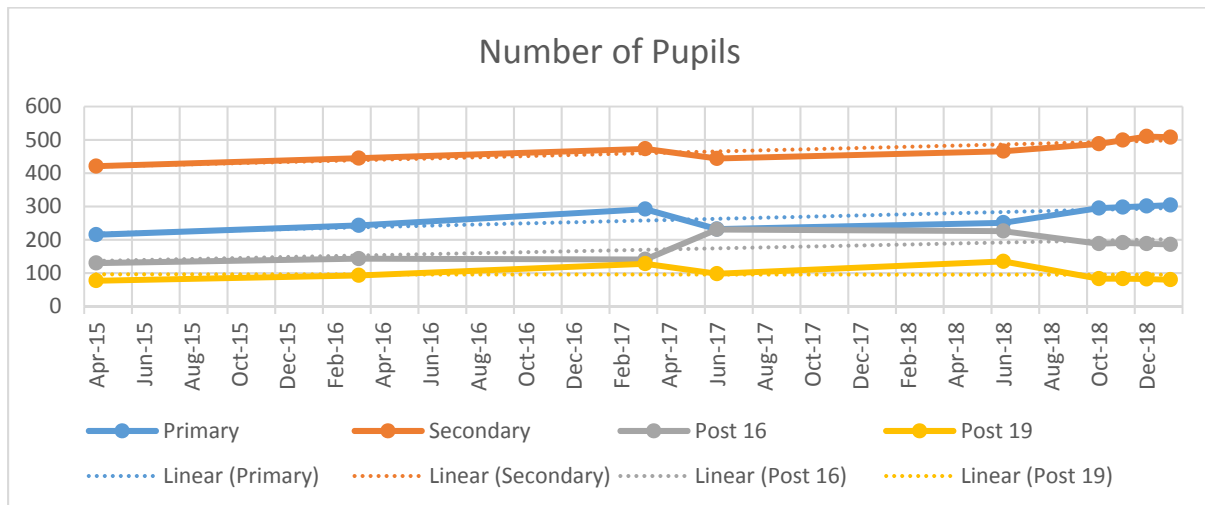
Gail Chester  
SEND Transport Manager  
8..4.19

Background papers relied upon in the preparation of this report:-

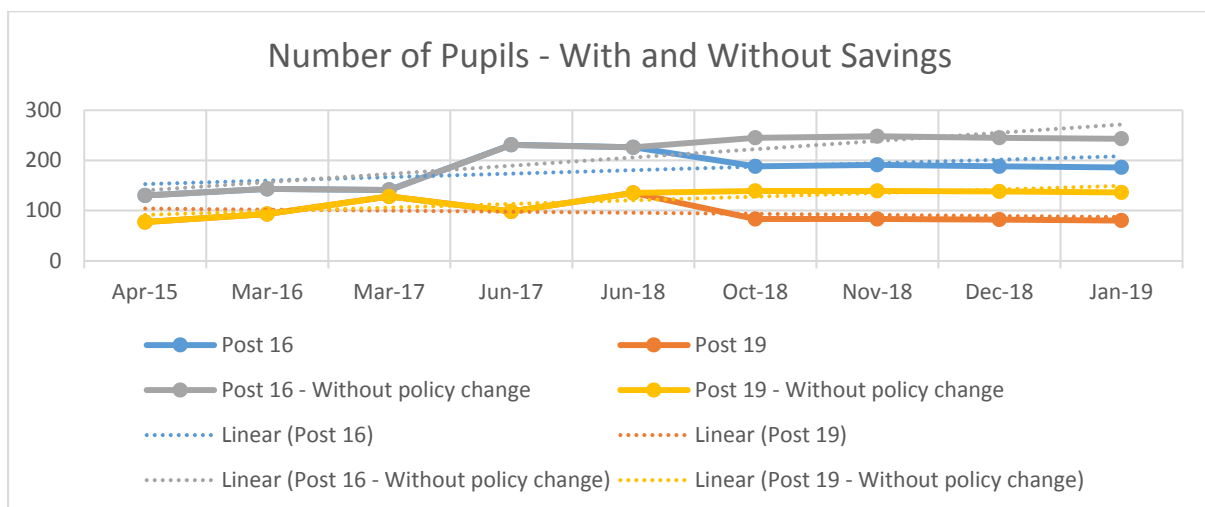
For further information contact the author of the report

### **Appendices**

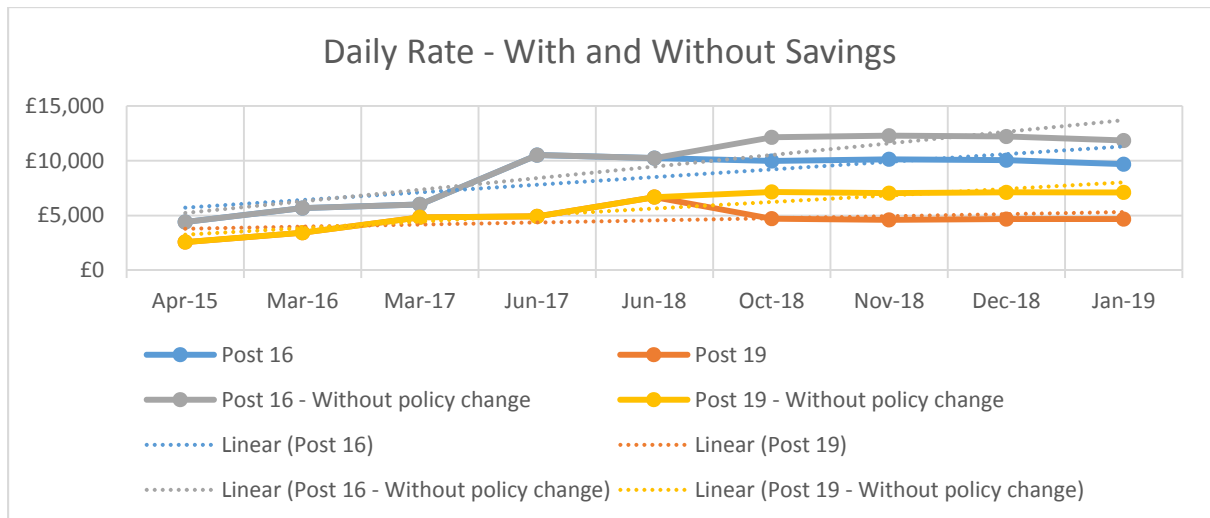
Trend data – Appendix 1



Whilst the number of pupils in SEND transport has been growing in the last 3 years, the policy change implemented from June 2018 has resulted in the number of post 16 and post 19 reducing back to 2015/16 level.



In more detail on the post 16 and post 19 pupil number, the linear line is where we would expect growth to be at, but by Summer 2017, the actual growth had exceeded this and a second anticipated level was forecasted (grey and yellow lines). In June 2018 following the policy change, the actual impact is shown (blue and orange)



This graph shows the impact on the daily rate of provision for all post 16 and post 19 including those who are currently protected. The graph shows the daily rate has stabilised in post 16 and falling in post 19 against June 2018 figures.