

## NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

## YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 January 2015

**Home to School and College Transport: Savings Proposals****1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To consider the formal consultation which is currently underway to remove two areas of discretionary provision from the home to school and college transport policy in order to meet the target saving in the 2020 programme.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Since 2010/11 savings of £3.928m have been made in the budget for home to school and college transport. By 2020, further savings of £325k have to be made in the current £20.5m budget.
- 2.2 The meeting of the Corporate Director and Executive Members for CYPS on 9 December, 2014 agreed to public consultation on proposals to make further savings in areas of discretionary provision in the home to school and college transport service. A copy of the report which was considered at the meeting is appended.

**3.0 PROPOSALS FOR CONSULTATION**

- 3.1 Transport for pupils aged 8-11

The Council has a duty to provide free transport for children over the age of 8 who live more than three miles from their normal or catchment school. For younger children, the Council must provide free transport if they live more than two miles from their normal or catchment school. The Council's current policy is to provide **all** primary age children with free transport if they live more than two miles from their normal or catchment school, regardless of their age. There are approximately 520 children who live between two and three miles from school who receive discretionary free transport. Most of these pupils travel to school on buses which are provided for entitled pupils but a small number (11 in 2014/15) are provided with taxis because there is no school bus available.

- 3.2 Consultation proposal

We are now consulting on changing this aspect of the policy so that free transport would be provided for those pupils aged 8-11 who live over three miles from their normal or catchment school, (which is the statutory requirement) but not for those who live between two and three miles from that school.

Implementation of the proposed revision to the policy would save the Council approximately £190k per annum. It is likely that most parents would choose to purchase an annual bus pass, which currently costs £380. It is proposed that these changes would be applied to pupils starting primary school from September 2016 onwards, to ensure any change in policy can be part of parents' decision when choosing a school for their child.

### 3.3 Transport for pupils at a 'critical stage' of their education

If pupils in Years 10 and 11 move house and their parents want them to remain at the school at which they started their GCSE courses, the Council currently provides free transport to enable them to do so. Some pupils in Year 9 may also be eligible for this support if they have commenced GCSE courses which their new school does not offer. In 2014/15, 191 pupils were provided with transport on these grounds.

### 3.4 Consultation proposal

We are now consulting on removing this area of discretionary provision. This would mean that in these cases, parents would be responsible for making transport arrangements for their children and for meeting any associated costs. The current policy would continue to apply to children who are in the care of the local authority.

We estimate that this would make a saving of £135k per annum from the home to school and college transport budget. The proposal would be phased in from September 2015 so that pupils already supported in this way would not have their current arrangements disturbed.

## 4.0 POST-16 TRANSPORT

4.1 The 9 December report also recommended that consultation be timetabled on a proposal to cease to provide subsidised post-16 transport to schools and colleges. That recommendation was **not** agreed and Executive Members requested that further consideration be given to the matter later in 2015. A decision was made to increase the cost of a post-16 travel pass to £550 per annum from September 2015.

## 5.0 CONSULTATION

5.1 A twelve week public consultation on the proposals commenced on 17 December, 2014 and ends on 11 March, 2015. A report will be made to the Executive on the outcomes of the consultation before a final decision is made.

5.2 If required a more detailed report with analysis of the consultation findings will be brought to the Committee at its meeting on 17 April 2015.

## 6.0 Recommendations

6.1 That the Committee notes that the consultation on changes in the home to school and college transport policy has commenced.

6.2 That the Committee considers whether it wishes to receive the results of the public consultation at its meeting on 17 April 2015.

## CORPORATE DIRECTOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICE

20 January 2015

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