

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Rory Love,

Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

23/00069

For publication [Do not include information which is exempt from publication under schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972]

Key decision: YES

Key decision criteria. The decision will:

- be significant in terms of its effects on a significant proportion of the community living or working within two or more electoral divisions – which will include those decisions that involve:
- the adoption or significant amendment of major strategies or frameworks;
- significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether County-wide or in a particular locality.

Subject Matter / Title of Decision

Post 16 Transport Policy Statement including Post 19 for 2024/25

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree the Post 16 Transport Policy Statement including Post 19 for the 2024/25 academic year.

Reason(s) for decision:

Background

Local authorities have a legal duty to annually publish a Post 16 Transport Policy Statement. This decision will put in place the policy for the academic year 2024/25.

KCC currently provides a Kent 16+ Travel Saver card to 4,765 pupils. Under the scheme, KCC subsidises 50% of the cost of bus travel, with a 50% contribution from families. KCC expects this card to be suitable for most learners, but where it is not KCC will consider applications for support – the policy statement sets out the assessment process and options available.

Equalities Impact Assessment

An EqIA has been completed and will be included in the report to the Children, Young People's and Education Cabinet Committee as well as the report presented to the Cabinet Member before this decision is taken.

Financial Implications

KCC's total estimated revenue costs for transporting Post 16 young people using either the KTS 16+ travel pass or KCC arranged transport/ Personal Transport Budget is approximately £14.6m per year, though this can vary depending on demand. Approximately £2.5m is recouped through the charging of the KTS16+ (currently £500 per year per child), with the balance of £12.1m met from the Home to School Transport revenue budget.

The financial impact of the proposals set out in this paper are estimated to achieve an annual saving of around £1.4m to £2.0m as set out below.

· The removal of wholly free Post 16 transport for learners with SEND and/or mobility problems, by charging the equivalent amount of a KTS16+ pass (currently £500 per

year, with a discounted rate for those eligible for Free School Meals) is estimated to generate additional income of approximately £0.5m per year.

· The removal of additional drop off and collection times for Post 16 learners to accommodate partial attendance is approximately £0.2m per year,

· Introduction of qualifying criteria for learners seeking transport support for new education courses started after their 19th birthday could generate an annual saving of around £0.6m to £1.3m (this is dependent on the course undertaken and journey times).

The costs of implementation are estimated to be around £30k, which includes system changes and website development. The increase in capacity of the CYPE transport eligibility team is estimated to be £50k. Legal Implications The requirements placed on a local authority are defined in the Education Act 1996 (as amended), Education and Skills Act 2008, Education and Inspections Act 2006, Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and the Equality Act 2010. Local authorities do not have a general obligation to provide free or subsidised post 16 travel support but do have a duty to prepare and publish an annual transport policy statement specifying the arrangements for the provision of transport or other support that the authority considers it necessary to make to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training. Local authorities have a duty to encourage, enable and assist young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND) to participate in education and training, up to the age of 25. The policy statement sets out the duties on the LA to consider requests for transport support. Where additional support is refused, learners can appeal to the Transport Regulation Committee Appeal Panel.

Data Protection Impact Assessment The Kent 16+ Transport privacy statement can be found here (Kent Travel Saver and Kent 16+ Travel Saver privacy notice - Kent County Council) and advises parents that they are consenting to the usage of their submitted data, how the data will be used, who it will be shared with and how long it will be held, in line with KCC's duties. Changes associated with this decision do not affect the data that is collected or how it is used, so previous DPIAs remain valid and do not require revision.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

The Children's and Young People Cabinet Committee considered the decision on 18 July 2023.

Any alternatives considered and rejected:

These are outlined in the decision report attached to this document.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer: None



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signed

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date