

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Shellina Prendergast,
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

22/00008

For publication

Subject: Proposed 16 - 19 Transport Policy Statement 2022-23

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Skills, I agree to the Kent Post-16 Transport Policy Statement

Reason(s) for decision:

- 1.1 KCC has a duty to consider applications for transport and is required to enable access to education. In most circumstances it meets this duty through the KCC 16+ Travel Saver pass. This is a generous discretionary scheme which aids access to both education and employment with training. The card will be made available for 2022/23 at an annual cost of £500, available to purchase via instalments, with no limit on the level of use. Learning providers, at their discretion, can subsidise this using bursary funding and we would expect bursary to be provided for up to 50% of the cost for low income families.
- 1.2 KCC has a duty to consult on and publish its Post 16 Transport Policy Statement each year. Whilst there is no statutory duty to provide transport for Post 16 Learners, there is a duty to consider applications for assistance with transport and to enable access to education and training to age 18 years. The transport policy sets out how KCC will meet this duty and what learners can expect by way of support.
- 1.3 While the ongoing uncertainty around COVID-19 means that there is a small potential for changes to be required for school/college transport, the current policy did not limit KCC's ability to make these necessary adjustments throughout the pandemic, no significant changes have been made for the 2022/23 academic year. Officers continue to monitor the pandemic, alongside any changes in government guidance to ensure that the transport offering remains suitable.
- 1.4 Schools, colleges and learning providers have been consulted, as have their students. Public Transport have also been included in the consultation, as have parents. The consultation on the proposed policy ran until the 20 February 2022. Due to statutory timescales associated with this policy review and the cabinet committee schedule, it was necessary to compose Cabinet papers shortly before the conclusion of the public consultation. As a result, the initial Committee report was based on just over 5 weeks' worth of consultation responses, with an addendum circulated shortly before the meeting to update statistics and key themes.
- 1.5 The policy is attached as Appendix A, a summary of consultation responses is attached as Appendix B. A copy of the consultation document can be found at www.kent.gov.uk/post16transport

Financial Implications

2.1 The scheme is uncapped and costs will vary depending on take up levels and journeys undertaken by cardholders, it is therefore difficult to predict overall costs for 2022-23. The current cost of the post 16+ KTS is around £2.9m of which £2.0m is funded from the recharge of the pass. The remaining subsidy of £0.9m is met from the revenue budget. The 2022-23 MTFP includes a saving of £0.350m from increasing the KTS 16+ pass cost from September 2022 to £500. In addition, the Home to school transport revenue budget also subsidises the Post 16 SEN Transport offer. This numbers fluctuate from year to year, but the total subsidy remains between £4-5 million per annum.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:
The decision was considered by the Children’s and Young people Cabinet Committee at their meeting on 1st March 2022.

Any alternatives considered:
All alternatives were considered following the consultation period.

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

Signed.....

Date.....