

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TAKEN BY:

Rory Love,
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

DECISION NO:

23/00051

For publication

Subject: Proposed 16 - 19 Transport Policy Statement 2023-24

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 Kent 16+ Travel Saver pass. This is a generous discretionary scheme which aids access to both education and employment with training. This provides up to a 50% reduction in travel costs for the average user. Learning providers, at their discretion, can further subsidise this using bursary funding and we would expect bursary to be provided for up to 50% of the cost for low-income families. Because schools and colleges use bursary funding at their discretion, some choose to subsidise other localised bus travel cards as opposed to the KCC scheme which offers a broader transport offer.
- 1.2 KCC has a duty to consult on and publish its Post 16 Transport Policy Statement every 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. The transport policy sets out how KCC will meet this duty and what learners can expect by way of support.
- 1.3 KCC consulted with current and future service users between 25 January and 21 March 2023 on a Post 16 Transport Policy Statement for 2023/24, stating that no changes were proposed for this year. KCC's proposals for 2023-24 continue to exceed its statutory duties in this area.

Financial Implications

The scheme is uncapped and costs will vary depending on take up levels and journeys undertaken by cardholders, and so the overall costs of the scheme can vary year to year. In the financial year 2022-23, the cost of the post 16+ KTS was £2.7m of which £2.5m was funded from the recharge of the pass. The remaining subsidy of £0.3m is met from the revenue budget. The 2023-24 MTFP includes savings from increasing the KTS 16+ pass cost from September 2023 however, following confirmation of the Bus Subsidy Implementation Plan for 2023-24, these increases are expected to be delayed with costs covered by grant funding (as outlined in Key Decision 23/00027). 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 is around £10 million per annum.

Legal Implications:

Local authorities have a duty to prepare and publish by 31 May each year an annual transport policy statement specifying the arrangements for the provision of transport, or otherwise that the authority

considers necessary, to make to facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training.

Equality Implications:

Post 16 Transport Policy has an overall positive impact for learners with protected characteristics, with little to no negative effects. The document and consultation information can be found via www.kent.gov.uk/schooltransportpolicy

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

This decision was considered by the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee on 16 May 2023.

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..... 6 June 2023