

MEETING	PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL Councillor Qaseem (Chair) Councillor P. Bedi (Vice Chair) Councillor Bal Councillor Basra Councillor Begum Councillor Brooker Councillor R. Davis Councillor Matloob Councillor Sandhu <u>EDUCATION VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS</u> Vacant <u>NON-VOTING CO-OPTED MEMBERS</u> Slough Healthwatch Representative – Neil Bolton-Heaton Secondary School Representative - Paul Kassapian Slough Youth Parliament Representative - Fifi El Sayed
DATE AND TIME:	MONDAY, 12TH SEPTEMBER, 2022 AT 6.30 PM
VENUE:	COUNCIL CHAMBER - OBSERVATORY HOUSE, 25 WINDSOR ROAD, SL1 2EL
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER: (for all enquiries)	NADIA WILLIAMS 07749 709 961

NOTICE OF MEETING

You are requested to attend the above Meeting at the time and date indicated to deal with the business set out in the following agenda.



GAVIN JONES
Chief Executive

AGENDA

PART I

AGENDA ITEM	REPORT TITLE	PAGE	WARD
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Apologies for absence.

1. Declarations of Interest

All Members who believe they have a Disclosable Pecuniary or other Interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting must declare that interest and, having regard to the circumstances described in Section 9 and Appendix B of the Councillors' Code of Conduct, leave the meeting while the matter is discussed.

CONSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

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| 2. | Minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2022 | 1 - 6 | - |
| 3. | Minutes of the Meeting held on held on 15 June 2022 | 7 - 10 | - |
| 4. | Member Questions | | |

SCRUTINY ISSUES

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| 5. | Home to School Travel Assistance and Post 16 Travel Assistance Policies - Consultation Feedback | 11 - 98 | All |
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ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

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| 6. | Members' Attendance Record | 99 - 100 | - |
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Press and Public

Attendance and accessibility: You are welcome to attend this meeting which is open to the press and public, as an observer. You will however be asked to leave before any items in the Part II agenda are considered. For those hard of hearing an Induction Loop System is available in the Council Chamber.

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In addition, the law allows members of the public to take photographs, film, audio-record or tweet the proceedings at public meetings. Anyone proposing to do so is requested to advise the Democratic Services Officer before the start of the meeting. Filming or recording must be overt and persons filming should not move around the meeting room whilst filming nor should they obstruct proceedings or the public from viewing the meeting. The use of flash photography, additional lighting or any non-hand held devices, including tripods, will not be allowed unless this has been discussed with the Democratic Services Officer.

Emergency procedures: The fire alarm is a continuous siren. If the alarm sounds Immediately vacate the premises by the nearest available exit at either the front or rear of the Chamber and proceed to the assembly point: The pavement of the service road outside of Westminster House, 31 Windsor Road.

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People Scrutiny Panel – Meeting held on Thursday, 31st March, 2022.

Present:- Councillors Qaseem (Chair), Kelly (Vice-Chair), Ajaib, Basra, Begum and Brooker

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Hulme and Gahir

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Matloob, Mohammad and Sandhu

PART 1

32. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Brooker declared that he was a governor at St Mary's CE Primary School.

Councillor Kelly declared that he worked for the Slough and East Berkshire CofE Multi Academy Trust (SEBMAT).

Councillors Brooker and Kelly remained and participated in the meeting.

33. Minutes of the Meeting held on 31 January 2022

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2022 be approved as a correct record.

34. Member Questions

None received

35. SEND Written Statement of Action

The Panel received a report and a presentation on the SEND Written Statement of Action (WSOA) that the Local Authority (LA) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) had filled with Ofsted on 18 February 2022, in response to the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) local area inspection.

The Cabinet member for Children's Services, Lifelong Learning & Skills spoke about the item and thanked officers and all those that had been involved in submitting the response, following the inspection of SEND services in Slough. A WSOA was required in order to ensure that the council was meeting the SEND responsibility for children in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014. The Cabinet member stated that the LA, CCG and Slough Children First (SCF) would work jointly to address highlighted areas for development.

The Associate Director, Education, and Inclusion (ADE&I) responded to Members' questions and comments as set out below.

A member asked whether the proposed completion target dates were likely to be met given the current resources available. The ADE&I advised that it may not be possible to meet some targets due to limited resources, but internal processes were currently being reviewed to assess available resources to improvements were possible.

(18.43 – Cllr Begum joined the meeting)

A member asked whether the focus area of expanding the workforce to increase clinical capacity for new assessment target date of March 2023, had been set as a worst case scenario. It was explained that this target was specific to the CCG, but efforts were being made to put additional resources to deal with the issue, given that this was a priority action point.

In response to the query as to whether the target to put the SEND team structure in place by April 2022 would be met. The ADE&I explained that a business case had been submitted and once the outcome had been confirmed, the Panel would be provided with an update.

A member highlighted that most of the priorities were set out as being 'in progress' and queried the likelihood of the actions being achieved on time, given the need for financial requirements. It was noted that the document was strategic and working groups would be created to achieve the completion date from the actions outlined. Members were reassured that processes had been put in place to drive forward the actions but were urged to be mindful that progress would be measured due to the issue of resources. Despite the slow progress, it was anticipated that needed resources would speed things up.

A member asked what had been put in place to improve the Council's SEND duties given the high number of primary school pupils with SEND or Educational Health Care Plans (EHCP). The ADE&I advised that the prevent programme was now in place to address the weakness of not having had an early intervention programme in the past. Plans were now in place to identify children at an earlier stage and the Panel would be provided with an update in due course. Members were urged to be mindful that expenditure in this area was highly overspent and this needed to be reduced.

In response to a query raised about the tracking of Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and concern about schools not using the grant appropriately; it was explained that the inspection had highlighted this as an area of concern and although training had been set up, there were still difficulties in tracking currently.

A member asked about the level of staff turnover, as there had been issues with schools not being able to contact officers in the SEND team. The ADE&I explained that there were currently 2.8 equivalent full time staff out of 7 in the team. Schools had been contacted to explain the issue of high turnover of interim officers who tended to support approximately 200-250 children and subsequently resulted in the issue of a smooth handover. Members were reassured that improvements were imminent as the department was in the

process of appointing new staff and plans had been put in place to mitigate the issues arising from interim staff leaving.

A member asked about the proposal for cultural change. It was explained that this would begin with setting standards and expectation for services, documenting various roles in order to be clear and transparent. Specific actions and Key performance indicators (KPI) would also be developed within the next four weeks

In response to a question about an area of concern in respect of children in care, it was explained that the Council was taking a multi-agency approach and although this was a high preference group, the priority was to focus on the plan to ensure that children received their entitlement for speech and language therapy.

A member asked what actions would be taken to work with schools to ensure a full understanding of the SEND code of practice and statutory responsibilities. The ADE&I advised that work would be undertaken with schools to impart an understanding of a holistic approach, setting out their responsibilities and providing guidance on funding restrictions. It was explained that challenges were being overcome but the critical issue was about how the needs of children were being met. Schools and SENCOs were being invited to SEND panel meetings, which contributed to making the process transparent and thus promoting an understanding and acceptance of change.

A member asked about feedback on improved services for hard to reach parents. It was explained that the Council was aware of every parent that had a child with an EHCP. There had been a review of the different languages with translations to ensure an inclusive service that took the views of parents on board. No system had been in place in the past to enable challenge, but the new way would provide better insight.

A member asked how teachers would be supported in providing action plans from schools in relation to review and facilitate school-to-school support on effective practice in SEND and inclusion support delivery. The ADE&I advised that this was facilitated by schools being able to share practices and school effectiveness strategy (academies were not required to but they also participated). There had also been an agreement with headteachers to include SEND specific questions and they would provide evidence of what and how they were doing.

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Gahir asked a number of questions which included clarification on the 7 areas identified for improvement, all of which were noted as being 'on track'. Cllr Gahir suggested that milestones would need to be reviewed as the WSOA was filed in February with the outcome of many actions set out as being 'in progress' and required tasks to be undertaken and reported back on. Therefore, he did not believe that it was correct to state that all actions were 'on track'. Cllr Gahir also questioned how frequently reviews would be undertaken. Members were informed that the

focus was on progress rather than on cultural change, which could only be ascertained from receiving feedback. Inbuilt system of communication and survey would provide required feedback.

Resolved - That the SEND Written Statement of Action report be noted.

36. Re-procurement of Adult Social Care Domiciliary Care Contracts

The Group Manager, Purchasing (GMP) presented a report and presentation on the Re-procurement of Adult Social Care Domiciliary. The report sought comments and consideration of the model agreed at Cabinet. The GMP responded to Members' questions and comments as set out below.

The Panel discussed and raised a number of questions.

A member asked whether the services from the same number of providers would be continued in the future. The GMP explained that this would depend on the amount of tender and capacity and there the number may increase as there was no restriction to the number of suppliers. Members were advised that selection was made only on suitable suppliers for requirements.

In response to a question about assessment process and criteria used to assess new entrants, Members were advised that an inspection was undertaken to ensure information given was accurate and was being put in practice. Work was also done with providers to improve standards before their services were used. The Quality Assurance team also reviewed providers to ensure and improve quality.

A member asked about the shortage of male domiciliary carers and the number of apprenticeships offered. Members were advised that a number of well-established providers had apprenticeship schemes, whilst the startup providers did not. There was also a high turnover for male care workers as they tended to work for a short while and moved on to other occupations. The GMP acknowledged that there was a need to ensure stability of male carers and advised that a workforce group had been created across East Berkshire to look at enhancing carers profession. It was also noted that the question of how providers meet the diversity of the community and ensuring a match, as well as the need to change the way in which the profession was viewed had been raised.

A member asked how key performance indicators (KPI) would be monitored. It was noted that these would be done through KPI workbook and may include matching diversity needs and looking at the number of people they had not been able to provide for. Additionally, there was a possibility of the link between rate and quality being reviewed, but such link had not yet been observed.

A member asked whether funding would be spent by 31 March 2022 financial deadline and whether unspent money could be clawed back. The GMP

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explained that the exact figure would need to be obtained and reported back to the Panel.

Resolved – That the report Re-procurement of Adult Social Care Domiciliary be noted.

37. Members' Attendance Record 2021/22

Resolved – that Members' Attendance record 2021/22 be noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.55 pm)

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People Scrutiny Panel – Extraordinary Meeting held on Wednesday, 15th June, 2022.

Present:- Councillors Qaseem (Chair), P. Bedi (Vice-Chair, from 6.36pm), Basra (from 6.33pm), Begum, Brooker, Matloob and Sandhu.

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Gahir.

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor R. Davis.

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest

None were received.

2. Re-Procurement of Community Equipment Service

The Panel received a comprehensive presentation detailing the re-procurement of Community Equipment Service. The Group Manager, People Strategy and Commissioning reminded Members that the provision of community equipment enabled individuals with assessed care and support needs to remain living in their own home, therefore promoting independence and reducing the need for more expensive residential care. The service was currently delivered via joint arrangement across the six Berkshire local authorities under the Berkshire Community Equipment Service (BCES) Partnership. The current five year contract commenced in April 2017 and was extended for a further two years to March 2024.

Future commissioning options were being considered to develop a community equipment offer to meet the needs of residents of Slough and were outlined as:

- Commissioning a stand alone service
- Delivering an inhouse service
- Continuing with the current arrangements

It was recommended that the proposed option, of continuing with the current arrangement and develop a model in partnership with Berkshire Health and Social Care Services; was considered to promote best value by delivering economies of scale through collaborative purchasing and was the most time/resource efficient method of securing supply both on system wide and individual basis.

The Panel noted that the budget for the community equipment service was £600k with particular emphasis drawn to the fact that current partnership arrangements meant that the Council only paid for what was required for clients.

The Panel discussed a number of issues including the loss of expertise within the local authority as outlined within Option 3. It was explained that this referred to potential future loss to develop in house expertise and that there was no loss under the current arrangements. A Member asked whether Option 2 – bringing services in house – was a feasible option and how many other local authorities had adopted this approach. Members were informed that whilst some larger local authorities, such as London boroughs commissioned services in house; this was not recommended as would require significant initial resource investment and loss of economy of scale.

A Member asked about what the process for extending the current contract was and duration of any future contractual arrangements. The Group Manager People, Strategy and Commissioning stated that business case had been submitted to extend the current contract. Work was currently on going regarding the duration of the proposed new contract.

Although there was general consensus to proceed with Option 3, Members requested that further detailed information be provided relating to feedback from users of the service and their experiences in addition to further financial details around economies of scale; to enable to measure and evaluate options objectively. It was noted that this information could be provided to the Panel at a future meeting.

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Gahir asked a number of questions which included clarification regarding the costs to the authority for the current partnership arrangement, who was in benefit of any profit and data for usage of community equipment by Slough residents. Members were informed that as the contract lead and host authority, £10k was payable to West Berkshire Council. The contract was held between the service provider Healthcare Pro and West Berkshire Council (acting on behalf of the partnership) and further information would be obtained and reported to the Panel on the specific point relating to profits.

It was confirmed that annual audits were held and that details of these from 2017 would be circulated to the Panel.

The Panel were reminded that Cabinet was due to consider the matter at its meeting in June 2022 with a recommendation to commence joint development of a community equipment model to support the delivery of economies of scale by drawing together the planning and purchasing power of local authorities and health bodies across Berkshire.

Resolved - a) That details of the presentation be noted.

b) That the Panel supports Option 3, as set out in the report, as the preferred approach for the development of an integrated community equipment service.

3. Re-Procurement of Extra Care Contract

The Panel received a presentation detailing the re-procurement of the Adult Social Care (ASC) Integrated Care and Support services in Extra Care Contract. The extra care providers played an essential role within the health and social care system, delivering care to individuals with an assessed need and enabling them to remain independent in their own homes for much longer. This flexible care and support, with help in an emergency, was significantly cheaper than residential care.

The existing contract was ending in March 2023 and various options available were outlined. It was explained that the preferred option of re-tendering via the ASC Dynamic Purchasing System, would ensure best value in delivering extra care services through procuring services following a competitive process and provide services that met Slough's demographic diversity. The risks associated with this option were highlighted and the mitigating factors in place to address them.

Financial implications of the current and proposed revised contract were summarised. It was proposed that there would be a 15% reduction in hours (primarily by reducing the waking night component relating to existing extra care provisions which had been under-utilised) under the new arrangement and whilst it was not possible to confirm a price for extra care provision without issuing a fixed price tender, it was anticipated that some savings could be achieved on the current contract price. Concern was expressed that a reduction in the number of care hours commissioned would compromise the care given. It was explained that an assessment had been conducted regarding user needs and the care hours proposed in the new contract would adequately meet user needs. However, in the event further hours were required there was process in place to obtain those, subject to approval of a business case.

A Member commented on the workforce implications outlined in the report stating that these may need to be revised given that inflation was currently at 9%.

Further details were requested as to what mechanisms were in place if the Council was not satisfied with the service being provided. It was noted that robust contract management would ensure quality assurance. In addition, clauses in the contract would allow the option of exiting the contract should this be required.

A Member asked how safeguarding concerns were identified and monitored and was informed that both announced and unannounced site visits took place by the local authority and the Care Quality Commission. The new extra care model was being developed to include outcomes that could be measured and monitored, with work currently ongoing including benchmarking against neighbouring authorities, user surveys and annual reports to establish a baseline against which future comparisons of service delivery could be made.

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Panel Members were informed that approval would be sought from Cabinet to commence the procurement for a three year contract plus an opportunity for a further one year extension; subject to satisfactory performance and the contract continuing to deliver best value to the Council.

Resolved – That details of the presentation on the re-procurement of Extra Care Contract be noted.

4. Date of Next Meeting - 27th June 2022

The next meeting was scheduled for 27th June and Members were informed that there was a possibility that it was likely to be postponed. It was noted that a scrutiny training and work programming session was scheduled 16th June, following which it would be confirmed whether the meeting on 27th June would take place.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.45 pm)

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	People Scrutiny Panel
Date:	12 th September 2022
Subject:	Home to School Travel Assistance and Post 16 Travel Assistance Policies – Consultation Feedback
Chief Officer:	Andrew Fraser – Executive Director of People (Children)
Contact Officer:	Johnny Kyriacou – Associate Director, Education & Inclusion
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	NO
Appendices:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Final Policy 5-16 Home to School Travel Assistance 2 Final Policy Post 16 Education Travel Assistance Policy Statement 3 Consultation Analysis 4 EqIA

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report sets out recommendations that will go to Cabinet regarding the continued delivery of Home to School and College Travel Assistance. The report highlights feedback from a recent public consultation and rationale regarding the proposed changes to policy. Cabinet decision is required regarding progression of the recommendations.

Recommendations:

- 1.2 People Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:
1. Scrutinise and make comments on the proposed policy changes for Home to School Travel (5-16) with effect from the 2023/24 academic year with transitional arrangements in place for the academic year 2022/23 (Appendix 1)
 2. Scrutinise and make comments on the proposed policy changes for Home to College Travel (Post 16) (Appendix 2) with effect from the 2023/24 academic year with transitional arrangements in place for the academic year 2022/23 *[please list by (a), (b), (c) etc where there are multiple recommendations]*

Reason:

- 1.3 Slough Borough Council (SBC) is committed to ensuring the public money we spend and the resources available, are used in the most efficient and effective way to meet the needs of the most vulnerable people within our community. The proposed policy changes ensure that the Council complies with its statutory responsibilities, whilst meeting its best value duties.

Commissioner Review

- 1.4 [Sign off from the Commissioner(s) is required for all reports and any comments are to be recorded in the report. Commissioners must have reports one week before agenda publication to sign off. Legal and finance must have signed off reports before being sent to Commissioners.]

2. Report

Introductory paragraph

- 2.1.1 The proposed policy for Home to School and Post 16 travel provides a child/individual centric approach to travel assistance. Provision will continue to support individual needs and circumstances whilst increasing alternative and independent travel options available to the Council and families.
- 2.1.2 The proposed policies reflect the Council's statutory obligations. It also includes the strategic aims previously approved at cabinet, which includes:
- Social integration of children and young people whatever their needs
 - Independence for children and young people with SEND
 - Promotion of parental responsibility to make any necessary arrangements to ensure their children attend school
 - School responsibility to collaborate with the council on SEN travel
 - Environmentally sustainable travel
 - Efficient use of public resources
- 2.1.3 This inclusion of more independent travel and alternative travel options does not mean the Council will stop meeting the needs of vulnerable children and young people by providing unsuitable travel arrangements. The policy is centred around the child/young person's needs and considering the individual needs and circumstances of each person to identify the most appropriate form of travel.
- 2.1.4 A public consultation ran from Thursday 23rd June to 21st July 2022 to ask those with an interest in the service their views on the proposed policy changes, which included:
- Independent Travel Training to be offered to families as a suitable and appropriate travel provision, subject to a needs assessment.
 - A new Travel Bursary option will be created and offered to families. With family consent this will enable them to make their own travel/care arrangements that enable them to facilitate their child's attendance at School/College.
 - Introduced use of collection points for transport arrangements where a needs assessment identifies that a child is able to access travel arrangements away from the home address.
 - The removal of assistance with travel to faith Schools or same sex establishments where nearer establishments are identified as being able to meet educational need, unless qualification under statutory requirements.
 - Introduction of a contribution charge from those in receipt of assistance where the Council does not have a statutory obligation to provide free assistance to eligible individuals, such as those in post 16 education.

- 2.1.5 A range of engagement activities was undertaken to hear from people who access these or similar services, as well as families, carers, professionals and the wider public. This included 6 face-to-face public events, including a dedicated public meeting for families of Arbour Vale School, meetings with School representatives and other professionals, engagement with voluntary groups, as well as publishing information relating to the policy proposals on the Council's consultation pages, including an online survey
- 2.1.6 General feedback from public meetings focussed on individual circumstances as a way of evidencing that that the proposed independent and alternative travel options may not be suitable and would place individual children at risk where these arrangements are not appropriate. Where discussion existed that took into account all users of the service and the extreme range of needs, it was acknowledged that some children/young people may benefit from these new options if their needs were more moderate.
- 2.1.7 It is important to note that upon approval of the recommendations made above, Slough Borough Council will continue to assess each request for assistance with travel based on the merit (needs/circumstances) of each case. Therefore, it is expected that those children/young people with the greatest/most severe needs will continue to be reliant on door-to-door transport services with appropriate onboard support.
- 2.1.8 The proposed action will support the delivery of the Council's statutory obligations, ensure assistance with travel to School/College is available to those with the greatest need, and contribute towards Outcome 1 and 2 of the five-year plan: "to have happy, healthy and successful children in Slough" and "our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs".
- 2.1.9 The Council is taking steps to support the development of independence and preparation for adulthood amongst children and young people. The services identify individual needs and circumstance to decide which travel option is the most appropriate to meet short- and longer-term objectives for the individual.
- 2.1.10 The service believes that the updated policies provide the structure to effectively promote independence amongst children and young people with SEND whilst also assisting with preparing them for adulthood. The policy aims to enable effective assessment and review of individual needs and circumstances, and the introduction of more travel options will enable the service to work closely with schools and families to encourage and enable more independent travel.
- 2.1.11 The strengthening of the policy document will provide greater control and clarity for officers to effectively implement the policy in a consistent and sustainable manner, whilst providing clarity and transparency for families and schools/colleges.

Options considered

2.2.1 No Change to Existing Policies or Service Provision

The Council could choose to retain the existing policies; however, this does not meet the strategic aims set out above, nor does it reflect the best practice which exists elsewhere.

Deciding to not change existing policies or provision would also restrict the services ability to make the service more efficient and assist in addressing the Council's financial challenges whilst also not effectively supporting children and young people to develop life skills for preparation for adulthood or provide a range of appropriate travel options appropriate to need/circumstances.

This option is not recommended.

Independent Travel Training

- 2.2.2 The option of Independent Travel Training as a suitable form of travel to be introduced. For the majority of existing users of the service this travel option will not be suitable due to the risks associated to travelling alone as a result of an individual's SEND. Where children/young person's needs are less severe than training will be offered to those where individual needs assessments (following engagement with families and schools) have identified this as a suitable option.
- 2.2.3 Training will be conducted on a 1:1 basis with each training programme individually designed to reflect the specific needs and capabilities of each learner. The duration of training (number of sessions) will reflect the learner's progression with no pre-determined session numbers being set.
- 2.2.4 Learners will be supported to learn about how to travel safely independently on public transport and will include numerous training scenarios to reflect potential situations that the learner may experience whilst travelling.
- 2.2.5 Existing transport arrangements will be maintained throughout the training to ensure if a return to arranged travel was necessary then this can be facilitated quickly.
- 2.2.6 Out of current users of the service with an EHCP (SEN), based on the experience of other Travel Training organisations, it is only expected that a minority may be able to benefit from the training.
- 2.2.7 Other Council's and Travel Training organisations typically identify approximately 10-14% of existing transport users have the potential to travel independently. This would represent between 52 and 73 out of the 520 current users of the service.
- 2.2.8 Due to the slow nature of delivering Travel Training and the significant barriers that will exist, a conservative estimate (until January 2024) has been used when calculating financial savings. This will be validated, reviewed, and confirmed when undertaking the needs assessments of all users of the service. Where training is not appropriate/suitable for an individual then existing travel arrangements will continue, although for some children and young people there may be an opportunity to re-visit this as they get older. It is anticipated that increasing the numbers of independent travellers through the training will increase post January 2024.
- 2.2.9 Based against current service demand and requirement to build confidence in the programme, training up to 15 children/young people may reduce spend against the Home to School Transport budget by £0.085m per annum by January 2024. Training will continue beyond this date, with the aim to increase the total numbers travel independently building on the early success and confidence generated from the original cohort of beneficiaries.
- 2.2.10 As part of the needs assessment activity that is planned to begin within the service in October 2022, individual children/young people will be identified as potential

candidates for training. Through engagement with families and Schools any potential will be validated and where it is appropriate bespoke training programmes will be designed to reflect the specific needs and circumstances of the individual.

2.2.11 Training is not expected to commence in a “live” environment until February 2023. Training progression and sign off as an independent traveller will be conducted in conjunction with the family and the school. The Council will work in partnership with schools/colleges and parents/families. It is accepted that any period of change is difficult for many children, young people and their families, however this is particularly the case with children and young people with SEND. Experience in other areas has shown that well delivered independent travel training can be life changing, but also that families are very anxious about the change and how risks will be managed. It will be important to have an open dialogue with parents and carers during the process.

This option is recommended.

Travel Bursary

2.2.12 The introduction of a Travel Bursary will provide families with a more convenient option to make their own travel arrangements to reflect the needs and circumstances of the child/young person and the family.

2.2.13 In contrast to typical reimbursement arrangements an agreed budget will be paid monthly in advance to cover the costs associated with the family making appropriate travel and care arrangements to facilitate attendance at School/college. Whilst the bursary can be used to fund a variety of different travel options, this is particularly appropriate for parents or carers who have access to an adapted vehicle, which can be used to transport their child/young person.

2.2.14 Based on the feedback of the consultation and upon review of the original Travel Bursary proposal the Council is looking to introduce the following payment structure which is based on the driving distance from the child/young person’s home address and their place of education.

2.2.15 The Travel Bursary value is as follows:

Distance Band (Home to School – Shortest Driving Route)	Travel Bursary Value (Per Annum)
Less than 5 miles	£2500
5 – 10 miles	£4000
Over 10 miles	£6500

2.2.16 An option will exist where parent/carers can request an enhanced Travel Bursary where the value is insufficient to provide specialist travel provision. This will be reviewed and considered on a case-by-case basis. Where justifiable circumstances are evidence, an enhanced offer may be awarded as long as any award remains financially viable for the Council.

2.2.17 The award of a Travel Bursary can only be made with the parent/carer consent, and therefore if the use of a Travel Bursary is not viable/appropriate then the parent/carer can refuse the offer at which point the Council will make alternative travel arrangements in order to meet its statutory obligations.

- 2.2.18 The acceptance of a Travel Bursary by 21 families (out of approximately 520) is expected to reduce spend by £0.065m, based on current demand levels.
- 2.2.19 The development of the Travel Bursary infrastructure, process and protocols will begin in October 2022. Once appropriate processes and controls are established that enable effective delivery of the Travel Bursary as a viable travel option it will then be communicated to families who will then have the option to consider a Travel Bursary offer for travel as a replacement for their existing travel arrangements.
- 2.2.20 It is expected that Travel Bursary's will begin to be awarded and used as a travel option by families from April 2023 with a targeted sign up of 21 families by September 2023.

This option is recommended.

Collection Points

- 2.2.21 The introduction of the use of collection points to replace some current home collection arrangements will help to encourage the development of independence and enable the streamlining of existing transport routes.
- 2.2.22 Based on the consultation feedback the Council is proposing to only allocate a collection point to individual children/young people where a needs assessment has identified that this is an appropriate and suitable travel arrangement. It is expected that the majority of current users of the service will not be able to use a collection point and will continue to be collected from their home address.
- 2.2.23 Up to 10% of the current users of the service are expected to be identified as able to use a collection point. No spend reduction targets have been identified through the implementation of this proposed option.
- 2.2.24 The Council intends to begin conducting needs assessments of existing users of the service from October 2022. Working with Schools/Colleges and families it is expected that individuals able to effectively use collection points can be identified allowing a phased introduction with individuals beginning to use collection points early in 2023.
- 2.2.25 Completion of existing user needs assessments and full implementation of collection points across the service is expected to be established for the start of the 2023/24 academic year. Use of collection points will only be for individuals where a needs assessment has clearly identified this is an appropriate option for travel.

This option is recommended.

Faith Schools & Same Sex Establishment Travel

- 2.2.26 The Council will cease to provide assistance with travel for children and young people attending Faith Schools or Same Sex Establishments where appropriate, more local provision is available.
- 2.2.27 Where a child/young person is attending a Faith School or Same Sex Establishment, and this has been identified in their Education Health and Care Plan as their named school by the local authority then assistance will continue to be provided in accordance with the statutory eligibility requirements.

- 2.2.28 The Council is looking to cease existing provision, unless statutory eligibility thresholds continue to be met, at the end of the 2022/23 academic year, providing affected families with sufficient notice to make alternative travel arrangements if necessary.
- 2.2.29 The change in travel provision is expected to effect 20 children/young people, currently costing the Council £0.020m per annum, spend reduction benefits will be realised from September 2023.

This option is recommended.

Contribution Charge for Non-Compulsory Age Travel

- 2.2.30 The Council will introduce a contribution charge for those who are not compulsory school age and not eligible (under statutory regulations) for free assistance.
- 2.2.31 Where travel assistance provision has been identified as necessary, in accordance with criteria stated within the Council's travel assistance policies then a contribution charge must be paid before any travel arrangements are established for the individual.
- 2.2.32 Where families/individuals are unable to pay the contribution charge they are expected to exhaust all options of financial support, including accessing 16-19 Bursary via the School/College they are attending. Statutory guidance confirms that the Council can receipt of 16-19 bursary funding into account when assessing an individual's need for financial help with travel/transport.
- 2.2.33 Where family/individual financial circumstances are a limiting factor restricting access to education for the young person, then applications can be made to the Council to consider the circumstances to determine if adjustments to the contribution charge is necessary. Applications of this nature will be considered on its own individual merit.
- 2.2.34 A contribution charge will be initially set at £750 per annum (13% of the current average cost for travel) for the 2023/24 academic year. The charge value will be reviewed annually and adjusted as necessary. Any change to contribution charge will be published in advance of the academic year it comes into effect, typically in alignment with the publishing of the Post 16 Travel Assistance Policy Statement which should be updated and published no later than the 31st May each year as directed by statutory guidance.
- 2.2.35 The introduction of a contribution charge is expected to generate an income and spend reduction of £0.040m from September 2023 based on current demand levels.

This option is recommended.

Background

- 2.3.1 Currently 43% (520) of all Slough children and young people with an EHCP are provided travel assistance by the Council. Approximately 30% of those children and young people with an EHCP and travel assistance live within the statutory walking distance eligibility and are therefore supported with travel due to mobility issues which impact on their ability to walk to school. The mobility issues may relate to physical or learning disability. The remaining children or young people with EHCP

who are provided with travel assistance need to travel further than the statutory walking distances to get to their nearest suitable school.

- 2.3.2 The Council spent approximately £3.4m on transporting children to School and Post 16 establishments 2021/22. The Council currently provides assistance for 710 children and young persons, of which 520 have an EHCP (SEN).
- 2.3.3 To deliver the service approximately 134 routes operate daily supporting children and young people with SEND. Those routes serve 18 in borough education establishments and 43 out of borough.
- 2.3.4 The Council currently does not request a contribution for travel assistance for those aged 16-18 (and 19 if continuing their course). Other Councils require a fee to be paid, as demonstrated in the table below:

<i>Council</i>	<i>Maximum Annual Contribution Charge</i>
<i>Hertfordshire</i>	<i>£1,554</i>
<i>Buckinghamshire</i>	<i>£1,179</i>
<i>Essex</i>	<i>£900</i>
<i>Wiltshire</i>	<i>£850</i>
<i>Bexley</i>	<i>£400</i>
<i>Redbridge</i>	<i>£300</i>

- 2.3.5 The Association of Transport Co-ordinating Officers undertakes a survey with its member authorities across England, Scotland and Wales, benchmarking demand and spend growth in the process. Their latest survey (published late 2021) detailed that Urban Unitary Authorities (EUU) were paying £4,983 per annum for every child/young person they provided travel assistance to with SEND, this does not include any London Councils (LB). Slough is currently paying on average £5,769 per annum per passenger for SEN travel.
- 2.3.6 Within the provision provided to children and young people is a significant number who travel long distances on their own in a taxi, often well into young adulthood. This does not promote independence and preparation for adulthood, nor is it inclusive. The Council is currently delivering a service that fosters dependency and isolation for many children and young people with SEND.
- 2.3.7 Key features of the current policy, practice and culture that underpin poor outcomes for children and young people and high comparative costs are:
- Significant historic levels of travel assistance for Post 16 student without requiring a monetary contribution and for those under the Council discretionary powers, such as assistance to faith and single sex schools by comparison with other authorities
 - Independent Travel Training has not been an available option for officers to make available to young people as a valid alternative travel assistance offer
 - School and parental expectations of solo routes and passenger assistants rather than options that promote independence and integration of children and young people
 - Practice has not been coherent and consistent in determining 'exceptional circumstances', although it has improved in recent times
 - A need for more robust annual review process for children and young people as to travel provision or continued eligibility

Consultation Feedback

- 2.4.1 A detailed consultation process was undertaken between 23rd June 2022 and 21st July 2022. This included an online questionnaire, a consultation booklet, 6 public meetings, and targeted meetings with key stakeholders.
- 2.4.2 Appendix 3 provides more detail about the results of the public consultation. Headline results from the consultation are described below in paragraphs 2.4.3 to 2.5.25.
- 2.4.3 Consultation responses were as follows:
- 58 responses of online questionnaire
 - 11 attendees of public meetings
 - 14 attendees of public meeting at Arbour Vale School
 - 1600 notifications of the consultation sent to current users and pupils with EHCP's
 - 91 notifications of the consultation sent to Schools/Colleges
 - 5 enquiries received via consultation email address
- 2.4.4 Engagement activity was planned to offer a range of options to encourage participation. Morning, lunchtime, afternoon, and evening public meetings were scheduled and a targeted meeting at Arbour Vale School also took place. Notification of the consultation was sent to all children and young people with active EHCP's irrespective of whether they are currently in receipt of travel assistance or not.
- 2.4.5 In addition to the wider communication to all stakeholders about the consultation a meeting were held directly with School, Post 16 and college representatives to explain the proposals and reasonings contained within the consultation. Representatives were able to verbally feedback during the meeting or choose to respond via the online questions, or via the consultation email address. Representatives feedback during the meeting confirmed an understanding of the proposals, that the proposals were reasonable with no significant objections/issues raised. Representatives did support the continued need for cases to be assessed based on individual merit and circumstance as there are always cases that may not fulfil the stated criteria for eligibility but may still warrant support due to the specific circumstances around the individual. Any further response in relation to the consultation would have been channelled through the questionnaire.
- 2.4.6 Ward councillors were invited to attend the scheduled public meetings during the main consultation period.

Key Findings from Consultation

Independent Travel Training

- 2.5.1 22 out of 58 (38%) of respondents agreed that if a young person had potential to travel independently on public transport, then they should be expected to participate in the training. 21 out of 58 (36%) disagreed believing even if an individual had potential to travel independently then they should not be expected to participate in the training.

- 2.5.2 General feedback presented many responses raising concerns about the high support needs required for their child, detailing the safety concerns and risks associated with undertaking training on individuals where it is not suitable or appropriate. Where feedback was received in support of training it acknowledges that a few children would benefit but that this should be on a case-by-case basis in a controlled environment but for the majority of children and young people with SEND this would not be a viable option.
- 2.5.3 *Council's response: The Council accepts that Independent Travel Training will not be suitable for all children and young people and that there will need to be a needs assessment process. It is the intention that through engagement with families, schools and other professionals' individual learners can be identified that would benefit from the training. This will be assessed through individual needs assessments and continually monitored and reviewed.*
- 2.5.4 *Feedback from other Councils, training providers and families that have benefits from training have reaffirmed that where this training is appropriate for the individual child/young person that it can significantly increase their confidence, independence, and contributes towards their preparation for adulthood. Families are often cautious when independent travel training is mentioned however where it can be demonstrated that training is detailed and comprehensive to effectively prepare the individual to travel independently, and that assessment and evaluation processes are robust and transparent, then confidence in the programme will improve amongst families and support effective delivery of this opportunity.*

Travel Bursary

- 2.5.5 34 out of 58 (59%) of respondents to the online questionnaire indicated that the Council should not encourage more families/young people to use a Travel Bursary to make their own travel arrangements.
- 2.5.6 A family or young person has the right to refuse a Travel Bursary to make their own travel arrangements where they meet the statutory eligibility requirements. 15 out of 58 (26%) of respondents indicated the Council should encourage families to use a Travel Bursary, it is assumed that if the Travel Bursary offer/value enabled a family to make their own arrangements then they would consider this offer. This option is not currently available under the existing policy.
- 2.5.7 The three biggest barriers facing families and restricting acceptance of a Travel Bursary is:
- Value of Travel Bursary is too low 18% (29 out of 163 choices)
 - Public Transport links are not suitable 19% (31 out of 163 choices)
 - Family/young person unable to identify and arrange suitable travel arrangements 20% (32 out of 163 choices)
- 2.5.8 Respondents also provided feedback in relation to the mechanism for calculating the value of the Travel Bursary. 34% of respondents (25 out of 73) feel that the value should be based on a cost per mile basis (driving route), a further 34% (25 out of 73) believe the value should reflect a percentage of the cost of transport if arranged by the Council, with 25% (18 out of 73) preferring pre-set mileage bands and value.
- 2.5.9 53% of respondents (31 out of 58) indicated that the rate of 45p per mile as a potential calculation mechanism for the Travel Bursary was too low.

2.5.10 Only 10 (17%) of respondents agreed that the proposed mileage bands and values were appropriate, 30% (18 out of 59) were in disagreement. This indicates respondents feel the values are understated and would not make the Travel Bursary a viable option. The proposed bands and values detailed in the consultation were as follows:

- Less than 5 miles = £2000 per year
- 5-10 miles = £3000 per year
- Over 10 miles = £5000 per year

2.5.11 When asked about calculating a Travel Bursary based on the Council's cost of providing transport 72% (43 out of 60) of respondents feel that 100% of the cost should be made available to families, the current average cost of transport arranged by the Council is £5,769 per person per year.

2.5.12 The general feedback from respondents supports the view that Travel Bursaries are not appropriate for every family due to the child's needs, family circumstances, access to transport. Therefore, families should not be required to have a Travel Bursaries placing additional unnecessary pressure and potentially a financial burden.

2.5.13 It should be noted that the award of a Travel Bursary can only be made with the consent of the family, if the bursary is not appropriate then the family can refuse the offer and the Council will identify an alternative form of travel support for the child/young person.

2.5.14 Council Response: A travel bursary gives flexibility to some families and may provide a more convenient alternative to Council commissioned services. The cost should reflect the cost of the parent/carer, not the cost to the Council of commissioning an alternative. A flat fee is easy to administer and will be more than 45p per mile for many families but will provide a minimum of 45p per mile for the vast majority of claimants. If there is evidence that the actual cost of transport is more, for instance the cost of public transport, this can be considered as part of an exceptional circumstances case.

Collection Points

2.5.15 39% (23 out of 58) of respondents do not think collection points for some children and young people would be beneficial, 28% (16 out of 58) felt that it would be beneficial for some children and young people.

2.5.16 44% (27 out of 62) of respondents indicated that the distance to a collection point should not be pre-determined and the distance any individual is required to walk is based on the outcome of an individual needs assessment.

2.5.17 The three most popular responses for locations of collection points were:

- Bus stops 17% (19 responses)
- Local points of interest 14% (15 responses)
- Suitable roadside locations 11% (12 responses)

2.5.18 The key barriers to a child or young person accessing transport via a collection point include:

- Specific health needs would make waiting at a collection point unsuitable 17% (46 responses)
- Limited awareness of danger/unable to keep safe, even when accompanied by an adult 18% (48 responses)
- Wouldn't be able to manage situations that aren't planned/out of routine, such as late running of transport 16% (41 responses)

This supports the Council's intention of adopting a needs assessment of child or young person's individual needs/circumstances to identify if the use of a collection point is appropriate. Where it is identified that a collection is not an appropriate arrangement then an alternative arrangement will be offered, which may be retaining the existing home collection arrangements.

2.5.19 General feedback in relation to the use of Collection Points reinforces the concerns amongst the public that this option may not be suitable for certain children/young people and that each child needs to be individually assessed for suitability, where the needs and circumstances do not allow the use of a collection point then home collection should remain.

2.5.20 Council response: It should be noted that the Council accepts a collection point will not be suitable for all children and young people. It is acknowledged that due to medical conditions, anxiety, sensory impairments, and a lack of awareness of danger may mean allocation of a collection point is not appropriate even if accompanied by a parent or carer, suitability is expected to be identified through individual needs assessments.

Travel to Faith Schools & Same Sex Establishments

2.5.21 Responses were equally split (36%/22 out of 61) between Strongly Agree/Agree and Strongly Disagree/Disagree when asked if provision to these establishments should cease if a closer suitable education establishment is available.

2.5.22 General feedback identified that some respondents felt that the individual needs and circumstances should be protected no matter what education establishment they attended. Other responses supported that if families have chosen to send their child to a School that isn't their closest then they should be responsible for getting them to and from School.

2.5.23 Feedback also identified potential issues with the proposal in relation to discrimination.

2.5.24 Council response: The Council intends to support and provide travel assistance to these establishments where children have additional needs and attend their nearest suitable school in accordance with the relevant eligibility criteria for their circumstances (e.g. SEND). However, where additional needs are not present and where closer education establishments are available then it is proposing that support with travel to faith or same sex schools will no longer be available. Families will continue to be able to be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

2.5.25 Families will continue to have the right to choose schools of a particular faith and the impact of this change has been considered in the equality impact assessment.

Contribution Charge for Non-compulsory School Age Travel

2.5.26 Post 16 education (Non-compulsory School age) travel is not required to be free, and the Council is allowed to request a contribution towards costs of travel from those accessing the service. Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to indicate the level of contribution that would be reasonable to request:

- £1500 per annum 16% (10 out of 61 responses)
- £1250 per annum 0% (0 out of 61 responses)
- £1000 per annum 0% (0 out of 61 responses)
- £750 per annum 7% (4 out of 61 responses)
- £500 per annum 16% (19 out of 61 responses)
- £250 per annum 61% (37 out of 61 responses)

2.5.27 When asked for feedback in relation to the expected use of a Vulnerable Person's Bursary 39% agreed that this funding should contribute towards costs where assistance is provided by the Council. 34% (20 respondents) disagreed and felt the funding should not be used to contribute towards travel assistance costs.

2.5.28 Council response: The Council believes it is reasonable to expect a bursary that includes a proportion of the funding specifically for travel costs to be used to contribute towards travel costs. However, it also acknowledges that it would be unreasonable to expect all of the Bursary to be used on travel and should be used to contribute towards other elements of their education. It has therefore concluded that a lower contribution (£750) towards travel costs than originally proposed (£1000) is more appropriate. The amount of contribution will continue to be reviewed annual and adjusted accordingly to ensure it remains fair and reasonable and reflective of actual transport costs.

2.5.29 The Council will also enable families to present evidence of exceptional circumstances and financial hardship where payment of the contribution charge may not be possible and result in non-attendance at their study programme. On a case-by-case basis the Council will be able to consider whether a reduce contribution is appropriate.

Consultation Feedback Impact on Proposals

Pre-Consultation Proposal	Consultation Feedback	Post Consultation Alteration
<i>Independent Travel Training (ITT) to be provided where individual needs assessment identifies option as an appropriate form of travel (following a needs assessment)</i>	<i>Majority of those attending public meetings felt that ITT would not be appropriate for their child and would not benefit many children/young people</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No change to original proposal as ITT offer was planned to be dependent on individual needs assessments identifying ITT suitability.</i> • <i>Assessments will include consultation with families and Schools before assessment outcome is finalised</i>
<i>Travel Bursary offer to be introduced with more favourable terms to encourage sign up from families</i>	<i>Current reimbursement rate offered to families is not sufficient to enable families to make their own travel arrangements. This offer should not be forced upon</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Proposed rate/calculation of Travel Bursary will be enhanced to make offer more viable for families.</i>

	<i>families as this may not be appropriate or viable.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A Travel Bursary can only be provided to a family with their consent, as per statutory obligations.</i> • <i>Policy to include an option for consideration of an alternative value of the Travel Bursary where travel requirements are specialist and high cost, agreed on a case-by-case basis.</i>
<i>Collection points to be introduced and replace existing home collections where individual needs assessments identify option as appropriate</i>	<i>Majority of those attending public meetings felt that collection points would not be appropriate for their child and would not benefit many children/young people</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No change to original proposal as collection point use was planned to be dependent on individual needs assessments identifying option as suitable</i> • <i>Assessments will include consultation and input from families and Schools before assessment outcome is finalised</i>
<i>Removal of travel arrangements to Faith Schools and same sex establishments where nearer education provision is available and can meet educational needs</i>	<i>Responses were split between whether arrangements should continue or cease. General feedback suggest individual needs such as SEND should continue to be taken into account.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>No change to original proposal</i> • <i>If access to education is dependent on travel, then an application can be submitted, and individual circumstances can be considered on a case-by-case basis under other criteria in the policy.</i>
<i>Introduction of a contribution charge for non-compulsory age (post 16) travel assistance charged at £1000 per annum</i>	<i>Feedback supports the use of a Vulnerable Persons Bursary to contribute towards the cost of non-compulsory age travel with the majority favouring a £250 per annum contribution.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Proposed charge reduced to £750 per annum</i> • <i>Option for applications to be submitted on exceptional circumstances grounds waiving fee to be allowed and considered on a case-by-case basis and will reflect free school meal thresholds and evidence that alternative financial</i>

		<i>support has been requested and rejected before requests will be considered</i>
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3. Implications of the Recommendation

3.1 Financial implications

- 3.1.1 The proposed changes to policy have the potential to contribute towards the improved cost effectiveness of the service. The overall budget for the service is approximately £3.640m
- 3.1.2 The service has an established savings plan, aiming to deliver a £0.550m reduction in spend by the end of the 2024/25 financial year. £0.490m is anticipated for delivery in 2023/24 with a further £0.060m realised in 2024/25.
- 3.1.3 The proposed policy changes contained in this paper are estimated to contribute £0.210m savings towards the overall savings programme. The remainder of the savings will be realised through route optimisation, procurement activity, and effective allocation of resources/provision. All savings forecasts are based on current demand levels for Home to School and College Travel Assistance.
- 3.1.4 The scale of such a saving will be subject to the extent to which travel assistance enables more children and young persons to transition from individual to shared travel arrangements, or where independence is increased. Travel arrangements will continue to be assessed on a case-by-case basis and it is not possible at this stage to say how this might affect any one individual, hence any saving can only be estimated at this stage.

3.2 Legal implications

- 3.2.1 Under the Education Act 1996, the Council has specific duties and powers as set out below:
 - (a) a duty to assess school travel needs and promote sustainable modes of travel in relation to children and young people of 6th form age (s.508A);
 - (b) a duty to provide home to school travel arrangements as considered necessary for eligible children of compulsory school age, such arrangements to be provided free of charge (s.508B). Eligible children is defined in legislation and further details are provided within this policy;
 - (c) a power to make school travel arrangements for children who are not eligible under s.508B. This power can be applied to children below compulsory school age, children attending faith schools or those living within the statutory walking distance. The Council may make a charge for provision of travel arrangements under this power (s.508C);
 - (d) a duty to prepare a transport policy statement specifying travel arrangements provided to persons of sixth form age (s.509AA). The statement shall specify the provision of transport, provision of financial support and provision of travel concessions. A person is of sixth form age is they are receiving education or

training and is over compulsory school age but (a) is under the age of 19; or (b) had begun a particular course of education or training at the establishment before attaining the age of 19 and continues to attend that course.

3.2.2 The statutory guidance for home to school travel arrangements for children of compulsory school age states:

(a) policies should be clear, easy to understand and provide full information on travel and transport arrangements, including the statutory provision and that provided on a discretionary basis;

(b) the appeal process should be set out;

(c) the sustainable modes of school travel strategies should ideally be integrated into the policy statement and published together;

(d) When changing a policy, there should be consultation for at least 28 working days during term time. This period should be extended to take account of any school holidays.

(e) Any changes should be phased in so that children who start under one set of transport arrangements can continue to benefit from them until they conclude their education at that school or move to another school.

The statutory guidance for Post 16 travel arrangements requires the Council to have regard to the following in assessing what transport arrangements of financial support may be required:

(a) The needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to access education or training provision if no arrangements were made;

(b) The need to ensure that young people have reasonable opportunities to choose between different establishments at which education and training is provided;

(c) The distance from the learner's home to establishments of education and training;

(d) The journey time to access different establishments;

(e) The cost of transport to the establishments in question;

(f) Alternative means of facilitating attendance at establishments;

(g) Preferences based on religion;

(h) Non-transport solutions to facilitate learner access

3.2.3 For young people with special educational needs and disabilities, consideration should be given to additional factors, including that it may take longer to complete a programme of learning or training and that the availability of an independent travel training scheme should be included in the policy statement.

3.2.4 When making public law decisions, the decision-maker should take account of all relevant information and disregard any irrelevant information. Relevant information includes the consultation feedback, equality implications and financial implications.

The Council should balance the need to deliver financial savings and best value, with its other overarching duties. When considering consultation responses in relation to a change and in particular a reduction in or charge for services, it is not uncommon for the majority of respondents to raise concerns and disagree with the proposal. These views must be taken into account and balanced with the other policy reasons for the proposal.

3.3 Risk management implications

- 3.3.1 The service is seeking approval to implement the proposed policies for travel assistance. A public consultation has been undertaken and interested parties have had opportunity to provide feedback.
- 3.3.2 Analysis of the public consultation engagement feedback has been undertaken to consider the impact of the proposed policies
- 3.3.3 The public consultation was conducted in accordance with DfE guidance and legislative requirements.
- 3.3.4 Proposed policies reflect current DfE guidance in relation to Home to School Travel and Post 16 Education transport.
- 3.3.5 Current request to consult is in line with statutory obligations and best practice as outlined by the DfE to avoid risk of legal challenge

3.4 Environmental implications

- 3.4.1 Promoting environmental sustainability is one of the strategic aims for the home to school and post 16 travel assistance policies and aligns with the objectives of the Councils Climate Change Strategy.
- 3.4.2 The proposed policies aim to encourage and support greater uptake and use of public transport to access education settings. Increasing numbers using this form of travel will reduce the use of smaller, dedicated transport services.
- 3.4.3 The promotion of Independent Travel Training, and use of collection points will support changes in behaviour outside of School, with expected increase in individuals/families using public transport at weekends, evenings and holidays to access services and activities.

3.5 Equality implications

- 3.5.1 The statutory duty assigned to councils in relation to Home to School travel ensures groups with protected characteristics, including age and disability will continue to have access to support with travel and access to their education place where it is necessary and Council support is required.
- 3.5.2 Requirements are established to support children of compulsory school age and ensure assistance is available if necessary for those attending Post 16 education establishments.

- 3.5.3 Families who are identified as low income are also supported through the statutory duty and this support will continue to be available.
- 3.5.4 Children/young persons with disabilities are also supported within the statutory duty with assistance being required where necessary to facilitate attendance, this is assessed on a case-by-case basis and will continue to be available.
- 3.5.5 Those families or individuals who may be disproportionately impacted by the proposal include those of a particular faith or sex who are or whose parents are expressing a preference for a faith school or a single sex school and will no longer be entitled to transport as it is outside the statutory eligibility. Proposed changes may impact on what travel support is available to these groups, however it will not impact on their right to choose an education establishment of a specific religion/faith or same sex establishment if that is their preference of the family. Under the proposed changes families would be expected to make their own travel arrangements where the establishment is not the nearest available that can meet their educational needs.
- 3.5.6 Within the proposed policies, the Council will continue to retain its right to award assistance if there are exceptional circumstances to justify this and the Council will consider the circumstances on a case-by-case basis.
- 3.5.7 The strategic aims to underpin proposals to refresh the Council's home to school and post 16 travel assistance policies are intended to foster the social integration, independence, and preparation for adulthood of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The EqIA has identified some neutral, positive and negative impacts for groups with protected characteristics.
- 3.5.8 Positive impacts see the promotion of the equality of opportunities and improved relationships between children with SEND and those without.
- 3.5.9 Negative impacts relate to the impact of the contribution charge for families with financial difficulty and potential access to education. This is mitigated through the use of the 16-19 Bursary's that are available, and the Council retaining the right to handle cases of financial hardship on a case-by-case basis as detailed within the proposed policy.
- 3.5.10 A negative impact also exists for those impacted by the change in entitlement when attending Faith or same sex education establishments. The proposals are in accordance with statutory requirements and reflect DfE guidance. The Council also retains the right to review circumstances of each case on an individual basis where exceptional circumstances exist.
- 3.5.11 Where changes to provision and entitlement exist, these will be transitioned between Autumn term 2022 and the start of the 2023/24 academic year. Notification of changes of entitlement and communication of changes in advance of the new academic year will be undertaken to ensure all parties are aware. Proposed changes to provision affecting individuals will be communicated with affected families with the Council engaging and working closely with families, schools and other linked professionals to ensure any change is appropriate, reasonable and transition supports the individual.

3.6 Procurement implications

No procurement implications have been identified at this stage. Current contracts have been procured on the basis that demand will fluctuate. Mechanisms exist within current terms and conditions to enable changes to the service being provided to reflect demand requirements.

3.7 Workforce implications

3.7.1 No workforce implications have been identified at this stage.

3.8 Property implications

3.8.1 No property implications have been identified at this stage.

4. **Background Papers**

None

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Slough Borough Council Home to School (5-16) Travel Assistance Policy

Travel Assistance policy for children of compulsory school age (5-16)

Department Responsible: xxxxx Contact details: xxxxx Document first release: October 2022

Introduction

This document sets out Slough Borough Council's Home to School/College Travel Assistance Policy and describes how the Council fulfils its duties and exercises its discretionary powers under the Education Act 1996. The policy explains the criteria for eligibility for travel assistance for pupils to their school for children of compulsory school age (5-16 years old) and for young people aged 16 to 19 and 19 to 25. It describes how parents and carers can apply for travel assistance and how decisions are made. It sets out how parents and carers may appeal against decisions that they believe do not comply with this policy.

Policy Statement

Slough Borough Council (the Council) is committed to ensuring that all pupils have a great start to life, are safe and healthy and have access to high quality education so that they are able to achieve their full potential. The Children and Families Act 2014 commits partners to work together to develop services which strengthen the abilities and resilience of children and their families to be independent.

The Council is also committed to meeting the educational needs of as many children and young people as possible within local schools. In many cases, this will mean that pupils can walk or cycle to school with their parents or carers. This policy sets out how we will help the small number of pupils who find it difficult to travel to school without some assistance.

The Council will continue to deliver our statutory responsibilities to meet the travel needs of children and young people, enabling them to access their place of education. This support will be targeted at those children and young people who have significant additional needs or are deemed extremely vulnerable.

We want to support parents and carers to fulfil their responsibility to ensure their school-aged children attend school regularly and to make any necessary arrangements to ensure that they attend school. Those children and young people not in receipt of travel assistance from the Council can use a wide range of forms of travel in Slough, accompanied as necessary, including bus, train, concessionary fares, walking and cycling. We also want to support schools to promote safe routes to school and safe travel skills through their regular curriculum.

The Council has a duty under s.508A of the Education Act 1996 to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport. This requires the Council to have a strategy to develop sustainable travel and transport infrastructure and to promote these modes of travel.

Aims and Objectives

The council has the following aims and objectives when assessing transport / travel support:

- Social integration of children and young people whatever their needs
- Support and develop Independence and resilience for children and young people with SEND and their families
- Environmentally sustainable travel
- Efficient use of public resources

Eligibility

All pupils

Parents and carers have a legal duty to ensure that their statutory school-aged children (age 5-16) attend school regularly and to make any necessary arrangements to ensure that they attend school.

A child is of compulsory school age from the start of term after their fifth birthday up until the last day of the academic year in which they are in year 11. This applies to both children with and without an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

There are four core categories of eligible children:

- statutory walking distances
- unsafe walking routes
- extended rights
- special educational needs, disability and mobility problems

Children below the age of 5 will not be eligible for free travel assistance between their home and school.

For pupils in year 12 and above (post-16 year olds), there is a separate policy (Linked to be added).

Statutory walking distances

The Council will provide free home to school travel assistance for children of compulsory school age to the nearest suitable school from their home address who meet the 'qualifying distance' criteria which is:

- 2 miles or more for children below the age of eight, measured by the shortest walking distance between the home and the school
- 3 miles or more for children aged 8 and above, measured by the shortest walking distance between the home and the school

Children who live between 2 and 3 miles from their school will cease to be entitled to free travel from the start of the term following their eighth birthday.

If the child/family qualify for free school meals or they are in receipt of maximum Working Tax Credit then please refer to the Extended Rights section below.

Further detail on eligibility is dealt with in the application section below.

Unsafe walking routes

The Council will provide travel assistance if it determines that a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk to the nearest suitable school because the nature of the route is deemed unsafe

to walk. The Council regularly assesses walking routes using the “Road Safety GB Guidelines on Assessment of Walked Routes to School.” Routes that have been determined to be unsafe will be kept under review and support will be withdrawn when the walking route is no longer deemed to be unsafe. The Council will expect a parent or carer to accompany the child along a route which would otherwise be classified as being unsafe and will not provide travel assistance if this accompaniment will make the route safe.

Extended rights

Children from low-income families are entitled to additional support in certain circumstances. This applies to pupils who are entitled to free school meals, or those families who are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit (WTC).

Children above the age of 8, but under the age of 11, from low-income families will be entitled to travel assistance to their nearest suitable school if the shortest walking distance between their home and the school is more than two miles.

Children aged 11 and over (years 7 – 11) from low-income families will be entitled to travel assistance if they attend one of their three nearest suitable schools where they live between two miles (measured by the shortest walking distance) and 6 miles (measured by the shortest road route) from their school.

Children aged 11 and over (years 7 - 11) from low-income families who are attending their nearest designated faith school preferred on the grounds of religion or belief will also be entitled to travel assistance if their school is more than two miles (measured by the shortest walking distance) but not more than 15 miles (measured by the shortest road route) from their home.

Application Process

How to Apply

All requests for travel assistance for children without an EHCP must be made via the Council portal.

For children and young people with an EHCP families can contact the Travel Assistance Team on 01753 875708.

The Council will look to complete the assessment of applications in a timely fashion, aiming to put in place travel arrangements for those entitled at the earliest opportunity. However, it may take up to 6 weeks to process and families should be prepared to make their own interim travel arrangements if necessary.

During periods of high demand, such as the build-up to the new academic year, timescales for processing applications may be extended. Families are advised to apply for assistance with travel at the earliest opportunity to ensure arrangements are in place when they are required.

Assessing travel assistance entitlement for compulsory school age children

In all cases, a child/young person must be attending the nearest suitable school (or one of the three nearest suitable schools under the extended rights eligibility). This is defined as a school that has spaces available that provides education appropriate to the age, gender, ability and aptitude of the child, and appropriate to the child's EHCP where one exists.

Types of suitable schools considered under this policy are:

- community, foundation, trust, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools
- academies or alternative provision academies
- free schools
- community or foundation special schools
- non-maintained special schools
- pupil referral units
- maintained nursery schools
- city technology colleges, city colleges for the technology of the arts and university technical colleges
- Independent schools where this is named on a child's EHCP or is the nearest of two schools named.

For mainstream applications processed during the normal school admissions round, a school will be determined as having a vacancy if a place would have been offered according to the allocations made on the national offer day, assuming the parent either made or could reasonably have made an application. For applications made after the normal admissions round and those made during the school year, a school will be determined as having a vacancy if, at the point of processing the child's school application, a place could have been allocated to the child.

When a child cannot be offered a place at the nearest school to the home address, the Council will, subject to the criteria set within this policy and the qualifying distance being met, provide assistance with travel to the next nearest school with space to admit. For travel arrangements to be provided in this instance the parent must provide evidence that they have applied for and been refused a place at the school which is the nearest school for their home address and any other schools closer than the school offering admission.

Where a school operates on multiple or split sites, the assessment of nearest qualifying school will take account of the sites used to prioritise admissions (as defined in each school's admission arrangements), regardless of which year groups are educated at which site or which site a child might attend.

How walking distance is measured

Walking distances are calculated using the shortest available walking route from the home address to school. If families believe that the walking route measured is not available to walk they should request a review of the route.

The legal definition of an 'available walking route' is a route along which a child, accompanied as necessary, can walk with reasonable safety to school.

Where a school operates on a temporary site and that school's permanent/current site is deemed to be a child's nearest qualifying school, the home to school walking distance will be measured to the school's temporary site to determine if the child lives over the statutory walking distance and is eligible for travel assistance. Eligibility will be reassessed at the point a child ceases to be educated at the temporary site.

Distances will be measured using the Council's CapitaOne System (and supported by other Council GIS systems) from the address point of the pupil's house to the nearest school gate available for pupils to use when measuring to a school, as set by Ordnance Survey.

Route safety assessment

Where a parent/carer believes the assessed walking route to be unsafe, they should write to the Travel Assistance Team outlining the aspect of the route they believe to be unsafe. The identified aspects of the route will then be reviewed by the team. Review of the routes will use the 'Road Safety GB Guidelines on Assessment of Walked Routes to School' to assess suitability.

Extended Rights

Parents who believe they meet the Extended Rights criteria and are therefore eligible for assistance with travel to school must include with their application evidence of the child's entitlement to free school meals or the family's receipt of maximum level of Working Tax Credit (WTC) with their application form.

A child who has been assessed as eligible for travel assistance by meeting the Extended Rights criteria will have their entitlement reviewed each academic year to ensure that the child continues to meet the necessary criteria.

If a child ceases to be eligible for free school meals or a family ceases to be entitled to the maximum level of Working Tax Credit during the academic year for which travel assistance has been awarded, travel assistance will continue until the end of that academic year.

If the child is applying for travel assistance to a school of faith under Extended Rights eligibility, then the parents must also provide supporting evidence regarding their genuine adherence to their religion or belief and this will normally be confirmed by asking their religious leader to sign the application form.

Special educational needs, disability and mobility problems

Where a child with special education needs, a disability and/or mobility problems does not meet the other three eligibility criteria but has identified specific needs/circumstances that may mean it is unreasonable to expect the child to walk to school (accompanied by an adult as necessary), then an assessment based on their individual needs and circumstances will be undertaken.

In determining whether a child cannot reasonably be expected to walk between home and school, the Council will consider whether the child could reasonably be expected to walk if accompanied and, if so, whether the child's parent or carer can reasonably be expected to accompany their child. The expectation is that a child will be accompanied by a parent or carer.

When assessing entitlement for travel assistance for a child with SEND or mobility problems, the Council will consider the individual needs of each child. This may include taking professional advice from educational psychologists, medical officers and teachers and consulting with parents and carers before arriving at a final decision.

Consideration will also be given to the child's physical and medical requirements including any disabilities they may have. The findings and decision will be recorded on a travel assistance assessment form.

The following factors will be taken into consideration when assessing travel assistance entitlement:

- the age of the child
- the distance of the child from school to home
- whether the child is physically able to walk the journey to school
- whether the walking route is appropriate for the pupil and their specific needs and allows them to arrive in a fit state to be educated
- whether a child's emotional and behavioural difficulties will create a clear health and safety hazard to themselves or others on the journey to school
- the SEND of the child
- the efficient utilisation of resources
- any other individual circumstance

This is not an exhaustive list. It is not presented in any particular order and is for guidance only. Meeting one or more of the criteria does not automatically entitle a child with SEND to travel assistance.

The fact that a child has an EHCP or attends a special school does not automatically entitle him or her to travel assistance.

Eligibility for travel assistance is related to the child's needs. Assessment may take into account the need for travel assistance due to some family circumstances. Factors identified in an application will be considered when determining eligibility for home to school travel assistance and deciding on the type of travel assistance to be provided.

Other family circumstances, such as parents and carers attending work or looking after other children cannot be considered when determining eligibility.

Extenuating circumstances

Recognising that the Council's discretionary powers should not be unreasonably fettered by its general policy, the Council will consider and may agree requests for home to school travel assistance where there are considered to be extenuating circumstances that prevent a child accessing their school unless travel assistance is put in place. If the parent believes extenuating circumstances exist and assistance with travel is necessary, then information and evidence must be provided when applying for assistance in order for this to be considered.

The overriding expectation is that parents should undertake their legal responsibility to get their child(ren) to and from school and as such the Council will need to be satisfied that the parent has demonstrated why they, for social, medical, financial or personal reasons cannot undertake this duty.

The determination will be based on evidence received to support the case whether travel assistance is necessary in order for the child to receive an education. Consideration will be given as to whether the circumstances could have reasonably been foreseen by the parent/carer. For example, moving to temporary accommodation owing to flood damage cannot be foreseen, whereas choosing a school other than a child's nearest school and realising following this decision that assistance with travel is not available could be foreseen.

Where it is decided that a child does not qualify for assistance with travel based on the presented needs/circumstances then it remains the parent/ carer's responsibility to ensure school attendance or consider transferring the child to a more local school.

In all cases the decision whether to exercise discretion will be taken on a case by case basis.

Special consideration and appeals

Parents/carers of children who live in Slough and who wish to appeal a decision about one of the following, may apply for their case to be considered at a travel assistance case review:

- the travel arrangements offered
- their child's eligibility
- the distance measurement in relation to statutory walking distances
- the safety of the route

During an appeal about an application for travel assistance, travel arrangements will not be provided to the child/young person. Where the appeal concerns a change to existing travel arrangements, then the previously agreed travel arrangements will continue until the review is complete.

The Council operates a two-stage appeal process as detailed below:

Stage one: Review by a senior officer

- A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's home to school travel assistance decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision.
- The written request should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.
- Where this is possible, within 20 working days of receipt of the parent's written request a senior officer reviews the original decision and sends the parent a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review

Stage two: Review by an independent appeal panel

- A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.
- Within 40 working days of receipt of the parents request an independent appeal panel considers written and verbal representations from both the parent and officers involved in the case and gives a detailed written notification of the outcome (within 5 working days).

Withdrawal of assistance provided in error

Where a child has been awarded in error, Slough Council has the right to withdraw this after first considering the circumstances of each case to determine whether there are exceptional reasons for provision to continue.

Consideration cannot be given to those who simply cannot meet their parental responsibility to get their own child to school following the removal of assistance. This would have been expected to have been taken into account at the time of admitting the child into school, as would have been the case had the error not been made. Where it is decided to withdraw transport, one term's notice is given.

Provision of false or inaccurate information

When submitting an application, the parent will sign a declaration confirming the accuracy of the information. The parent is also under a duty to notify the Council of any changes in circumstances. If it later transpires that the information is incorrect or updating information has not been provided, then notice will be given and the travel assistance will cease immediately. The Council will also take steps to recover the cost of travel assistance provided as a result of this inaccurate information. If the information has been provided fraudulently, the Council's corporate anti-fraud team will investigate to determine whether a criminal prosecution should be commenced.

Discretionary Travel Requirements

Children below the age of 5

Children attending Reception classes

Ordinarily and in accordance with the Council's statutory duty, children under the age of 5 will not be entitled to travel assistance between their home and school. However, the Council will consider travel assistance applications for children below statutory school age in extenuating circumstances. Where a parent/carer believes that there are extenuating circumstances that warrant a child being provided with assistance with travel before they turn five years of age, they should complete the appropriate application form and provide supporting evidence of the case.

A child becomes of compulsory school age at the start of term after their fifth birthday.

Pre-school children with SEND

Local authorities do not have a duty to provide or arrange free travel for children who have not yet reached compulsory school age and who are attending a pre-school setting. However, the Council will consider travel assistance applications for children below statutory school age in extenuating circumstances.

Where a parent/carer believes that there are extenuating circumstances that warrant a child being provided with assistance to support their travel to School (before they turn five years of age), they should complete the appropriate application form and provide supporting evidence of the case.

If the Council agrees to provide travel assistance it may request a contribution towards costs with travel arrangements subsidised by the Council.

Children attending schools on grounds of religion or belief

Ordinarily assistance with travel to a faith school will only be provided if it is the nearest suitable school and the child comes within the eligibility criteria above.

Travel Assistance Provision Options

Forms of Travel Assistance

The Council will review the travel needs of all eligible children and decide the most appropriate form of assistance that will be provided. In accordance with the Council's strategic aims, the form of travel offered will reflect the most appropriate use of public funds to ensure cost effective provision is in place, will seek to promote independence and to be environmentally sustainable, whilst also meeting the needs of the child.

In accordance with national guidance, a journey to school for eligible children should be suitable, safe and reasonably stress free to enable the children to arrive at school ready for a day of study. To this end it is considered reasonable that journey times each way for children are as follows:

- 45 minutes for primary aged pupils
- 75 minutes for secondary aged pupils

However, it is recognised that adhering to journey times may not always be possible particularly in rural areas. It may be deemed acceptable for a trip to exceed these journey times if it is considered that the additional time does not place undue stress, strain or difficulty on the pupil, which would prevent them from benefitting from the education.

Where children with special educational needs, disability or mobility problems are present, then journey times may sometimes need to be longer and more complex, although the Council will ensure that it does not extend routes for such children unnecessarily with appropriate measures in place to address any implications for doing so.

Subject to meeting the eligibility criteria of this policy, the following assistance will be considered (in the following order):

1. provision of a travel pass for the pupil;
2. provision of independent travel training;
3. provision of a travel bursary;
4. payment of car mileage/travel reimbursement for the pupil's parent(s) (with parental consent);
5. Provision of a cycling allowance (with parental consent)
6. Provision of a suitable escort to enable a pupil to walk a short distance (with parental consent)
7. provision of a travel pass for pupil and parent;
8. provision of a shared vehicle without escort (using collection point if appropriate);
9. provision of a shared vehicle with escort (using collection point if appropriate);
10. provision of an individual vehicle without escort;
11. provision of an individual vehicle with escort.

The provision of an individual vehicle with or without escort should be exceptional and only where it has been demonstrated that other modes of assistance are not suitable.

Other bespoke travel options may be considered and offered where individual needs enable travel, and the development of travel skills and independence, e.g. Travel Buddy.

All travel assistance will be reviewed as part of the annual review of needs and if appropriate as part of an early review. Travel assistance may be withdrawn or amended if circumstances have changed, or the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Panel considers the withdrawal appropriate as an encouragement to independence or the offer is no longer the most economical mode of travel.

Provision of Passenger Assistants

A passenger assistant will only be provided following the outcome of an assessment of the child's Special Educational Needs and/or medical needs in order to meet the needs of the children travelling to and from school. This determination will be made by the Travel Assistance Team taking into account:

- A child's medical needs, particularly where rescue medication is required.
- Where an individual child's needs create a clear danger or health and safety risk to themselves and other passengers on the vehicle.
- Where an assessment of the children on the vehicle and the journey to be undertaken highlight a clear danger or health and safety risk to all passengers on the vehicle.

The consideration for passenger assistants will be made based on evidence received from all relevant parties and will be reviewed regularly, where appropriate and whenever a contract is re-tendered.

Travel training

Local authorities have a duty to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with learning difficulties or disabilities up to the age of 25 in education and training. Independent travel training aims to achieve this.

Independent travel is a valuable skill for preparing for adulthood, an essential employability skill, and provides greater opportunities for young people, not least increasing confidence in their abilities and reducing their sense of reliance on family members.

In line with the Council's aims and objectives to support independence and prepare young people for adulthood, and where appropriate employment.

The Council will work in partnership with education establishments and other individuals to identify young people who could benefit from ITT and contact their families to invite them to take part in ITT.

The Council will also contact young people and their families who will be transitioning from statutory education into post-16 and above to invite them to take part in ITT.

An ITT assessment will be carried out in the home, with the support of the family, to confirm the suitability of the young person for the ITT programme, taking into account the following criteria:

- existing level of independent travel skills
- the likelihood of the pupil being eligible for SEN travel assistance under the 16 to 19 & 19-25 policy
- the age of the pupil
- the distance between home and school
- the SEND of the pupil
- the route which the young person would need to undertake
- journey times using public transport and the complexity of the journey
- the frequency of the journeys required

This assessment would take place before the pupil undertakes the ITT programme, which would last for approximately four to six weeks. During the programme, the pupil will travel to and from their education or training provision each day with their dedicated one to one ITT trainer.

During the period when a pupil is taking part in the ITT, this will be their travel assistance offer. At the end of the ITT programme, the Council will review the pupil's progress with the family to decide if it is appropriate for the pupil to continue to travel independently. If it is not appropriate for the pupil to travel independently, their previous travel assistance offer will be reinstated. Although it is expected that the majority of young people would benefit from ITT, it is acknowledged that for some young people, due to the nature of their SEND, ITT will not be appropriate.

Travel Bursary

This is an allowance that can be provided by Slough Council to parents of children who are eligible for travel assistance.

A parent may choose to consent to the acceptance of a travel bursary in lieu of arranged travel assistance by the Council. This enables families to make their own arrangements to facilitate travel and access to education. A travel allowance will only be offered where it is less expensive than any alternative form of travel assistance.

Any arrangements made by the parent using the travel allowance are the responsibility of the parent.

The travel bursary is calculated on shortest driving route distance between the home and the school. The value of the bursary awarded based on the banding listed below:

Distance Banding (Home to School – Shortest Driving Route)	Travel Bursary Value (Per Annum)
Less than 5 miles	£2500
5 – 10 miles	£4000
Over 10 miles	£6500

Where there are two or more children living at the same address and attending the same school and the travel bursary has been agreed for one child, additional bursary payments will not be provided for the other children as all children would be expected to travel together.

If the parent transports siblings to different schools the bursary due would be based on the shortest walking route between home, school A and school B, and return.

The travel bursary is paid over 10 months (October to July) if the child is entitled from the start of the school year. Parents will need to nominate a bank account before any payments are made.

Parents/carers are able to request an enhanced Travel Bursary if the standard values (above) are not sufficient to provide suitable travel arrangements. Each request will be considered on a case by case basis after review of the evidence provided. If the Council agrees then an enhanced Travel Bursary may be awarded, subject to the award being financially viable for the Council.

The travel bursary is based on the child's attendance being over 80% for the full year. Attendance records will be requested from the school at the end of each term. If the child shows poor attendance in the Autumn or Spring terms then the parent may be transferred to the standard travel reimbursement option. Alternatively, if the child's attendance is below 80% then the final month's payment will be reduced.

If a parent is in receipt of the travel bursary but is temporarily unable to transport their child to school due to a short-term illness or medical condition, temporary assistance may be provided. However, this may take up to 6 weeks to put in place.

Car Mileage/Travel Reimbursement

Where a child is entitled to travel assistance, the Council can provide a fuel allowance for parents to take their children to and from school, where it is more cost effective than providing contracted or arranged transport.

The Council would pay parents (where their child attends/travels daily) two return journeys at 45p per mile.

For example, where a family reside 5 miles from the school, each return journey is 10 miles:

2 return journeys = 20 miles x 45p = £9 per day.

A typical term would be 65 school days = £585 per term.

Where a Car Mileage/Travel Reimbursement is provided, parents are required to submit claims for payment on a monthly basis, confirming journeys made and attendance.

Upon receipt of the completed claim, the Council will then review and check the details. If details are correct, then payment will be made.

Car Mileage/Travel Reimbursement, based on the above, are paid where the parent agrees to receive such an allowance. Where the amount paid is at 45p per mile, this is considered to cover the full cost to the parent of transporting their child in their own vehicle.

Collection points

Collection points are like bus stops, where the Council identifies designated pick-up and drop-off locations for the pupil to meet the bus or taxi rather than offering a door-to-door service. This reduces the time needed for the route to pick up the pupils and supports children and young people to become more independent and better prepares them for adulthood.

Using a collection point will not be possible for some children and young people with the most complex SEND needs, and in some cases parents' own mobility or disability may impact on them being able to accompany their child to a collection point. A Needs assessments will be conducted to determine if the use of a collection point is a reasonable expectation, including the identification of the maximum walking distance (where this is shorter than one-mile).

The ambition for the service is to improve the range of options available for families to take responsibility for their own children's transport where this is desired and appropriate. In such circumstances, the Council will carefully consider and assess the individual child's needs/circumstances as well as the mobility and or disability of their parents.

Where a collection point is allocated, it is the parent's or carer's responsibility to make sure that their child travels to and from the collection point and transfers to and from the vehicle safely.

For parents who are temporarily unable to take their child to a collection point, no temporary assistance will be provided in those circumstances. This is because the child's special educational need or disability has not changed and the transport service from the collection point is still available.

All collection points will be within a one-mile walking distance of the home and will reflect the specific needs of the individual, each collection point will be assessed in advanced for their suitability.

- wherever a bus stop can be legally used as a collection point, it will be

- minibuses can stop to collect and drop off on yellow and double yellow lines; vehicles cannot stop on red routes, white zig zags (near a zebra crossing) or school keep-clear hatchings
- the driver always plans not to cause obstructions to other road users while making a drop off or collection and will try to stop in parking areas or bays
- collections or drop-off are always made kerb side
- each collection point is physically assessed before being used in service; a driver will go out and access to see if the location is safe (for example, a well-lit public location, not too close to a junction or on the brow of a hill)
- the drivers complete dynamic risk assessments at the time of collections or / drop offs in the eventuality of any changes (new road layouts, another road user in the stopping space) and will slightly adjust the collection point if it is unsafe to stop

Weekly/Fortnightly boarding placements

Transport will be provided to take children to school on a Sunday evening, or Monday morning, as directed by the school and to collect children to take them home at the end of the designated school week, or earlier as directed by the school for planned or unplanned early closures.

Termly residential placements

12 single journeys from home to school and school to home will be provided each academic year. This will consist of trips required at the start and end of each term, and at other school closure times, i.e. half term breaks.

Permanent (52 week) residential placements

12 single journeys from home to school and school to home will be provided each academic year. These are at the discretion of the parents, school and child and need to be booked at least 10 days in advance through our Travel Assistance Team.

Any additional trips will be the responsibility of the parent. Where there is a risk of a placement breakdown the Travel Assistance Team may consider providing reimbursement of fuel or public transport costs in order to support additional trips on a short term basis so that the child can be supported back into full time boarding.

Slough Borough Council Post-16 Travel Assistance Policy Statement

Academic Year 2022 – 2023

Travel Assistance policy statement for young people aged 16-18 in further education, continuing learners aged 19 and those young people aged 19 – 24 (inclusive) with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

Department Responsible: xxxxx Contact details: xxxxx Document first release: October 2022

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Introduction

Local authorities do not have to provide free or subsidised post 16 travel support but do have a duty to prepare and publish an annual travel assistance 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.

Most young people in Slough will be able to access their education without the support of the Council. It is expected that public transport and other travel options (including financial support) are explore in the first instance and utilised wherever possible.

All young people carrying on their education post 16 must reapply for travel support.

'Sixth form age' refers to those young people who are over 16 years of age but under 19 or continuing learners who started their programme of learning before their 19th birthday (years 12,13,14).

Local authorities also have a duty to encourage, enable and assist young people with learning difficulties / disabilities to participate in education and training, up to the age of 25.

This policy uses the term 'Post 16' to include both learners of sixth form age and those with learning difficulties / disabilities up to the age of 25.

This policy document specifies the support that Slough Borough Council (the council) considers necessary to facilitate the attendance of Post 16 learners receiving education or training.

Education or training refers to learning or training at a school, further education institution, a council maintained or assisted institution providing higher or further education, an establishment funded directly by the Education Skills Funding Agency, learning providers delivering accredited programmes of learning which lead to positive outcomes and are funded by the council, for example, colleges, charities and private learning providers.

Aims and Objectives

The council has the following aims and objectives when assessing transport / travel support:

- Social integration of children and young people whatever their needs
- Support and develop Independence and resilience for children and young people with SEND and their families
- Environmentally sustainable travel
- Efficient use of public resources

- To support students from low-income families access education

Transport and travel assistance

Low Income Support - Student reduced fare card

The Student reduced fare card supports those students from low-income families to encourage and enable participation in Post 16 education.

A Student reduced fare card is available for those meeting the necessary low-income eligibility criteria detailed in the how to apply section.

There is no charge for the Student Reduced Fare Card.

This enables students to travel on either First Buses (that either begin or end in the borough of Slough) or train services (specific routes only) at a reduced fare.

The Student Reduced Fare Card will enable some students to travel to a number of FE colleges outside the Slough area also. Some of these are listed below.

College
East Berkshire College (Langley)
Bracknell & Wokingham College (Bracknell Centre)
Berkshire College of Agriculture
Strodes College
Uxbridge College
Amersham & Wycombe College (High Wycombe Campus)
Kensington & Chelsea College (Holland Park Centre)
Westminster Kingsway College (Victoria Centre)

Cardholders using the train will be able to use their card on the following specific journeys:

- Slough to Langley/Maidenhead/Henley-on-Thames/Windsor & Eton Central and Reading (and vice versa)
- Langley to Slough/Maidenhead/Henley-on-Thames/Windsor & Eton Central and Reading (and vice versa)
- Burnham to Slough/Langley/Maidenhead/ Henley-on-Thames/Windsor & Eton Central and Reading (and vice versa)

Who is the Student Reduced Fare Card for?

The card is available for students aged 16-18 and those who reach 19 whilst continuing a course in the 2022-21 academic year.

Cardholders will be able to purchase daily, weekly, and monthly tickets at under 16 rates.

There are no time restrictions on the use of the Student Reduced Fare Card. Card holders are able to travel all day, all evening and during weekends or holidays.

Lost or stolen cards will be replaced once in the academic year and students will not be charged for this. Both cards will require three passport photographs.

How to apply

Students are required to complete an application form, and must include three passport photos, and copies of documentary evidence of meeting low income thresholds as follows:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Universal Credit (provided you have an annual net earned income of no more than £7,400, as assessed by earnings from up to three of your most recent assessment periods)
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income of £16,190 or less
- Working Tax Credit 'run-on' - the payment someone may receive for a further four weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

Applications can be downloaded from the Slough Borough Council's Website.

Concessionary tickets for young people 16 – 25 from public transport providers

National 16 – 17 Saver (Train)

In January 2019, the Department for Transport announced the launch of a new national Railcard scheme which benefits 16 - 17 year olds. This Railcard offers 16 - 17 year olds a 50% discount on rail travel, and is available from September 2019. More information is available on the Railcard website.

The Saver offers 16 - 17 year olds:

- a 50% discount off standard anytime, off- peak, PlusBus, advance and season tickets
- can be used on South Western Railways, Southern and Great Western Railway network and

- across the National Rail network (except on ScotRail and Caledonian Sleeper services)
- the card costs £30 and is valid for one year or until your 18th birthday
- a season ticket purchased before your 18th birthday can run up to 4 months after you turn 18. For example if you turn 18 in February 2020 then you can purchase a season ticket which will still give you 50% discount for travel up until June 2020

Concessionary Bus Travel

The Slough concessionary bus pass (national scheme) entitles holders to travel free of charge on off-peak local bus services anywhere in England. Off-peak hours are 9:30am until 11pm on weekdays and all day at weekends and bank holidays.

To be eligible for a concessionary bus pass you must be:

- of State Pension age; or
- have a permanent disability – where the disability has lasted at least 12 months, or be likely to last at least 12 months and has a substantial effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities

If you are disabled, you will automatically qualify if you:

- are in receipt of higher rate of the mobility component of the Disability Living Allowance or,
- are in receipt of war pensioner's mobility supplement or,
- have the disability registration card
- are blind or partially sighted
- are profoundly or severely deaf
- are without speech
- have a disability or have suffered an injury which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on your ability to walk
- do not have arms or have long-term loss of the use of both arms
- have a learning disability
- have been refused a driving licence because of physical incapacity
- suffer from severe mental illness
- have 8 points or more in the moving around component for the Personal Independence Payment (PIP)

Further details can be found on the Council's website: www.slough.gov.uk/transport-travel/concessionary-bus-passes

Travel support from schools and colleges

Students may also purchase seats on vehicles run by individual schools, colleges or by third party commercial operators on the school's or college's behalf. For information on available routes please check individual school/college websites.

The 16-19 Bursary Fund

The 16 to 19 Bursary Fund provides financial support to help young people overcome specific barriers to participation so they can remain in education.

There are 2 types of 16 to 19 bursaries:

1. A vulnerable bursary of up to £1,200 a year for young people in one of the defined vulnerable groups below:

- in care
- care leavers
- in receipt of Income Support, or Universal Credit in place of Income Support, in their own right
- in receipt of Employment and Support Allowance or Universal Credit and Disability Living or Personal Independence Payments in their own right

2. Discretionary bursaries which institutions award to meet individual needs, for example, help with the cost of transport, meals, books and equipment

To be eligible for the discretionary bursary young people must:

- be aged 16 or over but under 19 at 31 August 2022 or
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2022 and have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)
- be aged 19 or over at 31 August 2022 and continuing on a study programme they began aged 16 to 18 ('19+ continuers')
- be studying a programme that is subject to inspection by a public body which assures quality (such as Ofsted), the provision must also be funded by either a Government funding agency or the local authority

Schools and colleges are responsible for managing both types of bursary. Young people who want to apply for support from the bursary fund should contact their chosen school or college to make an application.

Further information can be found at www.gov.uk/ search for post 16 bursaries.

Young parents / Care to Learn

If you are a young parent under 20, Care to Learn can help pay for your childcare and related travel costs, up to £160 per child per week, while you're learning. Care to Learn can help with the cost of:

- childcare, including deposit and registration fees
- a childcare 'taster' session (up to 5 days)
- keeping your childcare place over the summer holidays
- taking your child to the childcare provider

Types of child care

The childcare provider must be Ofsted registered and can be a:

- childminder
- pre-school playgroup
- day nursery
- out of school club

If your child needs specialist childcare, the provider must also be on the Care Quality Commission's register for specialist provision.

If you want a relative to get Care to Learn for looking after your child they need to be both:

- providing registered childcare for children they're not related to
- living apart from you and your child

Payments

Childcare payments go directly to your childcare provider. Before your childcare provider can be paid:

- your childcare provider needs to confirm your child's attendance
- your school or college needs to confirm that you're attending your course

Payments for travel costs go to your school or college - they'll either pay you or arrange travel for you.

Attendance

Payments will stop if:

- you stop attending your course
- you finish your course
- your child stops attending childcare

Eligibility

You can get Care to Learn if:

- you're a parent under 20 at the start of your course
- you're the main carer for your child
- you live in England
- you're either a British citizen or a national of a [European Economic Area \(EEA\) country](#)
- your course is publicly funded (check with your school or college)
- your childcare provider is registered with Ofsted or the Care Quality Commission

Type of course

Care to Learn is only available for courses in England that have some public funding. This includes courses that take place in:

- schools
- school sixth forms
- sixth form colleges
- other colleges and learning providers, including Foundation Learning
- your community at Children's Centres

Young parents are also entitled to apply for an Under 19 Bus Only Ticket or for those aged 19 and over can apply for the 19 – 25 card.

For more information please visit <https://www.gov.uk/care-to-learn/how-to-claim>

Further Discretionary Support for Students aged 16-19 attending post 16 education

The Council will exercise its discretion to provide travel assistance for students aged 16 to 19 (when continuing a course commenced before their 19th birthday) where it considers that travel assistance is necessary to enable the young person to reasonably access their education or training provision.

The Council is clear that as young people with SEND approach adulthood, where appropriate, travel assistance will be provided to support independence.

In assessing eligibility for students entering post- 16 education and training for travel assistance, particular attention will be paid to the following criteria.

- whether the student is currently in receipt (or has applied for) of any funding from the 16 to 19 Bursary Fund and to what value
- the location of the sixth form unit or college the student would like to attend (if this is not a local provision, the local authority would need to know that the course being taken is not available locally).
- whether the sixth form unit is an extension to the school previously attended by the student and named in their EHCP
- the distance from the student's home to their education or training establishment and the journey time
- whether the young person has SEND and/or mobility difficulties which would impede their access to their educational placement, either independently or otherwise, for example, a wheelchair user
- whether the young person has SEND which would make it unsafe for them to travel independently
- whether the public transport journey to the nearest suitable placement is too complex for the young person to be expected to travel independently

Applicants must also evidence why it is necessary for the Council and not the student/family to make suitable travel arrangements. To assess this and understand the individual circumstances the Council will need to know:

- what other arrangements have been considered or tried and why they are not suitable

- if there is a family member or carer who is willing and able to transport the student
- whether the student is in receipt of higher rate mobility component of the Personal Independence Payment or Disability Living Allowance, the purpose of which is to assist those who have mobility problems, with severe difficulty walking or who need help getting around outside. We would normally expect this benefit to be fully utilised and if there are any factors limiting its use details should be provided
- whether there is a 'Motability' vehicle for which the student may or may not be the driver
- any other needs or circumstances that might need to be taken into account

Each request will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. Where an individual has been awarded assistance with travel this will be subject to payment of the appropriate contribution payment.

Contribution Payment for Students aged 16-19 attending post 16 education

Contribution payments for travel assistance will only apply to those aged 16-18, and those continuing their course when turning 19 years of age.

Contribution details for student types are as follows:

Low income families

Where travel assistance is provided to qualifying low income families, this will be subject to a contribution from the student/parent of £750 per annum. The option will be available to pay this in termly instalments over the academic year. Children from low income groups are defined as those who are entitled to free school meals, or those families whose annual taxable household income is less than £16,190* and are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit (WTC).

If the financial circumstances of the family/individual are impacting the young person's ability to attend their study programme, then a request for the contribution to be waived can be submitted to the Council. It is expected that all avenues for financial support have been explored before that Council will consider any contribution waiver.

Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Where a post 16 student has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and is attending the school named within their EHCP as the nearest appropriate school for their post 16 education – public transport will be promoted for this group and travel training referrals will be made for all students with the expectation that they will be assessed for suitability for training by the end of the first term of post 16 education. A charge for travel assistance will be based on the income of the family at the time of application. Low income families, as defined in above will be required to contribute £750 towards the cost of support provided. All other applicants will be required to make a contribution of £750 towards the cost of travel support.

Students with SEN who no longer have an EHCP

Those students who had an EHCP in year 11 who will be attending a school or college to continue their education and require additional support to do so. Low income families, as defined above will be required to contribute £750 towards the cost of travel assistance. All other applicants will be required to make a contribution of £750 towards the cost of travel support.

All applications will be considered based on the evidence provided to support the claim at the time of application.

Other Students

Bespoke transport or individual taxis will not be provided. The cost of travel assistance for this group will be £750 per year, per student.

Reimbursement of the Charge

If travel assistance is no longer required part way through a term, a partial reimbursement of the charge may apply, provided all tickets/passes have been returned and are received within the timescales stated in the table below. When calculating a reimbursement for tickets/passes received after the first day of a term an administrative charge of £60 will apply. The following levels of refund will be payable after the administration charge has been taken:

Length of time ticket/pass has been used	Refund Due
Up to 4 weeks	75%
4 to 8 weeks	50%
Over 8 weeks	0%

No reimbursement will be paid during the summer term.

Support for Students aged 19-25 attending post 16 education

The post-19 (19 to 25) travel assistance powers held by the Council apply to students with special educational needs and disabilities aged between 19 and 25 inclusive who have an EHCP.

The Council recognises that young people are, in many cases, more capable of achieving independent travel than pupils of statutory school age. As such the policy for post-19 (19-25) students is focused upon a needs-led approach in which the individual needs of each young adult are assessed to inform the appropriate form of travel assistance.

'Post-19' will include learners aged 19 to 25 (starting from the academic year after they turn 19).

The Council will consider whether assistance with travel is necessary to enable young adults with EHCPs to maintain attendance at their education placement. If it is

identified that assistance is necessary, then there would be no charge/ financial contribution expected from the young adult.

For post-19 students starting a new course, they must also evidence why it is necessary for the Council and not the student to make travel arrangements. The same assessment and considerations that were applied to students aged 16-19 will be applied to those 19-25 based on the evidence provided and, on a case,-by-case basis to determine if assistance from the Council with travel and access to their education placement is necessary.

Where it is identified that assistance with travel is necessary for a learner aged 19-25 then no contribution charge will be required.

Council provided Travel Assistance

Where students are identified as only able to access their post 16 education with assistance from the Council, after exhausting all other travel options, then the Council may

allocate a travel option from the categories below.

The Council will aim to use the highest appropriate category on the list, taking into account the needs of the pupil, and how the council can enable them to develop skills for independent travel:

1. provision of a travel pass for the pupil;
2. provision of independent travel training;
3. provision of a travel bursary;
4. payment of car mileage/travel reimbursement for the pupil/pupil's parent(s) (with consent);
5. provision of a travel pass for pupil and parent;
6. provision of a shared vehicle without escort;
7. provision of a shared vehicle with escort;
8. provision of an individual vehicle without escort;
9. provision of an individual vehicle with escort.

All travel provision will be reviewed as part of the annual review of needs and if appropriate as part of an early review. Travel assistance provision may be withdrawn or amended if circumstances have changed or the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Panel considers the withdrawal appropriate as an encouragement to independence.

Travel training

Local authorities have a duty to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with learning difficulties or disabilities up to the age of 25 in education and training. Independent travel training aims to achieve this.

Independent travel is a valuable skill for preparing for adulthood, an essential employability skill, and provides greater opportunities for young people, not least

increasing confidence in their abilities and reducing their sense of reliance on family members.

In line with the Council's aims and objectives to support independence and prepare young people for adulthood, and where appropriate employment.

The Council will work in partnership with education establishments and other individuals to identify young people who could benefit from ITT and contact their families to invite them to take part in ITT.

The Council will also contact young people and their families who will be transitioning from statutory education into post-16 and above to invite them to take part in ITT.

An ITT assessment will be carried out in the home, with the support of the family, to confirm the suitability of the young person for the ITT programme, taking into account the following criteria:

- existing level of independent travel skills
- the likelihood of the pupil being eligible for SEN travel assistance under the 16 to 19 & 19-25 policy
- the age of the pupil
- the distance between home and school
- the SEND of the pupil
- the route which the young person would need to undertake
- journey times using public transport and the complexity of the journey
- the frequency of the journeys required

This assessment would take place before the pupil undertakes the ITT programme, which would last for approximately four to six weeks. During the programme, the pupil will travel to and from their education or training provision each day with their dedicated one to one ITT trainer.

During the period when a pupil is taking part in the ITT, this will be their travel assistance offer. At the end of the ITT programme, the Council will review the pupil's progress with the family to decide if it is appropriate for the pupil to continue to travel independently. If it is not appropriate for the pupil to travel independently, their previous travel assistance offer will be reinstated. Although it is expected that the majority of young people would benefit from ITT, it is acknowledged that for some young people, due to the nature of their SEND, ITT will not be appropriate.

Those not in education, employment or training (NEET)

To support the provision of suitable education or training for young people who are 16 and 17 years old and not in education, employment or training (NEET), Slough Council may offer fixed term (up to one month) travel cards at subsidised rates to facilitate travel to interviews, work experience and other activities necessary to secure appropriate provision. To be eligible, young people must be registered and receiving support through Early Help and Preventative Services.

Available support in other circumstances

Recognising that the Council's discretionary powers should not be unreasonably fettered by its general policy, the Council will consider and may agree requests for assistance with travel to Post 16 education placements where there are considered to be extenuating circumstances that prevent a young person accessing their further education placement unless travel assistance is available. If the parent/carer or young person believes extenuating circumstances exist and assistance with travel is necessary, then they should provide additional information and evidence when submitting their application for consideration.

The overriding expectation is that parents/carers and young persons will have exhausted all other available options to support and enable travel to and from their education placement. The Council will need to be satisfied it has been demonstrated that, for social, medical, financial or personal reasons access to their education placement cannot be facilitated without assistance with towards travel arrangements.

The determination will be based on evidence received to support the case whether travel assistance is necessary in order for the child to access their education.

In all cases the decision whether to exercise discretion will be taken on a case-by-case basis.

Applying for travel assistance/support

All requests for travel assistance for children and young people with an EHCP must have a completed application form. To access a copy families can contact the Travel Assistance Team on 01753 875708.

Deadline for applications

For Post 16 Travel Assistance Applications an application window will operate between 1 March until 30 September each year for new starters which then reopens for 1 January to close again on 31 January in each academic year. We will consider circumstances of applications made outside of this window where someone's circumstances changed unexpectedly (eg a house move or drop in income).

Appeals

There is a two-stage process for parents who wish to challenge a decision about:

- the travel assistance arrangements offered;
- their child/young person's eligibility;

Stage one: Review by a senior officer

- A parent/pupil has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's home to school travel assistance decision to make a written request asking for a review of the decision.

- The written request should detail why the parent believes the decision should be reviewed and give details of any personal and/or family circumstances the parent believes should be considered when the decision is reviewed.
- Where this is possible, within 20 working days of receipt of the parent/pupil's written request a senior officer reviews the original decision and sends the parent a detailed written notification of the outcome of their review

Stage two: Review by an independent appeal panel

A parent has 20 working days from receipt of the local authority's stage one written decision notification to make a written request to escalate the matter to stage two.

Within 40 working days of receipt of the parents request an independent appeal panel considers written and verbal representations from both the parent and officers involved in the case and gives a detailed written notification of the outcome (within 5 working days).

Home to School Travel Assistance and Post 16 Travel Assistance Policy Consultation Survey Results

Notification of Consultation:

- Letters/communication sent to current children/young persons with EHCP's issued by Slough (including current users of transport): 1600
- Direct communication with Slough Schools (including those where transport is not currently provided): 48
- Direct communication with Schools outside of Slough where travel is currently provided: 43

Consultation Responses

- Responses to this survey: **58**
- Attendance at public meetings: **25**
- Enquiries via consultation email address: **5**

Discussion and feedback at public meetings reflected the responses received via the online questionnaire.

Meeting with Schools provided a supportive response. Understanding the rationale behind the proposals with a couple of key considerations being identified which reflected the questionnaire responses.

Email enquires during the consultation included (2) enquires about current travel support available to their child, two enquires about accessing the online questionnaire (including losing the original letter re the consultation), and feedback (1) regarding inability to make the dates/times of the public meetings.

Travel Independence

Question 1.1: Being independent is different for everyone. In terms of travel and preparing for adulthood, what is your/your child's aspiration in terms of how you/they will travel in the future?

Option	Total	Percent
Be able to carry own bags and board and alight a vehicle on their own	21	11%
Be able to access transport from a collection point	20	11%
Be able to share school transport with other children or young people	40	21%
Being able to travel without a parent or carer in attendance	20	11%
Be able to undertake a single journey/route independently using public transport	14	8%

Be able to undertake a single journey/route independently walking/cycling	10	5%
Be able to plan and undertake any journey independently using public transport	12	6%
Be able to undertake any journey when they want using any form of transport	11	6%
Be able to undertake any journey by driving a car or motorcycle	6	3%
Be able to undertake any journey by cycling or walking	8	4%
Be able to travel on public transport with an accompanying adult (e.g. parent/carer)	13	7%
Other (Please specify)	7	4%
Not Applicable	6	3%
Not Answered	0	0%

“Other” (7) responses confirmed the severity of need of their children and the high level of support that is required to transport them to and from School.

Question 1.2: What are the three biggest benefits for a young person who is successfully supported to travel independently on public transport, which allows them to access services and activities in the community?

Option	Total	Percent
Improved job opportunities	1	1%
Development of life skills/independence	19	30%
Improve self-esteem/confidence	13	21%
No benefit	6	10%
Independent travel not possible for my child	15	24%
No applicable	4	6%
Improved access to services and activities	5	8%

Question 1.3: What are the three biggest benefits for the family of a young person who is successfully supported to travel independently on public transport?

Option	Total	Percent
Family members have more time to do their own thing e.g. study or employment	22	20%
Increased numbers of travel options available for family travel	9	8%
Reduced dependency on family or friends financially	15	14%
Less need for adults to accompany young person to and from places	17	15%

Opportunities to access community services and activities that were previously not accessible	12	11%
Positive changes in family relationships and interactions	10	9%
Other	13	12%
Not Answered	12	11%

“Other” (12) responses confirmed the significant needs of their children and inability to travel independently.

Question 1.4: What are the three biggest barriers that stop children and young people using public transport independently to access services and activities in the community?

Option	Total	Percent
Specific health needs cannot be supported on public transport	42	11%
Likelihood of bullying or being attacked	34	9%
Unable to access services and activities due to poor public transport links	22	6%
Limited awareness of danger or unable to keep safe	49	13%
Specific needs may place child/young person or member of the public at risk	40	11%
Wouldn't be able to manage situations that aren't planned or are out of routine	44	12%
Risk of getting lost or missing stop	39	10%
Unable to communicate with public transport staff or members of the public	40	11%
Has never used public transport before, even with an accompanying adult	13	3%
Unable to handle money	27	7%
Not being able to access opportunities to learn the necessary skills to use public transport	11	3%
Family concern for the young person's safety and not allowing them the opportunity to try to travel on public transport independently	16	4%
Other	3	1%

“Other” (3) responses identified general safety in the town and specific individuals needs that would put them at risk if traveling independently.

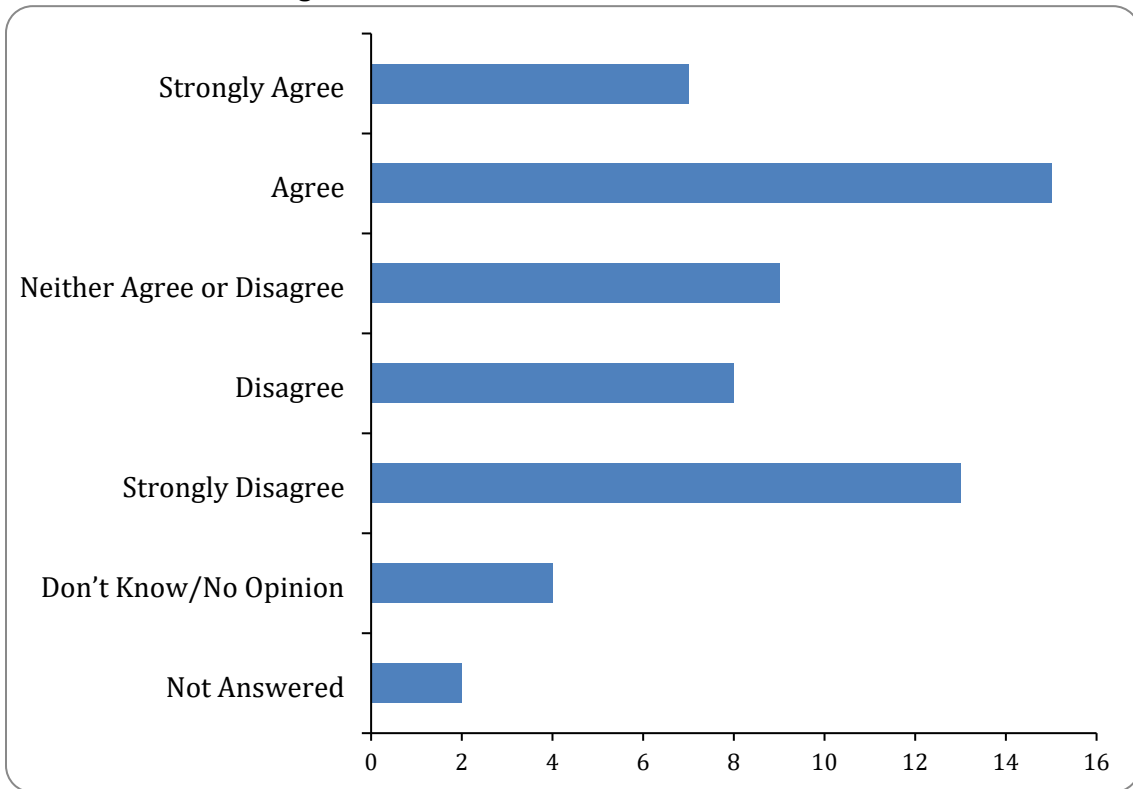
The Council will consider these aspects when assessing individual suitability and during design/delivery of any training to ensure risks are mitigated and appropriate controls and monitoring are in place to support passenger safety.

Question 1.5: What should the Council do to encourage more children and young persons with SEND to travel on public transport to school or college?

Option	Total	Percent
Promote/Market Travel Training better	4	8%
Train specific journeys/scenarios	2	4%
Provide adult support to accompany young person	3	5%
Travel Training not suitable for young person	20	38%
Improve safety within the wider community	4	8%
Save money elsewhere	3	5%
Conduct individual needs assessment to confirm suitability for training	11	21%
Provide free bus passes for young people and/or carers	3	5%
Improve bus reliability, accessibility, and driver training	3	5%

The Council will continue to explore suggested options to improve public transport travel based on the responses provided.

Question 1.6: To what extent do you agree with the statement below: If a child or young person has the potential to become an independent traveller and would benefit from Independent Travel Training then they should be expected to undertake the training



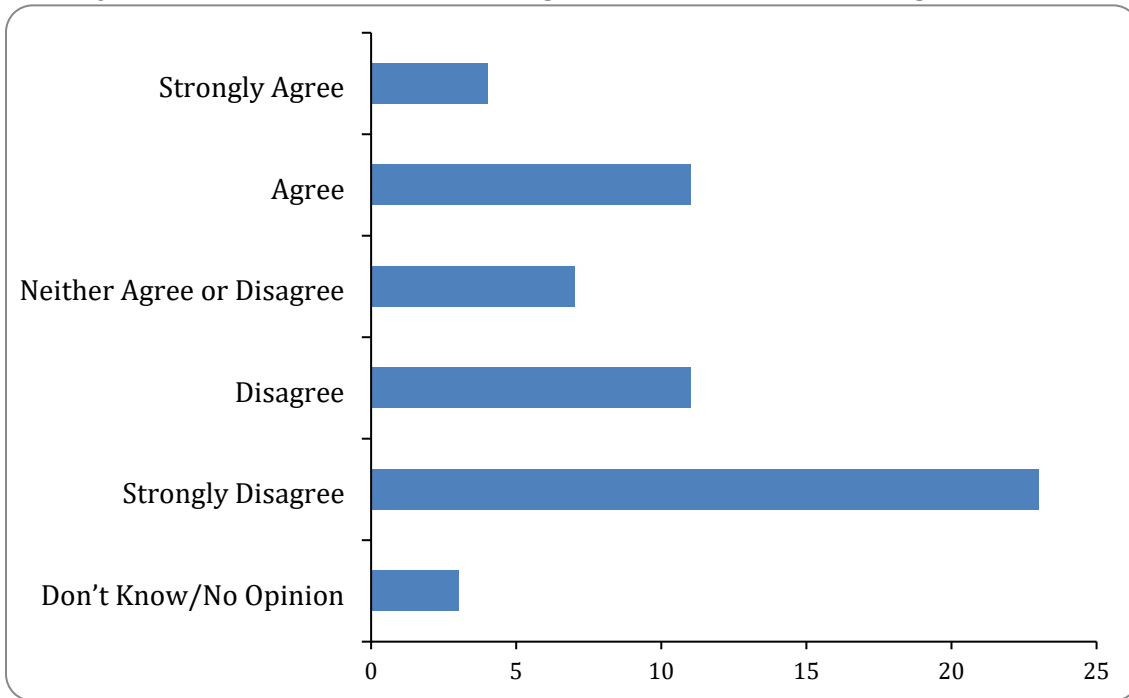
Question 1.7: Please provide any further thoughts, comments and suggestions in relation to Independent Travel Training.

The majority of responses either stated that Independent Travel Training would not be suitable for their child, or that it was essential that each child is individually assessed to identify if this is a suitable option for them.

Other responses included: the need to ensure travel arrangements keep children safe, and that training should focus on older children and should be part of long term planning/support for the individual.

Travel Bursary

**Question 1.8: To what extent do you agree with the statement:
The Council should encourage more young people and families to use a travel bursary to make their own travel arrangements to school or college.**



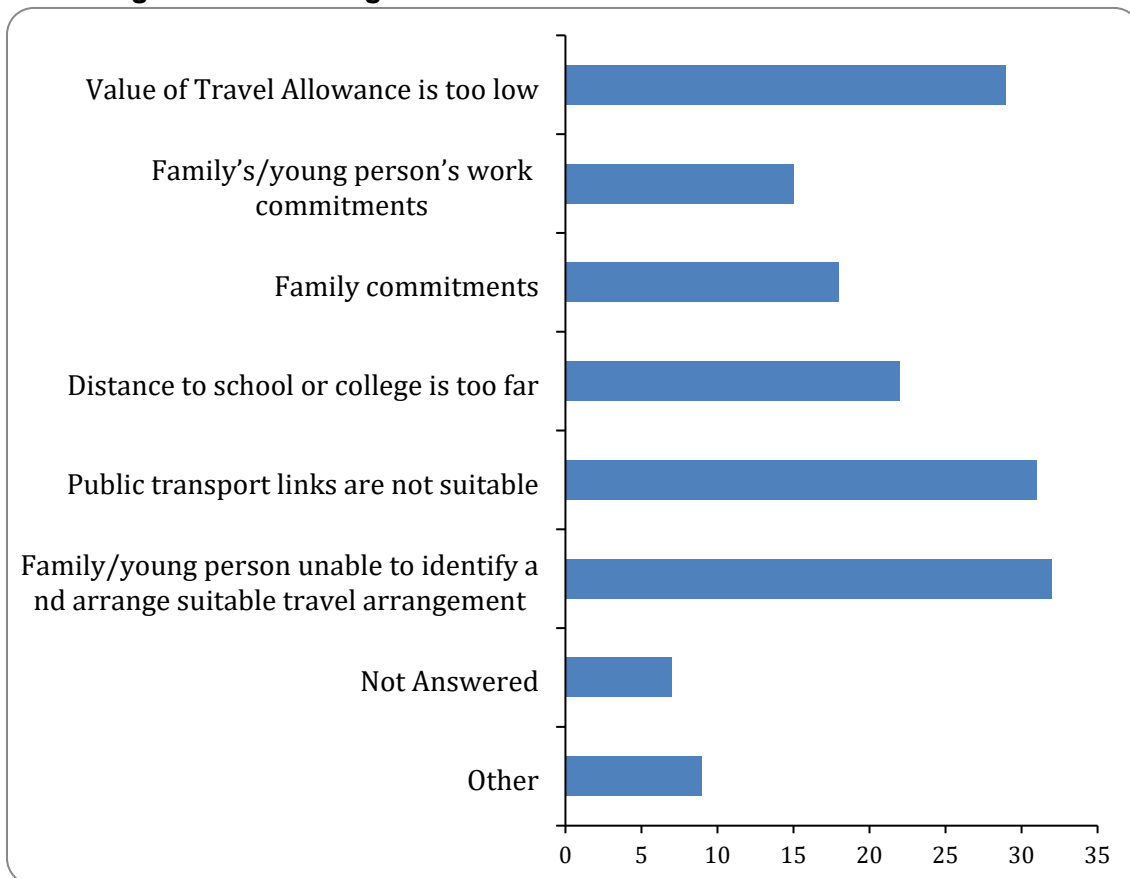
Question 1.9: Based on what you currently know about the proposed Travel Bursary travel option, what do you think are the three biggest benefits for families using a Travel Bursary to make their own travel arrangements?

Option	Total	Percent
Able to arrange travel around work commitments	8	7%
Able to arrange travel around family/caring responsibilities	11	10%
Flexibility to allow access to after school activities/services outside of school/college	14	13%
Greater control over travel arrangements	15	13%
Ability to provide additional funding for bespoke travel needs if necessary	9	8%
Less likelihood of changes in travel arrangements resulting from other passengers	9	8%
Shorter journey times for child or young person to school or college	13	12%
Not Answered	21	19%
Other	10	9%
Not Answered	2	1%

Those who responded “other” generally felt that the Council should be providing the travel, not the parent, and that there was no benefit to the Travel Bursary option. It was also mentioned within the feedback that this may put more cars on the road.

The Council acknowledges that car use could be increased if individual cars/journeys are undertaken in place of share travel arrangements. However, it is expected that the use of the Bursary is likely to be more beneficial for all parties where journeys are not currently shared and therefore if a family decides to drive their own child to school then this will replace the existing vehicle on the road (that is used), rather than increase vehicle numbers on the road. Vehicles already on the road transporting parents/carers to work may also be able to be utilized to transport their child to school and travel to work, therefore vehicle numbers will not increase in this scenario. The Council will continue to monitor and observe vehicle numbers on the road.

Question 1.10: What do you think are the top three barriers stopping a young person or their family using a Travel Bursary to make their travel arrangements for accessing school or college?

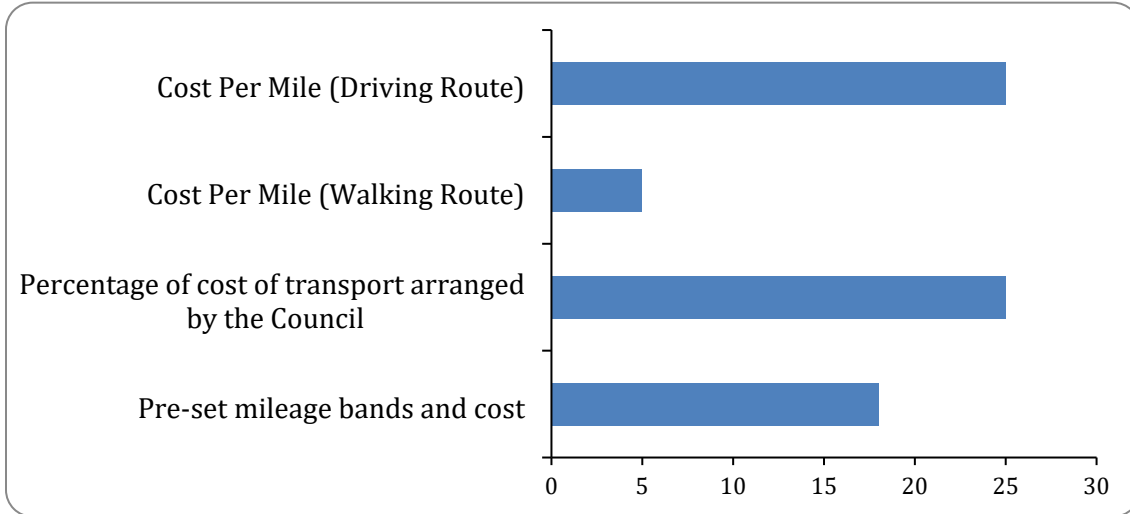


“Other” feedback regarding barriers to the use of a Travel Bursary included: that it may not be suitable due to other family members own ill health, the increase congestion on the roads would cause problems, it may not be suitable for their child due to their needs,

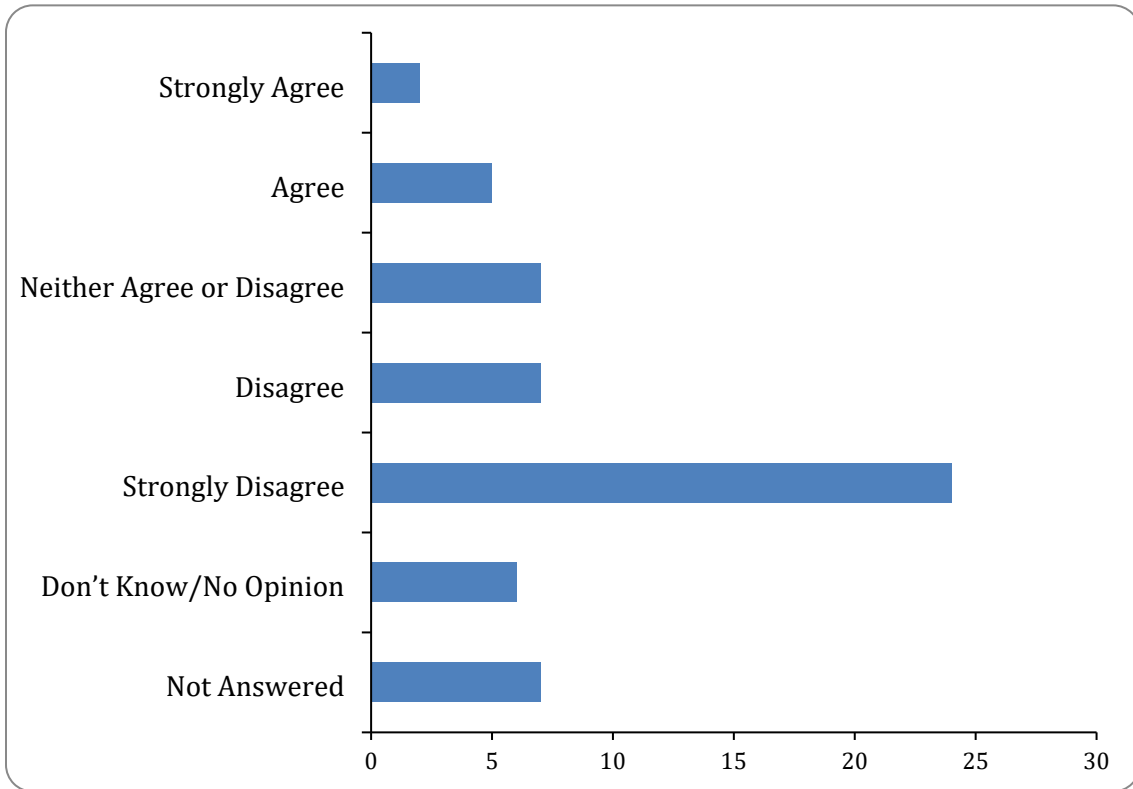
families may miss use the Travel Bursary and spend on other things for the family, and it may not be an affordable option for some families.

For eligible children/young people the use of a Travel Bursary can only be with the parent/carer's consent. Therefore, if circumstances do not allow a Travel Bursary to be used the family can reject this offer with the Council making an alternative offer of provision. The Council will continue to work with families to reduce the impact of identified barriers to encourage uptake of the Travel Bursary.

Question 1.11: How should the value of the Travel Bursary be calculated?



Question 1.12: If a cost per mile calculation was used to establish the value of the Travel Bursary, to what extent do you agree that 45p per mile for a return journey is an appropriate value?

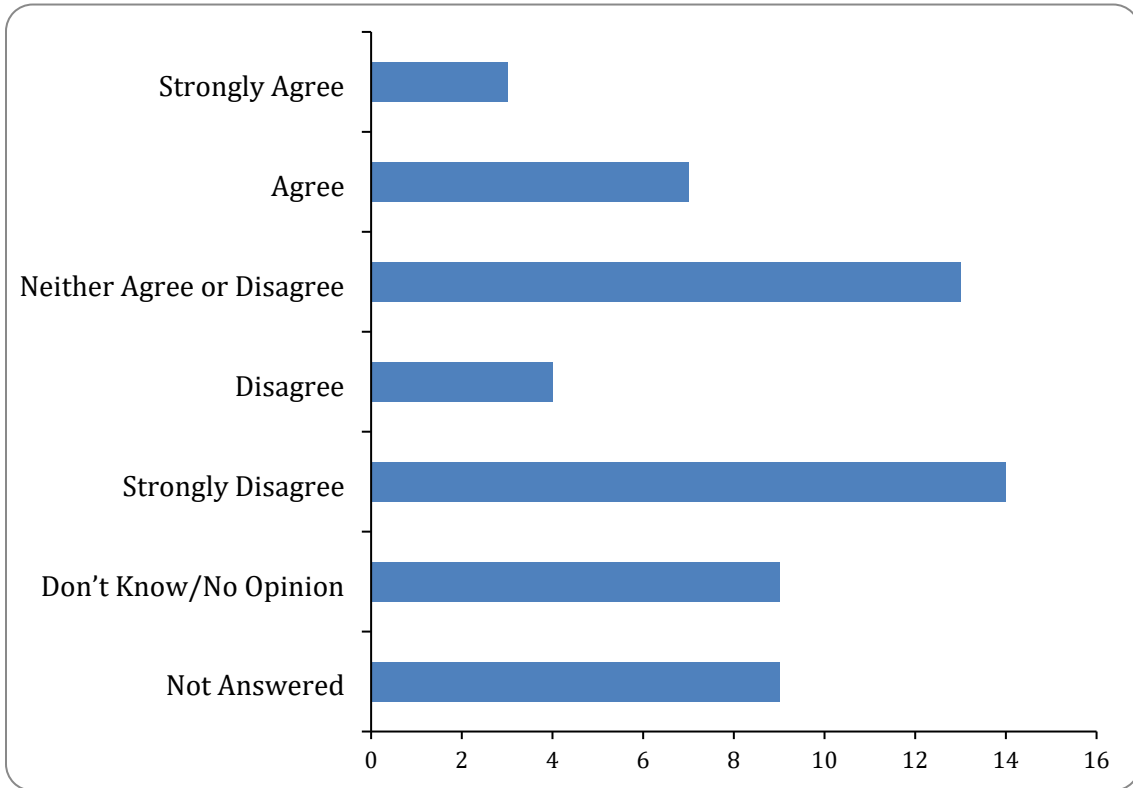


Question 1.13: If a pre-set mileage band and cost was used to establish the value of a Travel Bursary, to what extent do you agree with the following Bursary values?

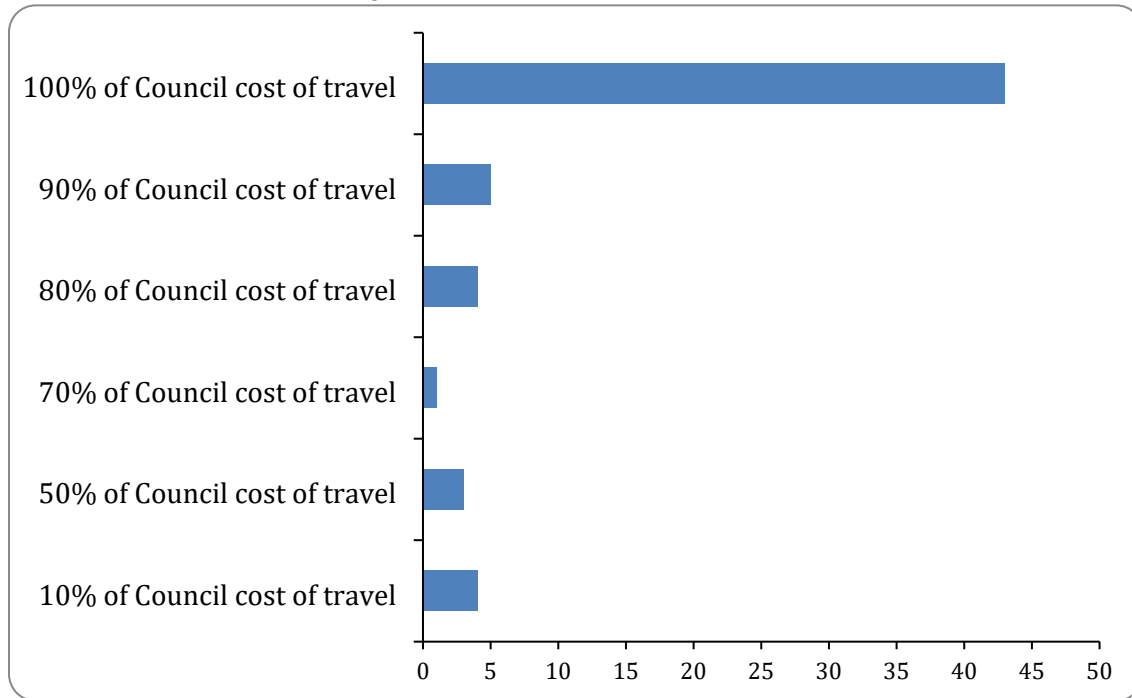
Less than 5 miles = £2000 per year

5-10 miles = £3000 per year

Over 10 miles = £5000 per year



Question 1.14: Based on the current average cost of travel assistance of £5,769 per person, what percentage of a child/young person’s travel cost should be offered as a Travel Bursary?

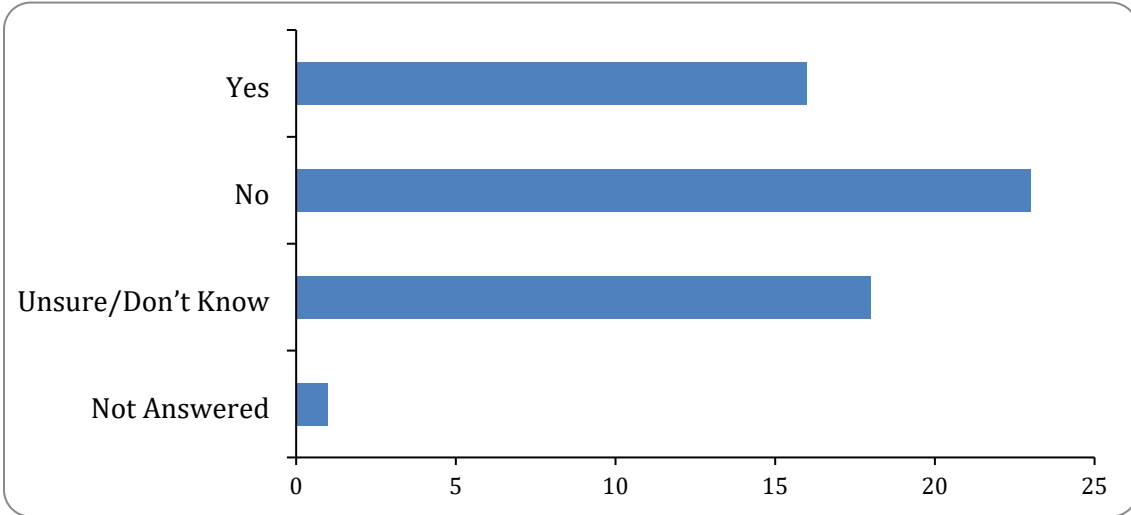


Question 1.15: Please provide any further thoughts, comments and suggestions in relation to Travel Bursaries.

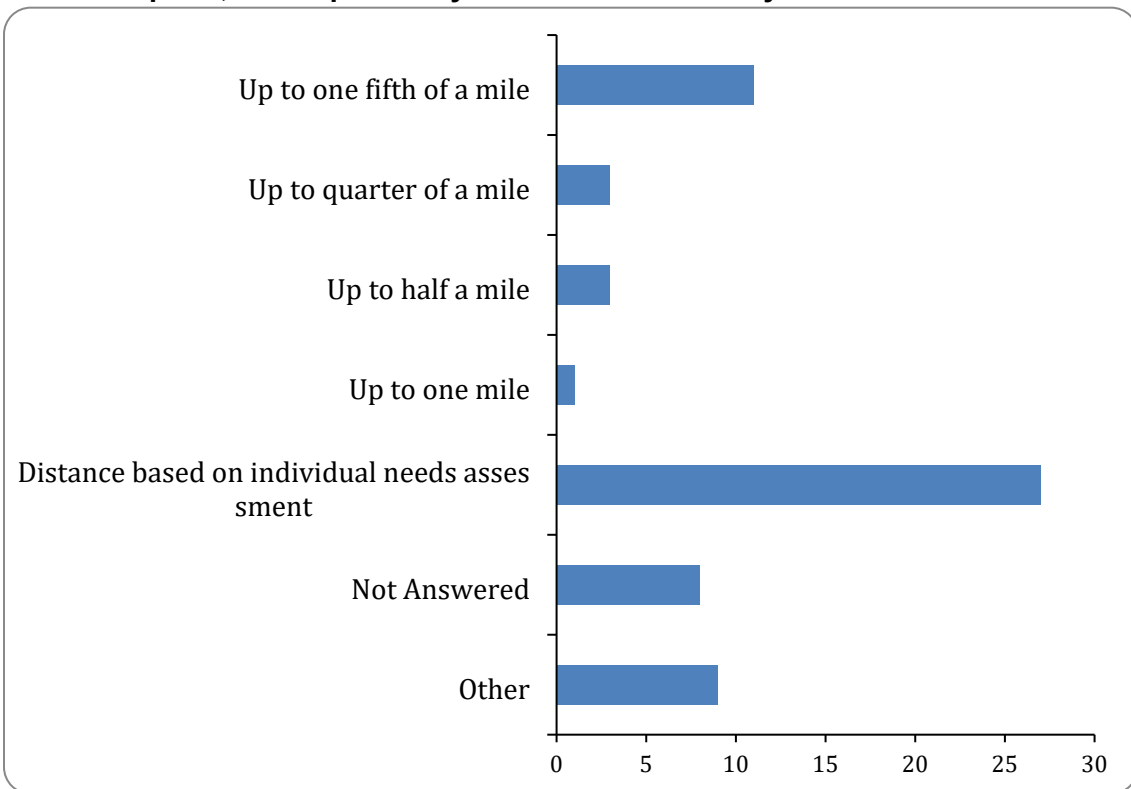
As per earlier responses to Travel Bursary questions many responses indicate that this travel option would not be suitable for their child, and that the Council should be arranging any transport if it is necessary to do so. The other prominent response was that the Travel Bursary may not be financially viable families and therefore unsuitable. Other responses suggest the Travel Bursary offer should be kept simple, cover the cost of return journeys for accompanying adults, there is a need to increase the availability of buses, and that the Council should support the development of travel skills to better support them in the future.

Collection Points

Question 1.16: Do you think that the use of collection points for some children and young people would be beneficial?



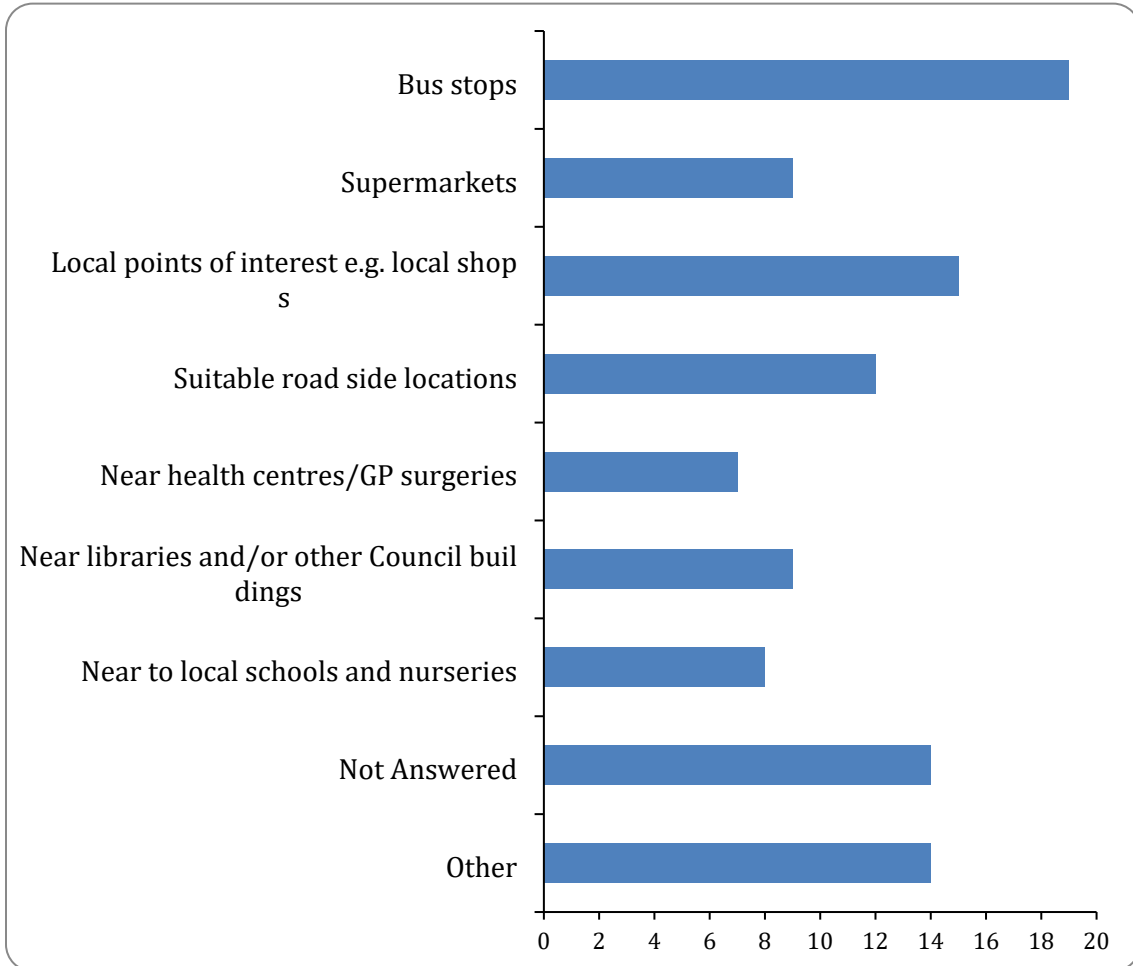
Question 1.17: If collection points were used for some children and young people, how far do you think is reasonable to ask a child or young person to travel to a collection point, accompanied by an adult as necessary?



Respondents (“other”) felt either that this would not be a suitable option for their child or that the distance a child should walk should be assessed on a case-by-case basis to reflect their specific needs and capabilities. Other responses stated that children should

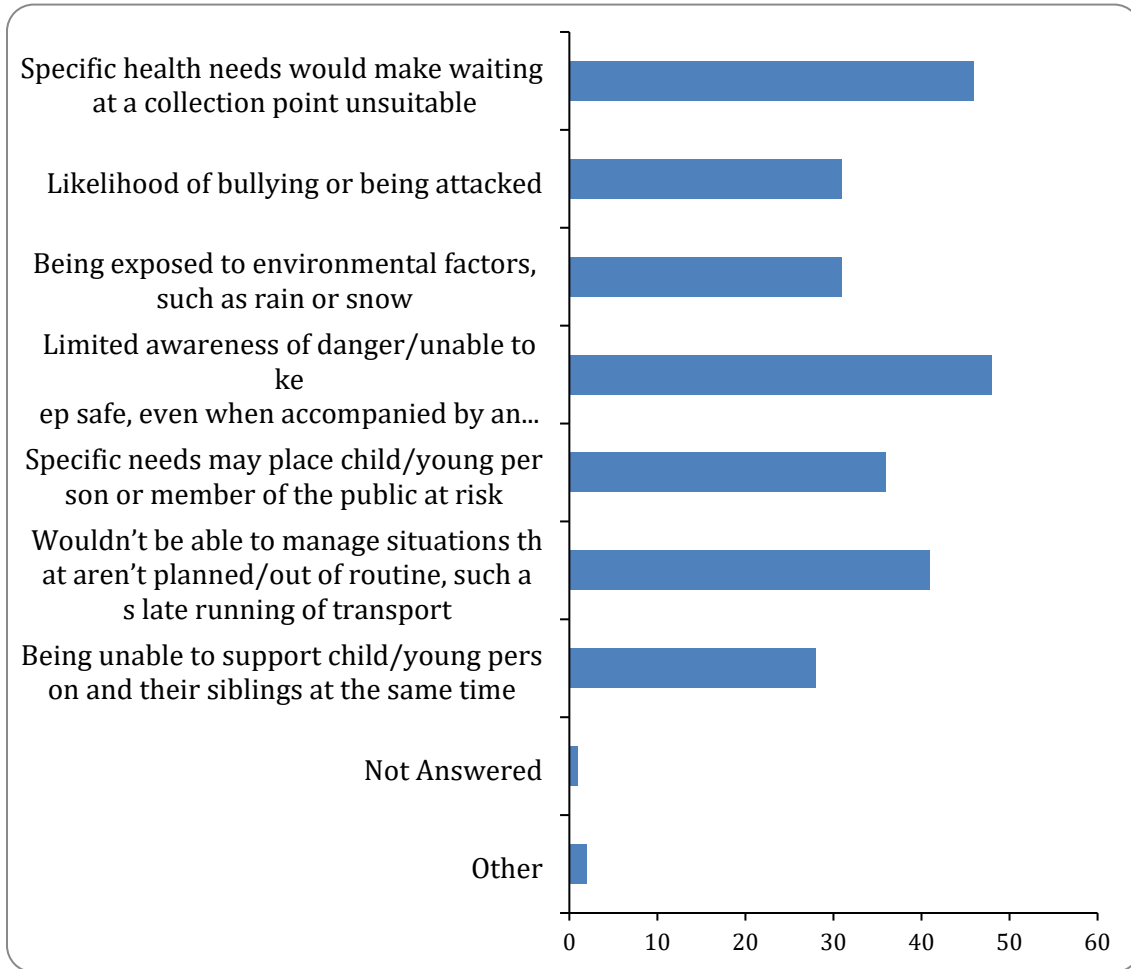
only be collected from the home address because it was the safest option, and it may impact family work arrangements.

Question 1.18: When planning routes with collection points which three locations would be most suitable for a collection point, subject to a location being identified as having suitable facilities for boarding, alighting and waiting?



Respondents also continued to indicate that they felt home collection was the only option for their child (11), there was also feedback suggesting that locations chosen should be individually assessed to reflect the needs/circumstances of the individual.

Question 1.19: What are the three biggest barriers to a child or young person accessing their school or college transport from a collection point?



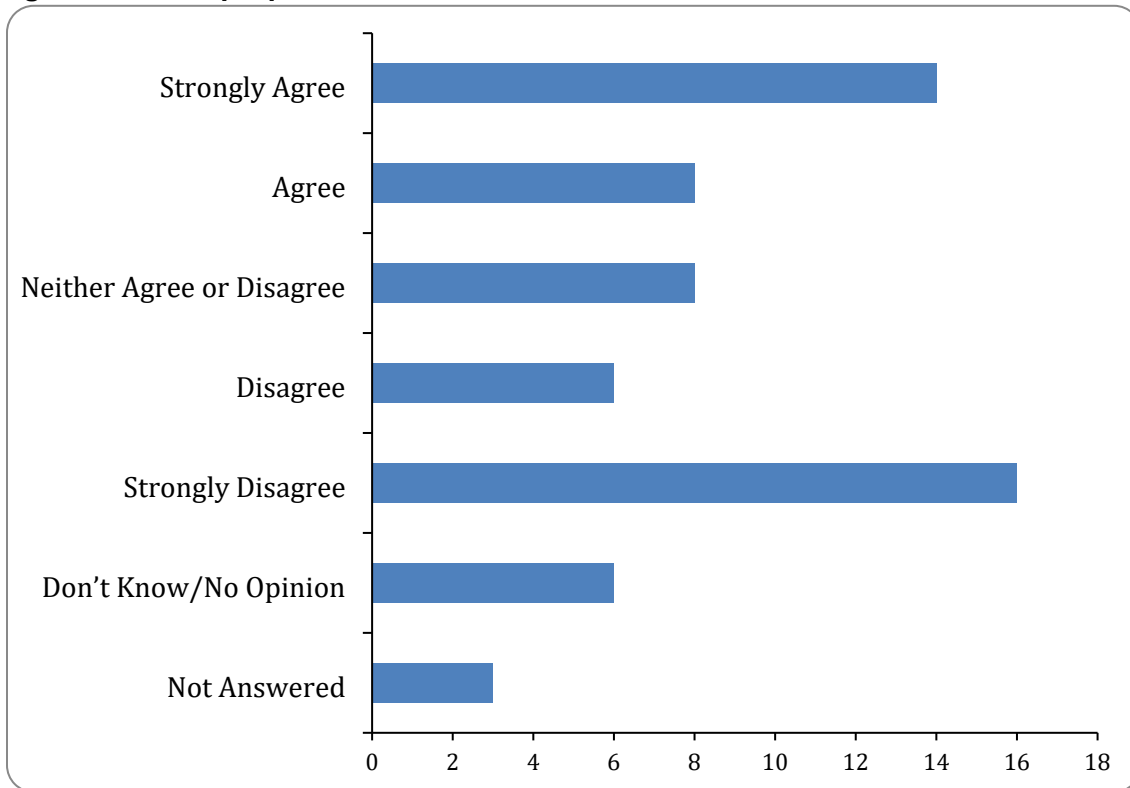
Further responses reinforced that the use of collections points would not be suitable for their child or if the child has specific additional needs.

Question 1.20: Please provide any further thoughts, comments and suggestions in relation to the use of collection points

Comments, thoughts and suggestions provided reflect the responses to previous questions. Generally those responding felt their child would be unable to access a collection point due to their needs, it would be necessary that location and allocation of children is individually assessed, and any location used must have space/cover/supervision available.

Faith School & Same Sex Establishments

Question 2.1: Slough Council is proposing to cease travel assistance for children/young people attending faith or same sex establishments that are not the nearest educational establishment to their home address. To what extent do you agree with this proposal?



Question 2.2: Please provide any further thoughts, comments and suggestions in relation to proposed ceasing of travel assistance to faith or same sex establishments

As per 2.1 the responses were evenly balanced between respondents believing that if parental choice results in attendance at a School that is not the nearest then families should be responsible for making travel arrangements in the same was as children attending nonfaith or same sex schools/establishments. It was also recognised by

respondents that some children may have additional needs, and these should continue to be taken into account and assessed on a case by case basis. Other respondents felt that provision to these Schools should continue.

Contribution Charge – Non Compulsory School Age

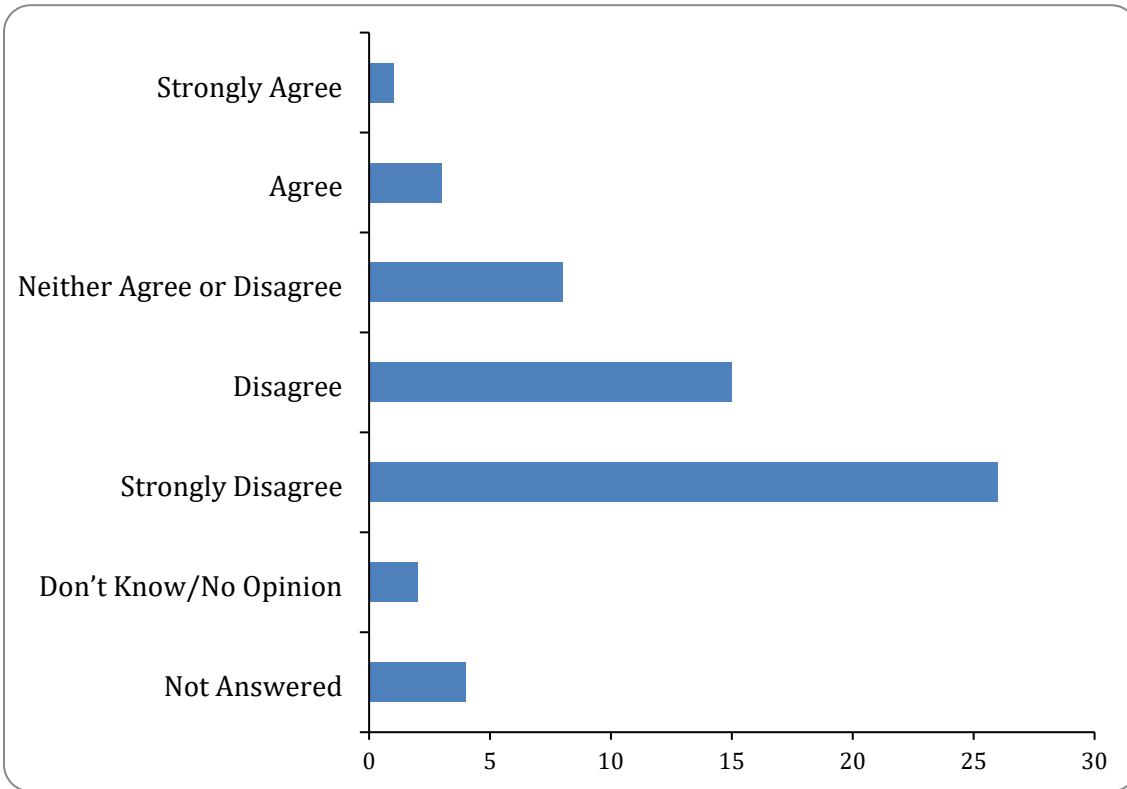
Question 2.3: Slough Council is proposing to introduce a contribution charge for children/young persons who are not of compulsory school age. The range of contribution charges amongst other Council’s ranges from £300 to over £1,500 per year. What contribution charge do you think is reasonable for non-compulsory school age young persons to make towards their travel costs?

Option	Total	Percent
£1500 per annum	10	16%
£1250 per annum	0	0%
£1000 per annum	0	0%
£750 per annum	4	7%
£500 per annum	10	16%
£250 per annum	37	61%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Alternative Saving Opportunities/Efficiencies

Question 3.1: Slough Council’s expenditure on home to school or college transport for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities is £3.7 million this year.

To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council should take reasonable steps to limit spend on this service.



Question 3.2: If you have any suggestions on how the Council could reduce its expenditure on home to school or college travel assistance, please provide these.

The majority of responses indicate that children/young people with SEND and their families should not be targeted for spend reductions. Instead, this should be targeted from other departments, officer salaries/pay and addressing miss-spending.

Suggestions were put forward that include requesting donations, target contract reductions with transport providers, optimise/replan the routes that are in place. More local specialist provision may also reduce Council transport spend.

Other Considerations

Question 3.3: Children and young people may be receiving Disability Living Allowance, a Personal Independence Payment or another form of travel benefit or concession. Ordinarily the purpose of this benefit is to provide support with travel and access to services and activities. With this in mind, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following:

Existing travel benefits or support should be one of the factors taken into consideration when assessing if a young person over the age of 16 needs additional support with travel to their education placement.

Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	8	%
Agree	11	%
Neither Agree or Disagree	5	%
Disagree	8	%
Strongly Disagree	22	%
Don't Know/No Opinion	2	%
Not Answered	4	%

Question 3.4: Some young people between the ages of 16-19 will be able to access a Vulnerable Person's Bursary from their college to support with the costs of continuing their education, including costs associated with travel. With this in mind, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following:

It is reasonable to expect young people in receipt of a Vulnerable Person's Bursary to use this funding to contribute towards the costs of any travel assistance provided by the Council.

Please specify

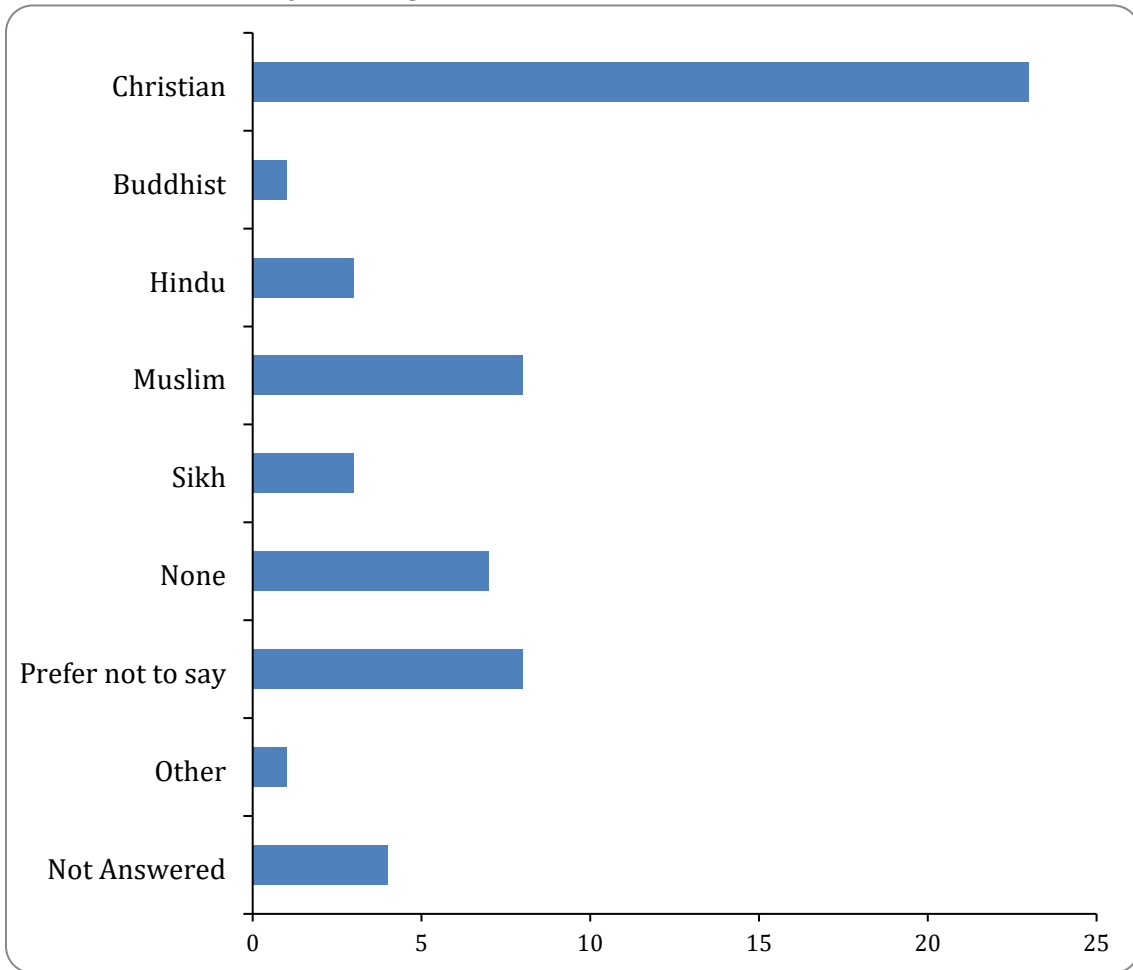
Option	Total	Percent
Strongly Agree	7	%
Agree	16	%
Neither Agree or Disagree	5	%
Disagree	4	%
Strongly Disagree	16	%
Don't Know/No Opinion	5	%
Not Answered	6	%

Demographic/Background Section

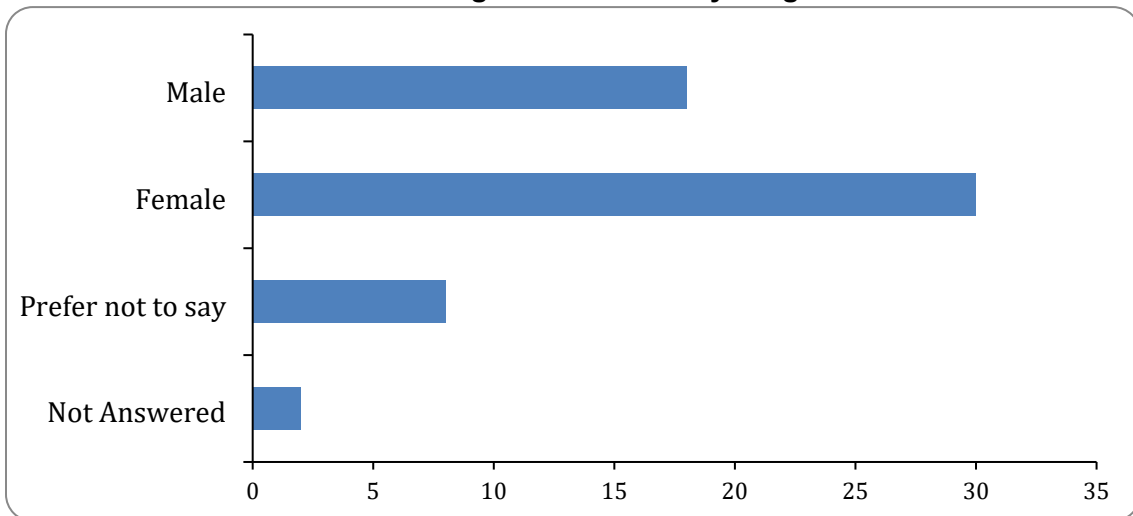
Question 1: What is your Ethnic Group?

Option	Total	Percent
A. White	23	39.66%
British	16	27.59%
Irish	1	1.72%
Any other White background, please state:	2	3.45%
B. Mixed	0	0.00%
White and Black Caribbean	1	1.72%
White and Black African	0	0.00%
White and Asian	0	0.00%
Any other Mixed background, please state:	1	1.72%
C. Asian or Asian British	5	8.62%
Indian	3	5.17%
Pakistani	6	10.34%
Bangladeshi	0	0.00%
Sikh	1	1.72%
Kashmiri	0	0.00%
Any other Asian background, please state:	0	0.00%
D. Black or Black British	1	1.72%
Caribbean	0	0.00%
African	0	0.00%
Any other Black background, please state:	1	1.72%
E. Chinese or other ethnic group	0	0.00%
Chinese	0	0.00%
F. I do not wish to provide this information	8	13.79%
Other	1	1.72%
Not Answered	3	5.17%

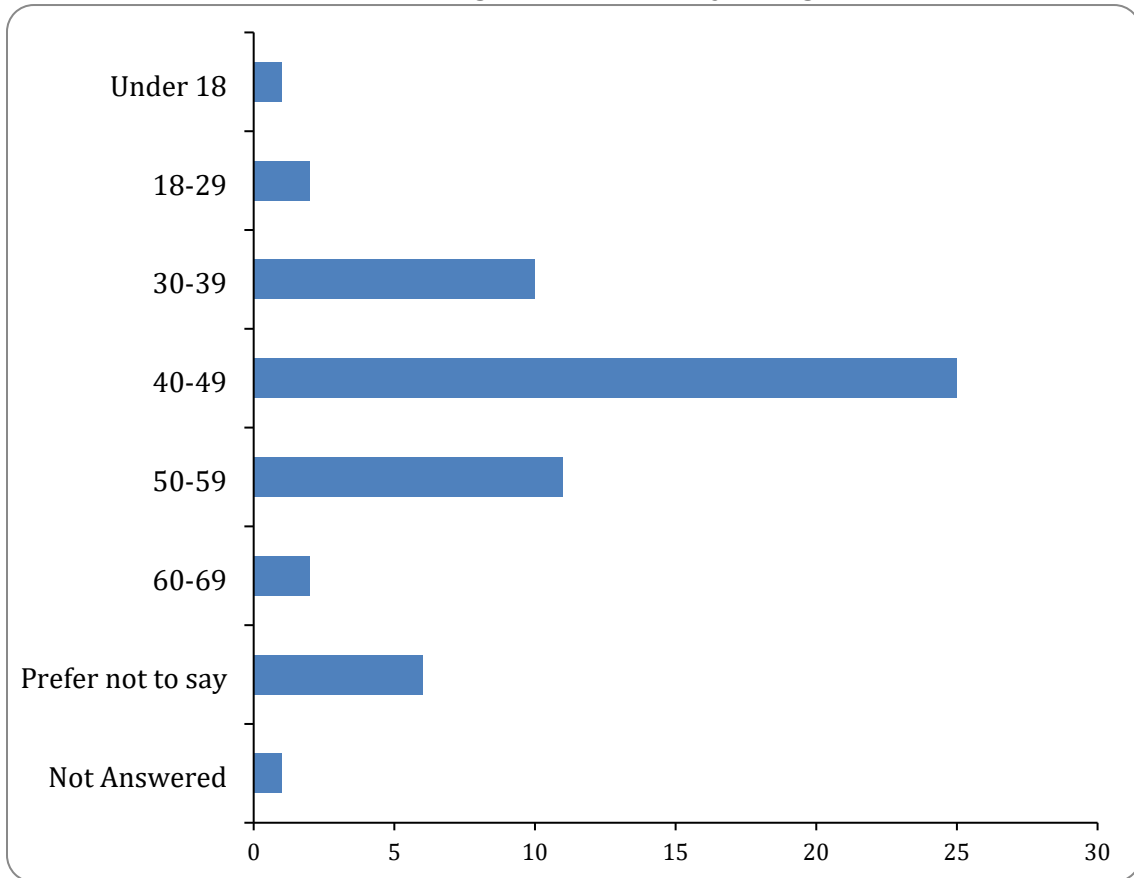
Question 2: What is your religion/faith/belief?



Question 3: Which of the following best describes your gender?



Question 4: Which of the following best describes your age?



Question 5: Do you have a disability?

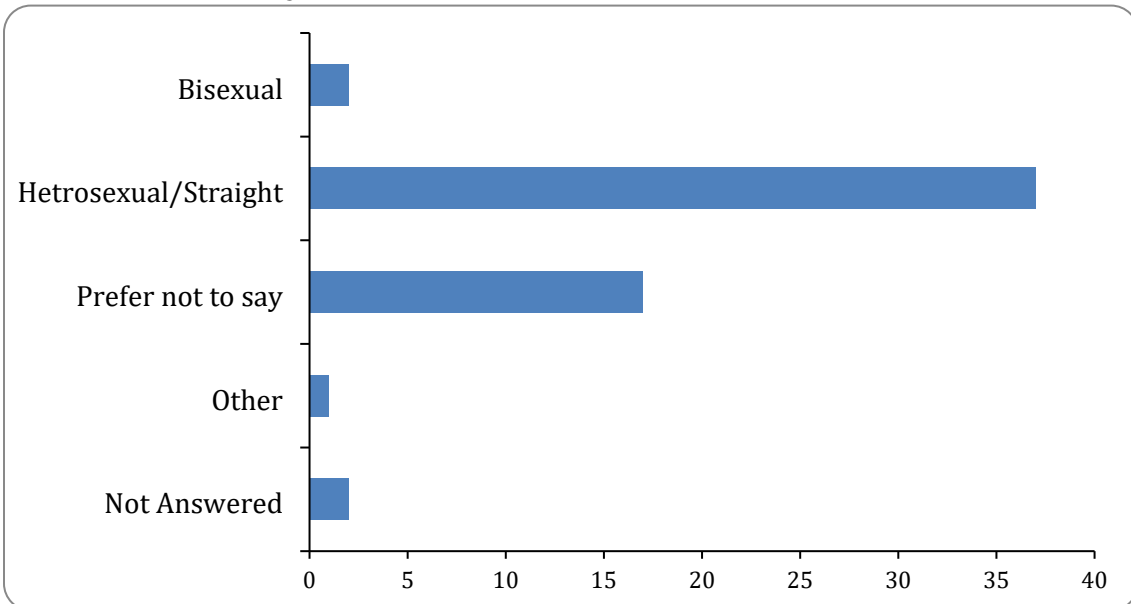
What do we mean by a disability?

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as a physical or mental impairment with substantial and long-term, adverse effects on ability to perform day to day activities.

Option	Total	Percent
00 None	36	62.07%
01 You have a specific learning difficulty (for example dyslexia)	1	1.72%
02 You are blind or partially sighted	1	1.72%
03 You are deaf or hard of hearing	1	1.72%
04 You use a wheelchair or have mobility difficulties	2	3.45%

05 You have Autistic Spectrum Disorder or Asperger Syndrome	1	1.72%
06 You have mental health difficulties	4	6.90%
07 You have a disability that cannot be seen eg. Diabetes, epilepsy or a heart condition	5	8.62%
08 You have two or more of the above	1	1.72%
09 You have a disability, special need or medication that is not listed above	1	1.72%
10 I do not wish to provide this information	11	18.97%
Not Answered	0	0.00%

Question 6: What is your sexual orientation?



EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT TEMPLATE

PLEASE ENSURE YOU READ THE GUIDANCE NOTES BEFORE COMPLETING THIS TEMPLATE

Completing an EIA is the simplest way to demonstrate that the Council has considered the equality impacts of its decisions and it reduces the risk of legal challenge. EIAs should be carried out at the earliest stages of policy development or a service review, and then updated as the policy or review develops. EIAs must be undertaken when it is possible for the findings to inform the final decision.

SECTION 1:

<p>Title</p>	<p>Draft Home to School Travel Assistance and Post 16 Travel Assistance Policies for Consultation</p>
<p>What are you analysing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the policy/project/activity/strategy looking to achieve? • Who is it intended to benefit? Are any specific groups targeted by this decision? • What results are intended? 	<p>The Council have undertaken a review of the way SBC delivers its Home to School and Post 16 Travel Assistance to a) ensure it is fit for purpose and continues to be compliant with statutory obligations b) to explore the advantages and disadvantages of offering alternative travel options (where appropriate) that support the development of independence c) deliver value for money by offering assistance based on individual need (in line with statutory obligations), with any offer aligning to the individuals ability to travel as independently as possible.</p> <p>The review of the Home to School and Post 16 Travel assistance policies was necessary to ensure officers can rigorously apply the appropriate entitlement thresholds and also provide transparency and consistency to families and Schools in relation to the decision-making process and understanding of any potential travel offer.</p> <p>The Council consulted on proposed updated policies as well as a range of options it was considering. The Consultation ran for 28 days between 23rd June and 21st July 2022. Engagement included: an online survey, direct communication to all current users of the services, direct communication to non-users of the service with an EHCP, all Slough Schools and Post 16 Establishments, all non-Slough Schools and Post 16 Establishments where travel is provided, and recognised partners & organisations.</p> <p>Face-to-face engagement with users and stakeholders took place through public engagement events discussing the draft policies and proposed changes.</p> <p>This EIA will be reviewed and updated post consultation process reflecting the final proposed policies and the feedback received through the consultation process.</p>

	<p>Under the Education Act 1996, the Council has specific duties and powers as set out below:</p> <p>a) a duty to assess school travel needs and promote sustainable modes of travel in relation to children and young people of 6th form age (s.508A);</p> <p>(b) a duty to provide home to school travel arrangements as considered necessary for eligible children of compulsory school age, such arrangements to be provided free of charge (s.508B). Eligible children is defined in legislation and further details are provided within this policy;</p> <p>(c) a power to make school travel arrangements for children who are not eligible under s.508B. This power can be applied to children below compulsory school age, children attending faith schools or those living within the statutory walking distance. The Council may make a charge for provision of travel arrangements under this power (s.508C);</p> <p>(d) a duty to prepare a transport policy statement specifying travel arrangements provided to persons of sixth form age (s.509AA). The statement shall specify the provision of transport, provision of financial support and provision of travel concessions. A person is of sixth form age if they are receiving education or training and is over compulsory school age but (a) is under the age of 19; or (b) had begun a particular course of education or training at the establishment before attaining the age of 19 and continues to attend that course.</p>
<p>Details of the lead person completing the screening/EIA</p>	<p>(i) Full Name: Johnny Kyriacou (ii) Position: AD – Education & Inclusion (iii) Unit: People (Children) (iv) Contact Details: Johnny.kyriacou@slough.gov.uk</p>
<p>Date sent to Finance</p>	
<p>Version number and date of update</p>	<p>V2 27th July 2022</p>

SECTION 2: Do you need to complete a full Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?

Not all proposals will require a full EIA, the assessment of impacts should be proportionate to the nature of the project/policy in question and its likely impact. To decide on the level of detail of the assessment required consider the potential impact on persons with protected characteristics.

<p>2.1</p>	<p>Please provide an overview of who uses/will use your service or facility and identify who are likely to be impacted by the proposal</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>If you do not formally collect data about a particular group then use the results of local surveys or consultations, census data, national trends or anecdotal evidence (indicate where this is the case). Please attempt to complete all boxes.</i> <i>Consider whether there is a need to consult stakeholders and the public, including members of protected groups, in order to gather information on potential impacts of the proposal</i>
<p>The Home to School service is mainly used by SEN children although there are a number of mainstream children who are entitled to free transport and in general receive bus passes. Going forward the key driver in children receiving home to school transport will depend on rigorous application of the policy so that just those with a statutory entitlement will receive it. There may be some identified who currently have incorrectly received transport so they will be negatively impacted but this will not be because of any particular group characteristic. On the positive side there will be children supported to become more independent and attain travel skills at an earlier age.</p> <p>There are currently 1,695 people aged 0-25 on an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Of the 1,695 there are 520 who current use travel arrangements organised and funded by the Council. 190 users of the service do not have an EHCP, 20 of which attend a faith or same sex school which may not be the nearest School to their home address which can provide the appropriate level of education.</p>	
<p>2.2 Are there any groups with protected characteristic that are overrepresented in the monitoring information relative to their size of the population? <i>If so, this could indicate that the proposal may have a disproportionate impact on this group even if it is a universal service.</i></p>	<p>The statutory requirements on Council’s in relation to Home to School/College travel includes support for children and young people with disabilities, low income families. Therefore, the proposed policies affect outcomes of those protected characteristics groups.</p> <p>The primary principle of the statutory requirements, guidance and the policy is to ensure children and young people can access their education placements, where statutory eligibility thresholds are met or it is identified as necessary (in order to facilitate attendance) then assistance with travel must be provided. Assistance will continue to be available to these groups, with the type of assistance reflecting individual needs/circumstances.</p>
<p>2.3 Are there any groups with protected characteristics that are underrepresented in the monitoring information relative to their size of the population? <i>If so, this could indicate that the service may not be accessible to all groups or</i></p>	<p>N/A</p>

there may be some form of direct or indirect discrimination occurring.

2.4 Does the project, policy or proposal have the potential to disproportionately impact on people with a protected characteristic? If so, is the impact positive or negative?

	None	Positive	Negative	Not sure
Men or women	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People of a particular race or ethnicity (including refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and gypsies and travellers)	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disabled ¹ people (consider different types of physical, learning or mental disabilities)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> More options to support development of travel independence, previously not available	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People of particular sexual orientation/s	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People in particular age groups (consider in particular children, under 21s and over 65s)		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Changes include contribution charge for Post 16 learners	<input type="checkbox"/>
People who are intending to undergo, are undergoing or have undergone a process or part of a process of gender reassignment	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Impact due to pregnancy/ maternity	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
People of particular faiths and beliefs		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20 users of the service are currently in receipt of support which exceeds the Council statutory obligations. This provision will cease except in	<input type="checkbox"/>

¹ Disability discrimination is different from other types of discrimination since it includes the duty to make reasonable adjustments.

			exceptional circumstances	
People on low incomes	<p>✓ Families on low incomes are currently supported through the Councils statutory obligations therefore no change proposed for compulsory school age assistance. Introduction of contribution charge for Post 16 assistance is unlikely to impact as financial support is available whilst Council retains right to waive contribution fee if necessary for attendance</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>If any of the answers to the questions above is, “negative” or “unclear” you will need to undertake a detailed impact assessment.</p>				

2.5 Based on your responses, should a full, detailed EIA be carried out on the project, policy or proposal

	Yes No X
2.6	Provide brief reasons on how have you come to this decision?
	Children will be assessed for school transport using criteria set out in policy. The policy will not allow children to be excluded on grounds of race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender or faith. The requirement will be for the policy to be applied equally for all groups and having an increased staffing resource will decrease the likelihood of cases not being fully or properly assessed.

SECTION 3: ASSESSING THE IMPACT

In order to be able to identify ways to mitigate any potential impact it is essential that we know what those potential impacts might be. Using the evidence gathered in section 2, explain what the potential impact of your proposal might be on the groups you have identified. You may wish to further supplement the evidence you have gathered using the table below in order to properly consider the impact.

Protected Group		Positive impact?			Negative impact? If so, please specify the nature and extent of that impact	No specific impact	If the impact is negative how can it be mitigated? Please specify any mitigation measures and how and when they will be implemented	What , if any, are the cumulative effects of this decision when viewed in the context of other Council decisions and their equality impacts
		Eliminate discrimination	Advance equality	Good relations				
Gender	Men					✓	N/A	N/A
	Women					✓	N/A	N/A
Race	White					✓	N/A	N/A
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups					✓	N/A	N/A
	Asian/Asian British					✓	N/A	N/A
	Black/African/Caribbean/Black British					✓	N/A	N/A
	Gypsies / travellers					✓	N/A	N/A
	Other ethnic group					✓	N/A	N/A
Disability	Physical		✓				N/A	Those with disability but have potential to travel more independently now have options to develop their independence. Those unable to travel independently continue to receive appropriate support based on their individual needs/circumstances

	Sensory		✓				N/A	Those with disability but have potential to travel more independently now have options to develop their independence. Those unable to travel independently continue to receive appropriate support based on their individual needs/circumstances
	Learning Difficulties		✓				N/A	Those with disability but have potential to travel more independently now have options to develop their independence. Those unable to travel independently continue to receive appropriate support based on their individual needs/circumstances
	Learning Disabilities		✓				N/A	Those with disability but have potential to travel more independently now have options to develop their independence. Those unable to travel independently continue to receive appropriate support based on their individual needs/circumstances
	Mental Health		✓				N/A	Those with disability but have potential to travel more independently now have options to develop their independence. Those

								unable to travel independently continue to receive appropriate support based on their individual needs/circumstances
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Protected Group		Positive impact?			Negative impact?	No specific impact	What will the impact be? If the impact is negative how can it be mitigated? (action)	What are the cumulative of effects
		Eliminate discrimination	Advance equality	Good relations				
Sexual Orientation	Lesbian, gay men, bisexual					✓	N/A	
Age	Older people (50+)					N/A	N/A	
	Younger people (16 - 25)				✓		Families will be required to pay a contribution towards travel costs if the learner is attending Post 16 education, currently there is no requirement to pay a contribution. The contribution charge has been deemed reasonable based on financial support that is available and the typical cost of traveling to college if Council travel is not available.	Young learners who require support with travel from the Council will need to pay a contribution charge. This may increase financial pressures on families to attend their study programme which may create an attendance barrier. Most current service users qualify for a 16-19 bursary which is provided to contribute towards education costs, including travel. If financial hardship can be evidenced, then the Council retains the option to waive contribution charge.
Gender Reassignment						✓	N/A	

Impact due to pregnancy/maternity					✓	N/A	
Groups with particular faiths and beliefs				✓		20 learners currently benefit from travel assistance to a School of faith or same sex establishment that isn't the nearest School that can meet the individuals' educational needs. Removing this provision will align eligibility with other learners and in line with the Council's statutory obligations.	Affected learners will be expected to access their chosen education placement (not nearest) with no travel support from the Council using existing family resources, public transport or walking. If extenuating circumstances that exist prevent or restrict attendance then the Council retains the power to provide discretionary assistance on a case-by-case basis.
People on low incomes					✓	N/A	

SECTION 4: ACTION PLAN

4.1	<p>Complete the action plan if you need to reduce or remove the negative impacts you have identified, take steps to foster good relations or fill data gaps.</p> <p><i>Please include the action required by your team/unit, groups affected, the intended outcome of your action, resources needed, a lead person responsible for undertaking the action (inc. their department and contact details), the completion date for the action, and the relevant RAG rating: R(ed) – action not initiated, A(mber) – action initiated and in progress, G(reen) – action complete.</i></p> <p>NB. Add any additional rows, if required.</p>
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Action Required	Equality Groups Targeted	Intended outcome	Resources Needed	Name of Lead, Unit & Contact Details	Completion Date (DD/MM/YY)	RAG
Create guidance information for families & schools to explain Home to School and Post 16 Travel Policies, to include available financial support and how to apply if extenuating circumstances exist	All	To provide useful information to families and schools that accurately and easily explain the policies with appropriate signposting to other available support or application channels/options.	TBC	Johnny Kyriacou, (People Children)	31/12/22	
Provide feedback from the consultation to partner organisations and Schools	All	To provide transparency of the consultation process and insight into the responses that have been considered as part of the decision making process	TBC	Johnny Kyriacou, (People Children)	30/11/22	
Engage with SENDIAS and other organisations to explain the transition of the changes, the implications and options available to	All	To ensure support organisations are aware of the policy changes, the continued support that is available and empower	TBC	Johnny Kyriacou, (People Children)	30/11/22	

	families in accordance with the new policies		them to effectively support those individuals they work with					

THIS SECTION TO BE COMPLETED BY THE RELEVANT SERVICE MANAGER

SIGNATURE:

FULL NAME: Johnny Kyriacou

UNIT: People - Children (Education & Inclusion)

EMAIL & TELEPHONE EXT: johnny.kyriacou@slough.gov.uk

DATE (DD/MM/YYYY): 27/07/2022

WHAT NEXT?

It is the responsibility of the service to complete an EIA to the required standard and the quality and completeness of EIAs will be monitored by Strategic Finance Board.

All EIAs for proposed changes to levels of service arising from budget proposals must be completed by (insert date).

All completed EIAs should be sent to

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE RECORD 2022/23
PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

COUNCILLOR	15/06/22 <u>Extraordinary</u>	12/09/22	24/10/22	28/11/22	Dec 2022 - tbc	30/01/23	Feb 2023 - tbc
Qaseem (Chair)	P						
P Bedi (Vice- Chair)	P						
Bal	Ab						
Basra	P						
Begum	P						
Brooker	P						
R Davis	Ap						
Matloob	P						
Sandhu	P						

P = Present for whole meeting P* = Present for part of meeting Ap = Apologies given Ab = Absent, no apologies given

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