

Equality Impact Assessment

A. Information about the policy

Policy title	Post 16 Transport Policy 2027/28
Lead officer (name and role)	Carly Price, Strategic Lead SEND
Date of assessment (dd/mm/yyyy)	May 2026
Summary of the policy	<p>The council currently provides discretionary transport support to post-16 learners with SEND, which goes beyond the statutory minimum requirements set out in the national guidance.</p> <p>Discretionary transport refers to travel assistance provided by the council that is not required by law. For post-16 learners with SEND, the council is not legally obliged to provide free or subsidised transport but may choose to do so in accordance with its local transport policy.</p> <p>This support includes free transport for eligible young learners 16-18 who meet the eligibility criteria.</p> <p>The council currently offers fully paid travel support, mileage allowance or council organised transport (COT) which includes solo taxis in some cases.</p> <p>Rising demand and financial pressures have prompted a review of this provision to ensure it is legally compliant, equitable, and financially sustainable.</p> <p>We are proposing a targeted revision to the current Post-16 SEND transport offer. This approach retains support for those with the greatest need while ensuring that resources are used fairly and sustainably.</p> <p>After an in-depth research on the offering from other councils, we believe the proposed changes to charge for some transport offerings will promote independence and positive outcomes for young people, as well as more efficient use of council resources</p>

B. Initial assessment

	Assessment
PSED Aim 1 (unlawful behaviour): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could your policy lead to direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, 	Yes – As the service supports those with SEND, we are talking about those with a disability which is a protected characteristic. It may impact those from

<p><u>victimisation</u>, or any other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010?</p>	<p>a low socio-economic household. As we are requesting a fee for arranging and managing transport.</p> <p>However, we do not have a legal responsibility to provide free transport and other authorities have a charging policy in place for Post 16.</p> <p>There still remains the potential it will cause distress to those the policy covers, which will need to be mitigated through consultation and engagement with stakeholders and individuals who may be impacted.</p>
<p>PSED Aim 2 (equal opportunities):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could your policy affect how service users or employees access services or participate in activities relevant to your policy area? • Could it impact people with particular protected characteristics who have a disproportionately low level of access to services, participation in public life, or other activities? • Could it create or worsen disadvantages and inequalities in your community? • Could it remove or minimise disadvantages and inequalities in your community? 	<p>Yes – We will be asking service users with SEND to access a bursary from their school, to fund their own transport to school or council organised transport which we are introducing a fee for. Although the bursary has been an available resource to 16+ learners and we made reference to this in the existing policy we have not previously requested this be used to mitigate transportation costs for learners.</p> <p>However, we do not have a legal responsibility to provide free transport for this cohort.</p>
<p>PSED Aim 3 (good relations):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could your policy affect how people perceive or interact with others? • Could it help tackle prejudice and promote understanding between people with different protected characteristics? • Could it lead to prejudice, community tensions, conflicts, isolation, or segregation? 	<p>No – People will still be able to access the same level of services as before.</p> <p>Yes – promoting more independent travel and access to public transport could positively introduce and include more young people with SEND to more public spaces.</p>

C. Full assessment

i. Impact on protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Expected impact	Evidence
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Age	16-19 year olds will have the introduction of charges which have not been the case previously.	This has been introduced successfully in several authorities and although difficult is not anticipate to impact the ability to attend education within this age range, as there are alternative funding mechanisms beyond council funded transport (e.g. Bursary)
Disability	All pupils on transport will have Special Educational needs and/or Disabilities Introduction of charges Although there is no duty on councils to transport post 16 all applications will be assessed on their own individual merit through a person-centred approach	The service will look at each request on a case by case basis within their annual review and will support learners to access Bursary and identify independent travel options where appropriate and can support in finding training to strengthen this skill.
Gender reassignment	None	
Pregnancy and maternity	None	
Race	None	
Religion or belief	None	
Sex	None	
Sexual orientation	None	
Marriage and civil partnership	None	
Membership of the armed forces community*	None	
Socio-economic disadvantage*	Introduction of charges which were not previously requested. Some may find this a difficult additional financial pressure – however there are avenues to support with this e.g. the use of the bursary. Although there is no duty on councils to transport post 16 all applications will be assessed on their own individual merit	The service will look at each request on a case by case basis within their annual review and will support learners to access Bursary and identify independent travel options where appropriate and can support in finding training to strengthen this skill.

	through a person-centered approach	
Experience of care*	<p>All pupils on transport will have Special Educational needs and/or Disabilities and potentially have experienced some care.</p> <p>Introduction of charges</p> <p>Although there is no duty on councils to transport post 16 all applications will be assessed on their own individual merit through a person-centred approach, ensuring that the Local Authority as corporate parent is promoting independence whilst supporting the needs of each individual child and young person.</p>	<p>The service will look at each request on a case by case basis within the annual review for the child or young person and will support learners to access Bursary and identify independent travel options where appropriate and can support in finding training to strengthen this skill.</p>

*Additional characteristics identified by the Council to be considered in Equality Impact Assessments.

ii. Mitigating Actions

Negative impact	Mitigating action
New financial pressure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will be working with educational settings to identify those with the potential to travel independently and supporting them to identify relevant training to strengthen this lifelong skill. - We will discuss travel arrangements as part of the annual review. - We will support learners to access the bursary which can be used to fund transport costs. - Where there is evidence the household is of 'low income' we have reduced the contribution to allow for those to still access education.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All cases will be assessed on their own merit and individual needs will be considered.
Impact on attendance at educational setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We will work with the educational setting to support the individual in creating and managing a travel plan. - All cases will be assessed on their own merit and individual needs will be considered. - We will be working with educational settings to identify those with the potential to travel independently and supporting them to identify relevant training to strengthen this lifelong skill.

iii. Monitoring and Review

The Post 16 travel statement must be re-published annually. Therefore we will closely monitor the impact the introduction of this has on learner, and we will be able to alter the policy annually where there is evidence unfair/unlawful impact to those with protected characteristics.

D. Approval

Approving officer (name and role)	Date (dd/mm/yyyy)
Brian Grady Director of Education	1/5/2026