

Report to: **Children's Services Scrutiny Committee**
Date: **26 September 2006**
By: **Chairman of the Project Board**
Title of report: **Scrutiny review of Home to School Transport**
Purpose of report: **To present the outcomes of the review and the proposed recommendation.**

RECOMMENDATION – that the Committee considers the report of the Project Board and support its recommendation.

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the recommendations in the Project Board report.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The attached report contains the findings and the recommendation of the Review Board. Supporting documentation can be made available in the Members' Room upon request.

2.2 The Project Board comprised of Councillor Rosalyn St Pierre (chair), Councillor Pat Ost and Councillor Sylvia Tidy.

2.3 During the course of the review the Board consulted officers in both the Admissions and Transport team and the Passenger Transport team. It also spoke with representatives of the Catholic and Church of England diocese and took evidence from officers at other county councils.

Councillor Rosalyn St Pierre
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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
Supporting evidence and information

Scrutiny Review of Home to School Transport

Report by the Project Board:

Councillor Rosalyn St Pierre – Chair
Councillor Pat Ost
Councillor Sylvia Tidy

August 2006



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1. Recommendation

- 1.1 This review was originally scheduled to be completed by March 2006. However, as a result of software changes to the home to school transport management system, it was not possible to obtain key financial data until April 2006. The revised finish date for the review was set for September 2006.
- 1.2 In June 2006 an executive best value review was set up to consider all aspects of passenger transport. This review is scheduled for completion in January 2007 and will include within its remit home to school transport.
- 1.3 The review board concluded that to have published its review in September 2006 and put forward recommendations to Cabinet as planned would have possibly pre-empted the recommendations of the Cabinet review. It has, therefore, made the following recommendation:

That the evidence compiled by the review board be formally presented to the Executive Best Value Review of Passenger Transport to allow it to be considered as part of the overall review.

- 1.4 The review board is disappointed that the timing of these two reviews converged. It would have liked to have completed the review as planned and put forward recommendations to Cabinet. It recognises the importance of a joined up process over this very complex area though and has therefore concluded that this recommendation is the best course of action.
- 1.5 This review shows that there is potential for savings in home to school transport but the review board recognise that savings would be generated over a five/seven year time scale. It is likely that the Executive review will identify additional savings in other transport areas and these may well be short term.
- 1.6 The review board would welcome an opportunity to discuss its findings with the Executive Best Value Review of Passenger Transport in due course.

2. Current statutory home to school transport policy

- 2.1 The Children's Services Authority (CSA) has a duty under the 1996 Education Act to provide free home to school transport for those children attending the designated school where the distance between home and that school is over two miles for children under 8 years old and three miles for children aged 8 and over.
- 2.2 The CSA also has the power to decide its own discretionary home to school transport policies to provide free or subsidised transport for children who do not fall within its duty to do so. In exercising its discretion as to whether it is necessary to provide school transport, the CSA should have regard (amongst other things) to:
- the age of the person and the nature of the route, or alternative routes, which the child could be reasonably expected to take; and
 - any wish of a parent for their child to be provided with education at a school in which the religious education provided is that of the religion or denomination to which the parent adheres.
- 2.3 The CSA considers applications on their merits. Where the distance criterion is not met, or the child does not fall within the discretionary policies, and the parent wishes to apply for an exception, such an application is referred to the School Transport Panel, which consists of 3 councillors, to determine.
- 2.4 Home to school transport is managed by two different departments at East Sussex County Council (ESCC). Policy, funding and eligibility are dealt with by the Children's Services Department, whilst procurement is the responsibility of the Transport and Environment Department.
- 2.5 The review board focussed on discretionary home to school transport policies. It did not have a remit to look at procurement.
- 2.6 The total home to school transport budget in 2005/06 was £8 million. Within this almost £700,000 was spent on discretionary policies.
- 2.7 Home to school transport is a complex issue, particularly as not all the current policies fall neatly into statutory or discretionary categories.
- 2.8 The review board had great difficulties in obtaining accurate data due to the way in which information has been coded and stored in the past. This made it impossible for the review board to get an accurate picture of where some aspects of the discretionary home to school budget has been spent.
- 2.9 The review board recognised the advances that had been made in recent months with regard to the management of this data. This has been due to the implementation of the Trapeze computer program and the hard work of staff in the Passenger Transport and the School Admissions Team in transferring data to the new system. The review board is confident that this new program will continue to bring benefits to the administration of all aspects of passenger transport.

3. Current discretionary policies in East Sussex

3.1 East Sussex currently has six discretionary policies in place. In 2005/06 the budget for these was £686,836 and 1,553 children (2% of the total number of children attending school in East Sussex) were provided with free transport through these policies.

Policy	Cost for 2005/06	% of overall budget	Children supported	Average cost per child	
1	A parent is unable to accompany their child to school due to their medical condition (primary school children only).	£27,921	4.1%	19	£1,469
2	A child has a medical condition and cannot walk the statutory distance.	£41,249	6.0%	10	£4,124
3	A child attends another school other than the designated school and both schools are beyond the statutory distance.	£41,043	6.0%	187	£219
4	A child attends a denominational ¹ aided school which is over the statutory distance and there are other nearer schools (the child has to be baptised in that faith or the parent adheres to the faith).	£576,623 ²	83.9%	1337	£431
5	A family is temporarily re-housed.	Not known	-	-	-
6	A child moves and has already embarked on a GCSE course.	Not known	-	-	-

3.2 The current way in which the data is coded does not allow for the recording of when transport is provided under policies 5 and 6. From discussions with officers in the department it is understood that these policies only cost a few hundred pounds each year but the board had no hard data to confirm this fact.

¹ 'Denominational transport' has traditionally referred to transport to and from schools which have a Roman Catholic or Anglican foundation standing within the Christian religious tradition. 'Faith schools' is a relatively new term which is being used to describe schools which have been established by a particular religious tradition, such as Islam or Judaism.

² There is a further cost of £47,815, which is met by the passenger transport department for the contracting of buses, which carry almost exclusively denominational children. Therefore a total of £624,438 is spent by the County Council on denominational transport, an average cost of £467 per child

4. Additional provision of home to school transport

- 4.1 There are a further three categories under which free home to school transport is provided: post 16 provision, SEN provision and unsafe routes to school. These areas fall between a statutory remit and a discretionary one in that the local authority is expected to ensure that arrangements are in place in these particular circumstances. The review board, therefore, did not look at these policies as part of its review. It would welcome the Executive Best Value Review of Passenger Transport looking in more detail as to how transport is procured in these instances.

Post 16 provision

- 4.2 The CSA does not have a statutory duty to provide transport to students beyond school age. However, it is required to ensure that no student is unable to access post 16 education due to a lack of transport. The policy which operates in East Sussex is to provide assistance where the distance to the designated establishment is over three miles and the family are in receipt of specific benefits or the student has special educational needs. This assistance can be in the form of bus pass, seat on a hired vehicle and a grant towards transport costs, or in the case of SEN pupils a specific vehicle.
- 4.3 In 2005/06, £317,829 was spent on providing transport for 478 students (91 of whom are SEN students) who fell into this category. A further £48,000 was provided in grants, which students use towards their transport costs.
- 4.4 In addition the CSA is required to establish a Transport Partnership involving all parties with an interest in post 16 transport and draw up an annual policy statement to support the recruitment and retention of post 16 students. The Partnership is provided with a grant (currently £111,000) and this is, at present, being used to reduce fares for post 16 students on both the rail and bus network and to provide a bus at lunch times to take Plumpton College students home.

Special Educational Need provision

- 4.5 The majority of special educational need (SEN) children live over the statutory walking distance from their nearest appropriate school and are, therefore, entitled to free transport. Where a child lives under distance, but supporting medical evidence states that they are unable to walk to school, the CSA is required to provide appropriate transport.
- 4.6 In 2005/06, £4,686,015 was spent on providing transport for 1312 SEN children. However, the way in which data is currently coded means it has not been possible to ascertain the percentage of these which are statutory provision (i.e. they live over the statutory walking distance from their nearest appropriate school).

Unsafe routes to school

- 4.7 Where a parent challenges the suitability of a route to school an assessment of the route will be made by the County Council using nationally set standards. If the route is deemed unsafe, and there is no alternative safe route under the statutory walking distance, then the CSA is required to provide appropriate transport.
- 4.8 In 2005/06, it is estimated that £183,000 was spent on providing transport for 259 children who fell into this category. The review board were informed that due to the way in which data had been coded in the past this figure should actually be much higher and, once further 'cleansing' of the data in Trapeze has been carried out, a fuller picture will be available.

5. Future impact of the Education and Inspections Bill

5.1 As the review was being carried out the Education and Inspections Bill was progressing through Parliament. Royal Assent is expected to take place in November 2006. Within the Bill are proposals to improve home to school transport and travel arrangements. These will impact, in various degrees, upon the Children's Services Authority:

- a new overarching duty to assess travel and transport needs of all pupils and promote safe and sustainable travel to school
- a duty to ensure that suitable travel arrangements are made, free of charge, for certain 'eligible children'
- discretionary powers to make travel arrangements for those other than 'eligible children'
- pathfinder authorities to be able to test innovative schemes

5.2 The review board considered what impact these changes could have to the home to school transport policy and budget. In making its assessment, the review board has used the latest guidance available on the current format of the Bill. However, it recognises that further changes could be made to the Bill prior to Royal Assent taking place and these may impact on the board's current assessment.

Duty to assess travel needs and promote sustainable travel

5.3 Each Children's Services Authority, will be required to carry out an assessment of travel and transport needs of all pupils and then publish a strategy which will promote sustainable school transport. This strategy will need to bring together School Travel Plans, elements of the Local Transport Plan and other existing information into one document. It will then be made available to parents to assist them with decisions over the choice of school.

5.4 This duty will come into force in 2007 and the Department for Education & Skills (DfES) will set aside funding for developing the strategies.

5.5 The review board welcome the development of a sustainable school transport strategy and hope that it will build upon the positive work already carried out by the School Travel Plan Team. It is concerned though that, whilst money will be available from the DfES for developing the strategies, ongoing costs of updating the strategy each year may have to be met from existing budgets.

Eligible children to receive suitable free travel

5.6 CSA's will have a statutory duty to provide free transport to 'eligible children' who are likely to be classified within the following categories:

- a) **Children who are unable to walk to school** by reason of their SEN, disability, or temporary medical condition.
 - b) **Children who are unable to walk in safety to school** because of the nature of the route or where for the route to be safe it relied upon a disabled parent walking with the child.
 - c) **Children living outside the statutory walking distance** (three miles for children aged eight or over, or two miles for younger pupils) attending their nearest 'qualifying school' where no suitable alternative arrangements have been made (for example, where their nearest school is within the statutory limits but has no places available, requiring them to travel to an alternative outside those limits).
 - d) **Children from low income families**, i.e. those entitled to free school meals, or whose parents are in receipt of their maximum level of Working Tax Credit. This applies to:
 - (a) primary pupils aged between 8 and 11 from low income families attending a qualifying school more than two miles from their home; and
 - b) secondary pupils aged between 11 and 16 from low income families attending one of their three nearest qualifying schools more than two miles but less than six miles from their home.
- 5.7 The DfES has set aside £35 million for the secondary aspects of the change in legislation and £5 million for primary. The implementation dates are 2007 for primary and 2008 for secondary.
- 5.8 The review board noted that these changes in legislation will mean that the current discretionary policies at East Sussex which relate to a child not being able to walk the statutory distance or a parent being unable to accompany them on the walk to school will become statutory requirements in the future.
- 5.9 Unsafe routes to school will also fall under statutory legislation in the future. In 2005/06 the budget for this area was £137,374 (an average cost £530 per child). The review board is concerned that this figure could increase and that future demand may be difficult to anticipate or control. It would like to see proactive work carried out to reduce the number of unsafe routes to school, perhaps through 'invest to save' measures or links to school transport plans.

Discretionary powers to make other travel arrangements

- 5.10 The Bill will provide local authorities with discretionary powers to make arrangements for those children not covered by the duties relating to eligible children. These may include:

- a) a child being provided with education or training at a particular school or institution on grounds of the parent's religion or belief³;
 - b) providing primary aged children with transport at a lower limit than the statutory walking distance; and
 - c) travel arrangements for children below compulsory school age.
- 5.11 The legal department have confirmed that the wording of the Bill around denominational transport, whilst a little stronger than in the previous Act, still leaves the provision of denominational transport to the discretion of each local authority.
- 5.12 Guidance on the Bill from the Children's Services Network⁴ states that "*local authorities should ensure that transport arrangements support the religious or philosophical preference that parents express.*" However, "*there is no requirement for any such discretionary arrangements to be provided free of charge but ... as a matter of good practice, children from low income groups should be exempt.*" The guidance also highlights the Secretary of State's hope that authorities will not disturb well established arrangements.
- 5.13 The review board recognise that the widen out of these discretionary powers to include strong philosophical grounds, as well as religious grounds, could lead to a future increase in the discretionary transport budget. It is also mindful of the possibility that other religious groups could decide to open a school in the future. The County Council would be obliged to provide them with the same transport provision as it provides to Catholic and Church of England schools, which would also further increase the discretionary transport budget.

Pathfinder authorities to be able to test innovative schemes

- 5.14 Up to 20 schemes will be allowed which remove transport as a barrier to access, increase the number of pupils travelling by sustainable means and show areas for innovation. They will need to show how the use of cars by parents to transport pupils to school will be reduced.
- 5.15 Schemes might include charges being made on pupils who currently travel free to create an income for redistribution to support other innovative aspects of school travel. However, it would not expect the charge to be higher than £1 per pupil, per day and charges cannot be made on families of low income, children with SEN or where a route has been judged unsafe for under distance children.

³ The definition of 'religion or belief' in the Bill follows that of the Equality Act 2006. Under this Act 'religion' means any religion, and 'belief' means any belief. References to 'religion or belief' include references to a lack of religion or belief. It therefore follows that this covers all religions and denominations, as well as philosophical beliefs.

⁴ Children's Services Network briefing on School Travel and Transport dated 23rd June 2006 (reference PB 1100/06C)

- 5.16 Pathfinder applications have to be made by late 2007 with schemes starting in September 2009. Evaluation of the schemes would take place in 2012 to see whether they should be extended nationally.
- 5.17 The review board note that the opportunity to develop innovative home to school transport schemes could radically alter the way in which school transport is provided, and funded, in the future. The Cabinet Best Value Review may wish to reconsider the county councils original decision not to become a pathfinder if the review were to suggest a reorganisation of home to school transport.

6. Discretionary home to school transport policies at other local authorities

6.1 The review board decided to establish what other local authorities were doing with regard to discretionary home to school transport.

Statistical neighbours

6.2 Fifteen county councils comparable to East Sussex were surveyed to establish what type of discretionary policies they had in place. These were:

Cornwall	Devon
Dorset	Essex
Gloucestershire	Kent
Lincolnshire	Norfolk
Northumberland	North Yorkshire
Somerset	Suffolk
West Sussex	Wiltshire
Worcestershire	

6.3 From the information obtained the board concluded that, except for the policy of free transport to a non-designated school (where both are over distance), these county councils provide a range of other discretionary policies similar to those of East Sussex County Council.

6.4 The way in which denominational transport is provided varies amongst the fifteen county councils:

- nine provide free transport for primary and secondary school children; and
- one provides free transport for just primary school children.

6.5 Of these, five county councils have an upper distance limit, and one only provides support up to a cost of £2.50 a day.

6.6 For those charging for transport the cost ranges from £153 to £300 per year for each pupil. These charges have been put in place during the past few years with Devon, Somerset and Worcestershire introducing a charge in 1999, Essex in 2004 (for just secondary school children) and Suffolk in 2005.

6.7 Most of county councils surveyed, which charge for transport, have a policy of either providing free or reduced cost travel to families on benefit or with more than two children attending a denominational school.

6.8 Northumberland County Council went out to consultation earlier this year on whether or not free transport to denominational schools should end and the responsibility for providing transport then fall to parents and guardians. At its Cabinet meeting in July 2006 it was decided that no change be made to

denominational transport arrangements at this time. However a review of all home to school transport policies should be undertaken after the publication of the Education and Inspections Bill.

- 6.9 Wiltshire County Council decided at its Cabinet meeting in September 2006 to bring in a sliding scale of charges for denomination transport ranging from £270 to £360 per year depending on the distance travelled. These charges will come into effect from September 2007 for all new pupils attending a denominational school. Those families on lower income levels will be able to receive free passes, subject to the qualifying clauses to be specified in the Education and Inspections Act.

Other local authorities

- 6.10 During its research the review board found that several other local authorities have recently brought in charges for denominational transport:

Council	Changes to denominational transport
Barnsley	Recently agreed that from September 2007 it will only provide free transport to faith schools for children in receipt of free school meals
Bath & North East Somerset	Agreed in July 2006 to introduce charges from September 2007 For families with more than 1 child the 2 nd and 3 rd child would pay 50% of the cost up to a maximum of 3 children. Exemption will be made for low income families in receipt of free school meals, income support or Working Tax Credit
Dudley	Agreed in June 2006 to introduce charges for bus passes for new pupils from 1st January 2007
Hampshire	Agreed in May 2006 to introduce charges for new pupils from September 2007. When setting the charges account will be taken of the number of eligible children in a family travelling to a denominational school and the level of family income
Herefordshire	Agreed in June 2005 to introduce charges for new pupils from September 2006. Process to be put in place to ensure fair and effective implementation of the new policy especially in relation to low income families
Hertfordshire	Agreed in July 2006 to phase out free transport from September 2007 Arrangements made for low income families and siblings
Northamptonshire	From September 2004 assistance with denominational transport was removed

Council	Changes to denominational transport
Nottinghamshire	Agreed in July 2006 that charges be brought in from September 2007 except for pupils entitled to free school meals, pupils whose parents are entitled to their maximum level of Working Tax Credit and where a family has 3 or more siblings attending schools on denominational grounds (up to age 16) only the two youngest children will be subject to a charge
Torbay	From September 2005 a charge was brought in for denominational transport. The charge is waived for those families on income support.

6.11 From the research carried out the review board noted that since 1999 at least fifteen councils have decided to make changes to its denominational transport policy. The majority of them have opted to introduce some level of charges, but have ensured that these charges do not impact on low income families.

7. Consultation carried out by the review board

Diocesan representatives

7.1 The review board discussed with representatives of the Catholic and Church of England diocese what the impact any possible changes to the current discretionary policy relating to Catholic and Church of England schools could have.

7.2 Their comments included:

- less advantaged families would not be able to afford the travel costs and this could result in less inclusive Catholic and Church of England schools
- if children started to choose their local school instead of a Catholic and Church of England school the local schools would not have the capacity to take them. There would be a huge cost implication for the County Council as more classrooms would need to be built (suggestion that this could be in the region of £1 to £2 million per year).
- Whilst the County Council may fund transport to these schools, the faith communities save the County Council money through the Church's own investment in the schools.
- There is only one Catholic secondary school in East Sussex and parents therefore have to send their children long distances to attend it.

Northampton and Essex County Council

7.3 The review board spoke to officers at both Northampton and Essex County Council to establish how recent changes in denominational home to school transport policies had been handled and the impact that it had had.

7.4 Change to transport provision

Northampton County Council ended its provision of transport for new children attending denominational schools from September 2003 (it also ended its policy of providing transport to single sex schools at the same time). Essex County Council introduced a charge for new children requiring transport to Jewish, Catholic and Church of England secondary schools in September 2004. Free transport remained for primary schools.

7.5 Public opposition

Both county councils experienced a large amount of public opposition when the changes were introduced. In Northampton a challenge to the European Court of Human Rights was initially put together as the changes were going to affect parents who had chosen a school that year based on the provision of free transport. The changes were therefore postponed for one year to accommodate this group and the challenge was therefore dropped. In Essex a firm of solicitors were retained to argue the case on the behalf of one particular group, but no legal challenge to the change was mounted.

7.6 Impact

Northampton stated it was been difficult to measure if there had been a change in school attendance since the removal of free transport, but no schools had closed as a result. Essex had evidence that the number of pupils now attending some of the schools on denominational grounds had reduced. But these schools were popular and successful in their own right and the overall numbers attending had not been affected. Instead children now tended to come more from the local area.

7.7 Savings

At Essex County Council a charge of £100 per term was introduced (rising in September 2006 to £105). There is an exemption for those on income support or in receipt of free school meals. It was acknowledged that this charge does not cover the complete cost of providing the transport. In fact in 2005/06 over £1 million (£1,372,007) was still spent on providing denominational transport to 1676 secondary school pupils; this was on top of the £1,300,000 spent on providing denomination transport for 923 primary school pupils.

7.8 Northampton had not monitored if the original projected savings of ceasing denominational transport had been realised.

8. The legal situation with regard to denominational transport

- 8.1 There seems to have been some uncertainty in the past over whether or not local authorities have a legal obligation to provide denominational transport. The review board wished to be clear on the situation and has taken its guidance from the Children's Services Network briefing on the Education and Inspections Bill. This states that "*under the European Convention on Human Rights, parents do not in fact enjoy any right to have their children educated at a faith or a secular school, or to have transport arrangements made by their local authority to and from any such school. Similarly, whereas the provisions of the Equality Act 2006 place a duty on local authorities not to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their religion or belief, they do not apply to the exercise of an authority's functions in relation to transport.*"⁵

9. Financial information on discretionary home to school transport

- 9.1 The financial information available on home to school transport in 1999/2000 was produced from the manual system in place at that time and it is recognised by officers that it might not have been 100% accurate. It is however the only data available by which an estimate can be made on how the discretionary budget has risen in recent years.
- 9.2 With this caveat in mind, the overall home to school transport budget has risen from £4,850,000 in 1999/2000 to £8,006,300 in 2005/06 (a rise of 65%). The discretionary transport aspect of this budget has risen from £552,735 to £696,924 (a rise of 25%). The review board would wish the Best Value Review Board on passenger transport to look into why statutory provision has risen so steeply during this period.
- 9.3 Particular increases in the discretionary transport budget are not at the control of the department. For example the recent move of St Paul's Catholic College from Haywards Heath to Burgess Hill has resulted in the transport costs rising from £67,547 for 130 pupils in 2004/05 to £133,000 for 145 pupils in 2005/06 (this is due to the need to switch transport provision from trains to coaches primarily for children travelling in from the Seaford area). This cost would be £33,972 higher per year if it were not for the sale of conditional passes to a further 72 pupils who also use the coaches.
- 9.4 The review board could only estimate the maximum saving that there would be if it were decided to phase out the current discretionary transport policies that will not become statutory under the Education and Inspections Bill (e.g. the calculation does not include the current cost of the discretionary policies relating to a medical condition of the child or parent). In calculating this figure it recognised that:
- If free transport on denominational grounds or to a non-designated school ceased pupils may choose to attend another school. This school could be over

⁵ Children's Services Network briefing on School Travel and Transport dated 23rd June 2006 (reference PB 1100/06C)

the statutory distance and therefore pupils would still be entitled free transport and no actual saving would be made.

- If a coach currently transports pupils with different entitlements, phasing out one of these out doesn't necessarily mean that the cost of the coach is saved. It might mean that a smaller coach could be procured, although having to re-tender could actually increase costs.

9.5 In producing the estimate the current cost for denominational and non-designated transport was broken down by primary and secondary school. Each figure was then divided by seven for primary schools and five for secondary schools to give an average cost for one year.

9.6 On this basis the review board estimated that the following maximum savings could be made based upon the current budget costs of transport on denominational grounds or to a non-designated school:

Year 1	£120,384.62
Year 2	£240,769.24
Year 3	£361,153.86
Year 4	£481,538.48
Year 5	£601,923.10

9.7 The review board would also envisage that a further saving of £47,815 would be made (this is the cost currently met by the passenger transport department on providing denominational transport, as noted in the table at 3.1).

9.8 The board noted that any savings made from within the home to school transport budget would remain within the overall education budget and could therefore be spent on other aspects of education.

10. Objectives and scope of the review

- 10.1 The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 16 June 2005, resolved to carry out a review on the current school admissions arrangements and discretionary home to school transport. The review concentrated on the policy surrounding discretionary home to school transport and not the procurement arrangements for it. This is due to the fact that procurement is dealt with by the Transport and Environment department and therefore fell outside the remit of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee.
- 10.2 The admissions aspect of the review was completed by March 2006 and presented to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee on 23rd March, Cabinet on 2nd May and finally ratified by Full Council on 23rd May.
- 10.3 A decision was made towards the end of the review to continue with the discretionary home to school transport aspect beyond March 2006. This was to allow the review board an opportunity to receive up to date expenditure costs prior to final recommendations being made.

11. Membership and evidence

- 11.1 During the initial stages of the review the review board comprised of Sam Gregory (a school governor representative on the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee) (Chair), Rosalyn St Pierre and Sylvia Tidy. After March 2006 Sam Gregory stood down from the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee and his place on the review board was taken by Councillor Pat Ost. For the remainder of the review the chair was Councillor Rosalyn St Pierre
- 11.2 The Project Manager was Gillian Mauger (Scrutiny Lead Officer) and Sam White (Scrutiny Support Officer) provided logistics and support.
- 11.3 The Board considered the following documents:
 - Education White Paper – Higher Standards, Better Schools for All, More Choice for Parents and Pupils
 - Draft Education and Inspections Bill
 - Children's Services Network briefing on School Travel and Transport dated 23rd June 2006 (reference PB 1100/06C)
 - ESCC Transport Policy Statement for Students in Further Education
 - Cabinet reports from 12th December 2000 and 20th March 2001 relating to a previous review of home to school transport
 - A range newspaper and journal articles relating to discretionary home to school transport
- 11.4 The following people provided evidence during this review and the Board would like to thank them for their help and participation:
 - Mr Brian Catt, Senior Manager, Planning & Admissions, Essex County Council
 - Tony Campbell, Principal, St Richard's Catholic College, Bexhill
 - Mr Ian Coe, School Transport Manager, Northampton County Council

- Councillor Godfrey Daniel, Chairman, School Transport & Student Awards (Support) Panel
 - Frank Myers, Deputy Director, Catholic Schools' Service
 - Nigel Sarjudeen, Schools Officer, Governor Services, Diocesan of Chichester Board of Education
 - Jeremy Taylor, Diocesan Director of Education, Diocesan of Chichester Board of Education
- 11.5 The Board met with and took evidence from Councillor Keith Glazier, Lead Member for Children's and Adults' Services, Councillor Rupert Simmons, Lead Member for Learning and School Effectiveness and Matt Dunkley, Director of Children's Services at East Sussex County Council.
- 11.6 The review board would like to thank Geoff Evans, Head of Admissions and Transport at East Sussex County Council, for his support throughout the review.
- 11.7 The following council officers provided evidence during this review and the Board would like to thank them for their help and participation:
- Roger Hills, Trapeze Project Manager
 - Andrew Keer, School Travel Plan Co-ordinator
 - Bernadette Light, Control and Compliance Manager
 - Nick Smith, Head of Passenger Transport
- 11.8 Consultation was carried out with a range of county councils regarding their discretionary transport policies and the review board also held a telephone conference with officers at Essex and Northampton County Council.

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Background papers can be made available in the Members' Room by contacting Sam White, telephone: 01273 481581 or e-mail: scrutiny@eastsussex.gov.uk