



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

LEAD MEMBER FOR LEARNING AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS

DECISIONS (Depending on the items on the Agenda) to be made by the Lead Cabinet Member for Learning and School Effectiveness, Councillor Bennett; and the Lead Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Councillor Tidy.

The Lead Members will only attend if an item on the Agenda falls within their portfolio or if they are making decisions on behalf of each other.

MONDAY, 8 JUNE 2015

10.00 AM CC2, COUNTY HALL, LEWES

A G E N D A

- 1 Decisions made by the Lead Cabinet Member on 11 May 2015 (*Pages 3 - 4*)
- 2 Disclosure by all Members present of personal interests in matters on the Agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the Member regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct
- 3 Notification of items which the Lead Member considers to be urgent and propose to take at the end of the appropriate part of the Agenda
- 4 Approval to consult on a review of discretionary Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transport provision for the 2016/17 academic year - report by Director of Children's Services (*Pages 5 - 28*)
- 5 Approval to consult on a review of discretionary post-16 support for low income families (LIF) and rural link transport provision for the 2016/17 academic year - report by Director of Children's Services (*Pages 29 - 50*)
- 6 Review of the implementation of the home to school transport policy regarding children living within the shared community areas - report by Director of Children's Services (*Pages 51 - 62*)
- 7 Hastings Academy Trust - process for ending sponsorship - report by Director of Children's Services (*Pages 63 - 64*)
- 8 Any urgent items previously notified under agenda item 3

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29 May 2015

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Learning and School Effectiveness
Children and Families

DECISIONS made by the Lead Member for Learning and School Effectiveness, Councillor Nick Bennett on Monday 11 May 2015 at County Hall, Lewes

Councillor Sylvia Tidy spoke on items 4 and 5 (see minutes 40 and 41)

Councillors Michael Ensor, Kathryn Field, Kim Forward, Sylvia Tidy and Francis Whetstone spoke on item 5 (see minute 41)

37 DECISIONS MADE BY THE LEAD CABINET MEMBER ON MONDAY 20 APRIL 2015

37.1 The Lead Member approved as a correct record the minutes of the meeting on 20 April 2015

38 REPORTS

38.1 A copy of the reports referred to below are contained in the minute book.

39 URGENT ITEMS

39.1 There were no urgent items.

40 POST 16 TRANSPORT STATEMENT FOR 2015/16

40.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which sought approval of the Post-16 Transport Policy for the 2015-2016 academic year.

DECISION

40.2 RESOLVED to approve the Post-16 Transport Statement for the 2015-16 academic year.

Reason

40.3 The County Council has carried out its legal duty to consult on the annual Transport Statement, and the comments received show no opposition to the proposals outlined in the Transport Statement.

41 PRIMARY SCHOOL RE-ORGANISATION IN CROWBOROUGH

41.1 The Lead Member considered a report by the Director of Children's Services which sought approval to amalgamate Whitehill Infant School and Herne Junior School to create an all-through primary school with effect from 1 September 2015.

DECISION

41.2 RESOLVED to approve the closure of Herne Junior School on 31 August 2015 and to change the upper age limit at Whitehill Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 with effect from 1 September 2015 in order to establish an all through primary school.

Reasons

41.3 The Council and the governing body believe that a change to the current organisation of Whitehill Infant School and Herne Junior School would build on the progress made since federation in September 2009 and lead to a sustained improvement in educational standards at Key Stage 2. The feedback received from the consultation period indicated that the majority of respondents support the view.

Report to: **Lead Members for Learning and School Effectiveness**

Date: **8 June 2015**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **Approval to consult on a review of discretionary Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) transport provision for the 2016/17 academic year**

Purpose of report: **To ask the Lead Member for permission to consult between June and September this year on proposed reductions in support for students with SEND**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) **The Lead Member is asked to approve consultation on the options set out in 2.1 of this report in order to reduce spend on the discretionary home to school/college budget from the start of the 2016/17 academic year**
 - 2) **To note that if approved, two parallel consultations would take place over summer 2015; the first, as set out in this report, on reducing the level of support for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and the second on removing travel support for post-16 students from low income families (LIF) and FE link transport**
 - 3) **To note that if agreed, decisions on whether to proceed with these changes following the consultation final report and appropriate Scrutiny meetings, would be taken in the context of wider savings proposals by either the Lead Member or Cabinet in November 2015**
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1 Background

1.1 It is anticipated that East Sussex County Council will need to reduce expenditure by £70-90 million between 2016/17 and 2018/19 and all areas will need to be considered. The Home to School Transport (HTST) budget was overspent in 2014/15, with expenditure of £10.78m against a budget of £10.72m, and approximately £1.5m of that used for discretionary transport.

1.2 During the 2012/13 to 2014/15 Medium Term Financial Plan there has been a systematic review of the HTST budget to reduce costs which included:

- the introduction of financial contributions towards travel costs for Post 16 SEND for families not from a low income household
- the introduction of personal transport budgets for families of Children and Young people (CYP) with SEND, where this provides the most cost effective solution
- recommissioning of the Independent Travel Training service (ITT) so young people with SEND are trained to travel independently to school or college on public transport

1.3 The last remaining areas of discretionary HTST expenditure are pre-school and post-16 SEND transport, post-16 transport for students from low income families (LIF), free link travel for FE students living in highly rural locations to the start of a continuing public transport journey, and a £15k subsidy with Brighton and Hove and West Sussex made to Southern Rail so that they can offer a discount to post-16 learners. This £15k rail subsidy is one of the mitigations for the proposals and will need to be maintained if changes are agreed. The remaining transport provision is statutory and we continue to ensure that delivery is as cost effective as possible.

1.4 If the consultation is not undertaken from June to September it will be too late to implement, if the Lead Member decides to do so, for the 2016/17 academic year.

1.5 If approval to consult is given, the Lead Member / Cabinet will be asked to decide whether to go ahead with the changes following the consultation and final report by November 2015.

1.6 Formal consultation on the proposals is planned with sixth forms and colleges during June and July; an initial meeting to raise awareness occurred on 19 May 2015. The Early Years and Transitions teams are also being consulted.

1.7 It is recognised that the options put forward may have a significant negative impact on people's lives, although every effort will be made to mitigate the negative impact where this is possible.

1.8 The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee will be asked if and how they wish to become involved in the process at their next meeting on 15th June 2015.

1.9 **Appendix 1** gives SEND estimated savings and cohort numbers.

1.10 Potential savings per year based on current annual cost estimates accumulate to reach £759k of savings across the three financial years 2016/17 - 2018/19; which by 2018/19 or Year 3 (full impact) constitutes 3.2% of the total expected HTST budget, or 20.1% of the total discretionary budget.

1.11 In making the savings estimates for this report, it has been assumed that implementation will start in September 2016, with young people and their families being informed about agreed changes in November 2015.

1.12 **Appendix 2** shows a HTST budget breakdown to provide context.

1.13 A SEND forecasting model for East Sussex is in development and will be available this autumn. Any increase in the number of children with SEND will translate to pressures on the HTST budget. The number of active ESCC SEN statements / EHC Plans in January 2015 compared with the previous 9 years is shown in **Appendix 3**.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The proposed changes are:

- i. Offering support to those demonstrating the 'highest level of need' only, by introducing tighter 'exceptions' criteria for post-16 SEND students and offering support which is more cost-effective, eg transport at college start/end times, use of Motability vehicle and increased expectation that parents will help to transport their child to college. This would be via a range of strategies which are set out in **Appendix 4** draft policy for Post-16 SEND travel assistance.
- ii. Increasing the current post-16 SEND transport contribution from £370 to £608, which is the annual cost for a Freedom Pass for bus travel (the average charge made by the 16 county councils which currently require a contribution is £525)
- iii. Introducing a 50% rate of contribution for low income families with post-16 students with SEND (£304 per year). These changes would be for all travelling children.
- iv. Introducing an annual contribution for pre-school SEND travel assistance along the same agreed lines as post-16 travel (£608/£304).

2.2 The outcome of the consultation on the Post-16 transport Statement for 2015/16 has recently been approved by Lead Member and will be published on the Connexions 360 website by the end of May. This is an annual activity and the changes made from the previous year for 2015/16 will apply to the cohort of pupils starting in September 2015. For 2016/17 the Post 16 transport statement will need to be amended to reflect the outcome of the proposed consultation set out in 2.1 above.

2.3 Any changes would be phased in with new starters only being subject to revisions from September 2016. Students awarded transport help in the preceding academic years will continue to receive the same support for the agreed duration of their course; up to 3 years. The exception to this is that all SEND students would be subject to the increase in the travel contribution (including low income families) if implemented in September 2016. Any policy which was introduced as a result of this consultation would include an appeals process to consider exceptional cases, and equality issues would be considered at all stages.

2.4 **Appendix 5** details post-16 SEND students receiving travel assistance this academic year.

2.5 Reducing travel support carries with it a number of risks, outlined in a joint document (combined with risks for post-16 LIF students) in **Appendix 6**.

2.6 Although it is regrettable to take this action, the proposed changes are permissible under current legislation and guidance. Comparisons in terms of expected contributions for SEND student travel are set out in **Appendix 7**.

2.7 **Appendix 8** the Equality Impact Assessment will form an essential part of the consultation process as it is likely that these proposals will have a negative impact on pupils with SEND. The consultation process will help us to identify the impacts and look at mitigations.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 Given the financial constraints set out in this report approval is requested to undertake the consultation.

STUART GALLIMORE
Director of Children's Services

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All Members

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Appendix 1	Finance tables and information
Appendix 2	Home to school transport budget breakdown
Appendix 3	SEND pupil population trends
Appendix 4	Draft Post-16 SEND travel assistance strategy
Appendix 5	SEND cohort information
Appendix 6	Risks
Appendix 7	Comparison with other local authorities
Appendix 8	Equality Impact Assessment

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Finance tables and summary cohort information

1. Breakdown of total savings estimates – summary including cohort numbers

Potential savings per year based on 2014/15 annual cost estimates are summarised below:

Financial Year	2016/17*	2017/18	2018/19	Total (3 year period)
Estimated total savings resulting from reduction in support for post-16 students with SEND student (20% reduction in new starters, contribution of £608/£304** for post-16 and pre-school students)	£118,441	£290,502	£350,524	£759,467
Estimated number of pre-school children and post-16s with SEND impacted (new starters)	94	85 more	42 more	

2. Breakdown of total savings estimates for each proposal – higher detail

Financial Year	2016/17*	2017/18	2018/19	Total (3 year period)
Post-16 SEND				
(i) SEND students (20% reduction for Y12-16 new starters)	£81,630	£240,088	£300,110	£300,110
(ii) Plus charge at £608 (if 20% fewer new starters)**	£11,281	£15,042	£15,042	£41,364
(iii) And £304 charge for LIF (if 20% fewer new starters)	£23,530	£31,373	£31,373	£86,275
Total for (i) - (iii) - post-16	£116,441	£286,502	£346,524	£749,467
(iv) introduce charge for pre-school cases (£608/£304)	£2,000	£4,000	£4,000	£10,000
Total for (i) - (iv) - post-16 + pre-school	£118,441	£290,502	£350,525	£759,464

* adjusted for part-financial year with changes for new starters from September 2016 (68% of full year)

**additional saving on top of expected saving from current £370 charge

- 2.1 The estimated totals for each financial year relate to the potential savings against an estimate for total 2015/16 costs if no changes were made.
- 2.2 Outturn for 2014/15 was £1.5m for 216 students with SEND, including 10 pre-school children at £40k per year.
- 2.3 Changing the SEND travel assistance policy so that transport is offered only at the start and end of a college day is estimated to produce additional savings of between £13k and £25k of savings

in 2017/18 assuming a 20% reduction across the budget (with approximately one-third of that in the 2016/17 financial year).

- 2.4 We have been mindful of the fact that the MTFP already includes savings that relate to SEND travel in 2016/17 (£46k saved through an increase in the post-16 SEND charge and a total of £378k via the iMPower recommendations against the entire SEND Travel budget (statutory and discretionary) of which post-16 used approximately 23% in 2013/14. We will be asking finance to ensure that there is not a duplication of savings; and if this does occur we will make a deduction from total savings.

3. Notes and assumptions for savings estimates

- 3.1 It should be noted that these figures are estimated from a December 2014 snapshot which was used to generate total annual costs for the 2014/15 academic year, and then adjusted for the 2015/16 financial year (during which the changes will be implemented with approximately 70% of the school travel days remaining).
- 3.2 It should also be noted that the costs provided per SEND student using hired transport (taxi or minibus) were apportioned, i.e. an appropriate share of the total cost of that particular vehicle run. This has been used to create a total for savings made if that particular person no longer receives a seat and if some runs are ceased completely – however there is a risk that some of these seats may run empty and savings will be less than the estimates shown – these are therefore maximum savings.
- 3.3 If policy changes were introduced from September 2016, it is proposed that only those pupils starting a post-16 course in September 2016 should be affected, based on fairness and the legitimate expectations of young people and parents who would have chosen a school or college based on the Council's admission criteria and transport policy at the time of entry to the school or college. The supported cohort currently ranges from Y12 to Y16, with SEND students supported for courses of up to 3 years.
- 3.4 In addition, changes would be introduced at the start of September (and savings would result from around 130 school travel days from a total of 190 within the 2015/16 financial year). Therefore changes to discretionary provision would not result in full expected savings until the 2018/19 financial year.
- 3.5 There are also potential associated savings in staffing cost in both CSD and CET teams, although this needs further consideration as more time may need to be invested per successful application, particularly at the start of the changes. CET have indicated that they think staff savings are unlikely as they are losing one FTE who deals with LIF in any case, and a 20% reduction in SEND clients would be a negligible reduction in resources as post-16 SEND pupils are the easiest group to manage; they generally stay on existing transport where there is FE provision at the school or transport is arranged for colleges at the end of the summer when normally the bulk of authorisations have been processed.
- 3.6 CSD have identified that possibly a 0.5FTE post may no longer be needed, however some of this may need to be redirected as support for assessments and authorisation of travel applications.

4. Post-16 SEND travel assistance contribution

- 4.1 Families of new students receiving SEND travel support from September 2014 have been asked to contribute £370 towards the full costs, unless assessed as low income.
- 4.2 The current annual cost for a Freedom Pass for bus travel is £608, and linking the contribution to this cost appears a logical step to put us in line with other authorities. Table 1 shows the estimated savings made if ESCC increased the full rate from £370 to £608, based on an anticipated 20% reduction in new cases.
- 4.3 Based on current figures, the expected income from the current £370 charge in the 2016/17 financial year for non-LIF only would be £29,230. Table 1 shows both the total income and the additional income above that expected from the £370 charge.

Table 1: Estimated additional income from increase in charge / new charge for LIF

		£608 charge (non-LIF)	£304 charge (LIF)	Total Income £608 / £304
2016/17 financial year	Total income	£37,588	£23,530	£61,118
	Additional savings above £370 charge	£11,281	£23,530	£34,811
2017/18 financial year	Total income	£38,426	£31,373	£69,798
	Additional savings above £370 charge	£15,042	£31,373	£46,414

- 4.4 The estimated additional savings made by ESCC increasing the charge to £608, and introducing a £304 charge for low income families is £35k in 2016/17 and then £46k in 2017/18 and for subsequent years.
- 4.5 It has been assumed that the new level of contribution would be expected from the families of all students, including those on low incomes (not just new starters). It would be highly complex to administer parallel payment systems for different years of entry as the new students come through over 3 entry years.
- 4.6 It has been noted that if families of students who are already travelling prior to September 2016 are to be required to make an increased or new contribution then the Authority must pay due regard to alerting them to this with as much notice as possible; by writing to them with this information.

5. Third Year savings and numbers impacted (based on 2014/15 cohorts)

Table 2: Percentage savings per year due to reduction in support / increased charge for discretionary SEND travel assistance

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Percentage of the total HTST budget plus Travel budgets (£10.9m)	1.1%	2.7%	3.2%
Percentage of the discretionary element of the budgets (£1.74m)	6.8%	16.7%	20.1%

So we anticipate 3.2% saving against total budget by third year if proposed changes to support for post-16 students and pre-school children with SEND were to be implemented from September 2016.

Table 3: Approximate numbers impacted by reduction in support by third year (2018/19)

Number of CYP impacted by third year of the changes*	Number of pre-school / post-16 currently transported	Number impacted as % of discretionary SEND cohort	Number of ALL SEND students currently transported	Number impacted as % of total SEND cohort
41	216	19%	1084	3.8%

* estimated using 2014/15 figures

Of the 216 anticipated SEND students (206 post-16 and 10 pre-school), there will be a reduction in number of post-16 approved cases by approximately 20% - therefore impacting 41 students. The final percentage of the discretionary cohort impacted is only 19% as the policy for pre-school children will

remain the same (exceptional cases only) and their numbers will therefore not be affected by the changes.

It should be noted that 80% of post-16 SEND students continue to be supported, but that all discretionary SEND travel will be subject to an increase in the contribution towards travel.

Home to School Transport Budget Breakdown

The Home to School Transport (HTST) budget year end spend was £10.78m in total.

A large proportion of the budget (£6.6m or approximately 61%) is spent on the 1,100 children and young people with SEND who are authorised for SEND travel assistance to get to school or college. Of the £6.6m, £1.5m is used to fund travel for just over 200 post-16 students with SEND, whose support is discretionary and who may therefore be impacted by the proposed changes outlined in this report.

A further breakdown of the 2014/15 budget with percentages of the total budget required for each activity is included below. These are estimated outturns at the time of writing as final year-end figures are not yet available. Due to the complexities of the budget, some minor details have been omitted for simplicity, eg some costs which are later recouped. However, the figures provide a reasonable indication of the budgetary context of the proposed areas for reductions (highlighted):

Description	% of total HTST budget	Estimated cost (rounded)
Hired Transport		
SEND transport statutory age (and £40k nursery)	46.2%	£4,952,000
SEND post-16 students hired transport	13.4%	£1,440,000
Statutory entitled students (due to distance)	13.5%	£1,449,000
FLESS/FLP/College Central	3.1%	£330,000
Unsafe routes (statutory age)	4.3%	£466,00
LAC with SEND funded by HTST	0.5%	£57,000
MEDG students/parent with medical problem	0.5%	£53,000
Pre-16 students from Low Income Families	0.4%	£41,000
Special Needs Outreach (travel between sites)	0.1%	£12,000
Post-16 students from Low Income Families	0.05%	£5,000
FE Link Transport	0.04%	£4,000
Total Hired Transport (estimate for 2014/15)	83.2%	£8,912,000
PTBs / mileage		
SEND Statutory age PTB	1.2%	£126,000
SEND post-16 students PTB	0.6%	£60,000
Total PTBs	1.7%	£186,000
Parental mileage scheme (Statutory students)	0.4%	£42,000
Public Transport (Freedom Pass/B&H bus ID)		
Statutory age students over distance	11.0%	£1,178,000
Post-16 students from Low Income Families	1.2%	£126,000
SEND Post-16 students public transport	0.01%	£1,000
Total public transport	12.2%	£1,305,000
Staffing Costs SLA with CET	2.5%	£271,000
Approximate total HTST budget	100%	£10,716,000

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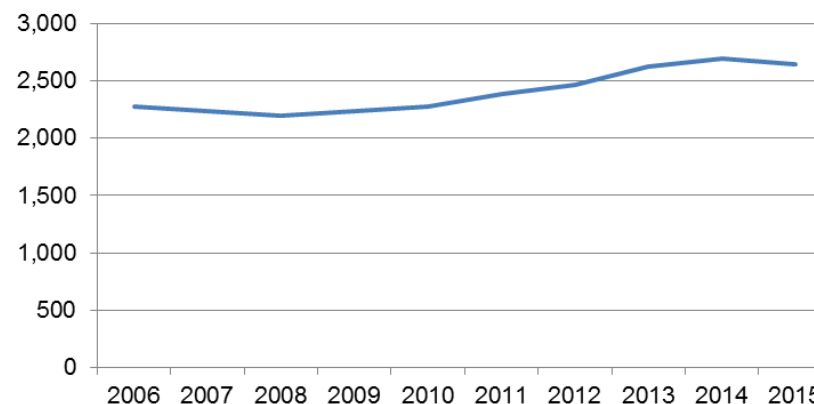
SEND pupil population trends

There was a 13% increase in the number of children and young people with SEN statements or EHC Plans between January 2011 and 2014; however this increasing trend has shown a plateau in 2015. A breakdown by Primary Need category appears to show a rapidly increasing proportion of CYP with ASD; a group which may particularly benefit from Independent Travel Training and other potential cost saving initiatives.

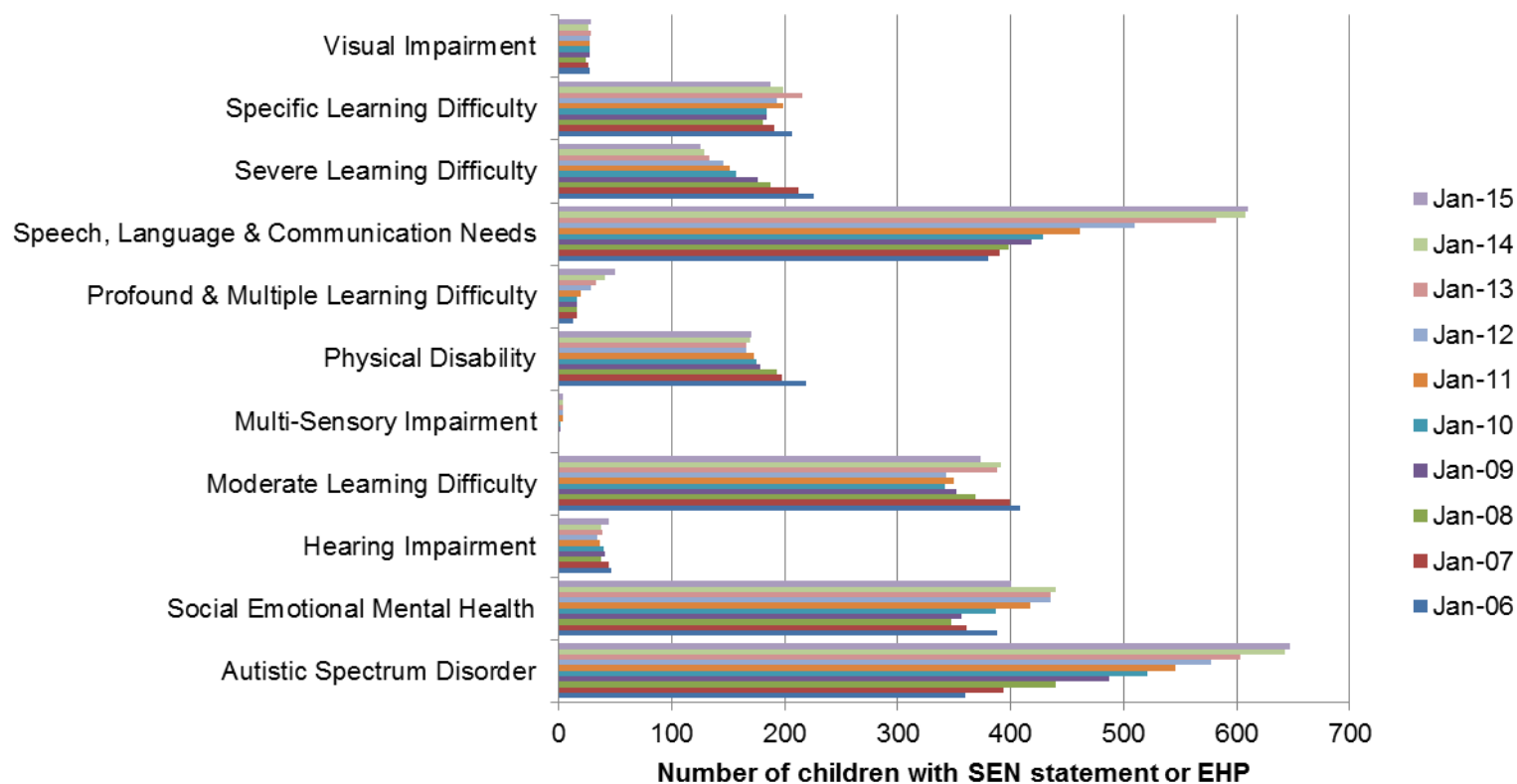
Number of children and young people with SEN statements or EHC Plans by year group

NC Year	Jan-11	Jan-12	Jan-13	Jan-14	Jan-15
-2	0	0	0	1	1
-1	3	2	1	0	2
R	79	93	111	110	94
1	116	98	127	139	121
2	126	142	129	152	151
3	134	156	186	152	163
4	149	161	195	201	158
5	160	181	211	221	221
6	210	191	216	247	235
7	237	247	231	241	258
8	216	248	255	242	246
9	250	243	264	271	258
10	253	257	252	273	269
11	272	258	268	250	268
12	78	86	73	81	82
13	55	61	66	63	70
14	48	40	43	46	47
Total	2386	2464	2628	2690	2644

Number of ESCC maintained SEND statements / EHC Plans based on January census



Changes in number of children and young people by Primary Need between 2006 and 2015 census



Travel assistance for post-16 young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)



Last updated: Xxx 2015

This document details the ESCC policy regarding assistance with travel for post-16 students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who are continuing in education. This policy takes effect from September 2016.

1. Background information

Local authorities do not have a statutory duty to provide free transport to school or college for students who are above compulsory school age; however ESCC remains committed to providing support for young people with SEND who demonstrate exceptional circumstances regarding the journey to a suitable placement. It is very important that students and their parents or carers consider the journey when making decisions about post-16 options, as the majority of cases will have to arrange and pay for transport themselves. Student support services at schools and colleges will be able to provide information on other sources of funding for young people.

This policy applies to all students with SEND aged 16 or over (Year 12 upwards) who are making a new application for travel assistance from September 2016. All Year 11 students moving into a post-16 placement are required to apply to be considered for continuing support in Year 12, even if they are staying in the same school. Those continuing on a post-16 course starting pre-September 2016 who are already in receipt of travel assistance will be supported under existing arrangements for the duration of their course if their circumstances remain unchanged.

All students who are assessed as eligible for travel assistance are required to pay an annual contribution (adjusted annually) to the County Council towards the cost of their provision, unless they are assessed as being from a low income family, in which case the proposal is currently that half the full contribution will be required, though this too will be reviewed annually. By receiving a contribution, the Council is able to support a greater number of young people to access post-16 education. The contribution is the same amount regardless of the type or frequency of travel assistance provided.

2. Eligibility for SEND travel assistance

The Council recognises that some students with learning difficulties or disabilities may not be able to travel to school or college independently or may not yet be ready to do so. The council expects that where possible in these circumstances parents or carers should be responsible for making travel arrangements.

In exceptional cases, students with learning difficulties or disabilities, or their parents or carers may apply for travel assistance. Each case will be considered by the council's Post 16 Travel Panel, and travel support will usually only be considered further if all the following criteria are satisfied:

1. The student must be attending an appropriate funded, full time course at the nearest school or college to their home. If an alternative suitable course is offered by an FE provider nearer to their home, the student will not be eligible for support.
2. The Council will fund transport to a college placement up to the academic year in which a young person reaches a maximum of 21 years of age.
3. The student must be travelling over three miles to their nearest appropriate provider, unless their learning difficulties or disability means they are unable to travel this distance either walking or on public transport (specific and up to date evidence from relevant health and/or educational appropriate professionals supporting the student will be required to assist the decision) and a parent is not available to take them.

If a student is able to be considered for travel assistance, factors the Council will take into account when determining whether a student is eligible for assistance may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The student is unable to travel to their placement by public transport, either unaccompanied or accompanied by a responsible adult (specific and up to date evidence from relevant health and/or educational appropriate professionals supporting the student will be required).
2. The family does not have a Motability or other suitable vehicle for their transportation to school or college. If a family has a Motability vehicle provided for the benefit of the young person, there is an expectation that this will be used to get them to their post-16 placement.
3. The length or complexity of the journey and whether parents or carers could reasonably be expected to provide transport or act as a chaperone themselves. If parents/carers or other family members are not available this should be fully explained in the application.
4. The student has been assessed by the Authority as requiring an escort, or as a 'high needs' case.
5. Other circumstances relevant to each case.

3. Annual contribution

In all cases where assistance is agreed, a contribution towards the cost of travel is required. The charge in 2016/2017 is £608 and payment can be made in instalments. Transport will not be arranged until payment in advance is made. If subsequent payments are late, transport will be suspended or even cancelled.

Low income families will be asked to contribute £304 per academic year. Low income is defined as families in receipt of one of the following:

- Income Support*
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance*
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance*
- Support received under part six of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999.
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit*
- Child Tax Credit (but not also Working Tax Credit unless in receipt of the maximum level) based on an income of £16,190 or less*

*Correct at the time of consultation

The annual contribution level will be reviewed on an annual basis.

4. Provision

Each applicant who is determined as requiring assistance will be risk-assessed for their immediate needs and the most cost-effective suitable mode of travel support will be arranged. At the same time, each will be assessed for suitability for our intensive Independent Travel Training (ITT) programme, which can provide a young person the skills and confidence for greater independence in their adult life. A young person who is ready for travel training may be offered temporary travel assistance until they have 'graduated' as independent travellers on their journey to school or college, at which point they will be given free bus or train travel for a limited fixed period. For students who can access public transport, a journey time of up to 75 minutes each way is considered reasonable according to national guidance for best practice.

Where an applicant is determined as eligible for SEND travel assistance, the type of travel assistance provided will be the most cost-effective available to the Council at the time, appropriate to the student's needs. This may be one of the following:

- a) A free place on a contract or school bus
- b) A Personal Travel Budget (PTB)
- c) A taxi
- d) Another type of transport / assistance to be determined on individual circumstance; for example, a parent may be expected to transport their child part of the journey in order to get to a suitable pick up point (this might be a bus stop or a taxi pick up point)

Please note that taxis will usually only be provided in the most exceptional cases, and for students with severe disabilities and/or the most complex health needs.

Limitations for travel assistance

- Students will usually only be transported to and from a school or college at their published school start and school finish times. This may therefore require the student to arrive earlier than the start of their first session or wait at the end of their timetabled day until other young people are ready for shared transport.
- The Council does not provide travel assistance to work experience placements, medical appointments or other off-site visits; responsibility for this remains with the parents or carers, or school or college as appropriate.
- Reimbursements for travel costs incurred before application cannot be made.

5. Review of eligibility

1. Any applicant for whom travel assistance has been agreed by the travel panel must apply again each academic year. It should not be assumed that the same form of travel assistance will be agreed for a further period.
2. In every case, travel assistance will be reviewed following a house move, change in placement or course, or a change in the student's needs (condition, medication or equipment) or any other change in circumstances which may be relevant.
3. Following an incident on school or college transport, it may be necessary to stop provision until a further risk assessment has been carried out to make sure that the student can be transported safely. If this occurs, parents or carers remain responsible for transport and costs until the situation has been resolved.
4. Appeals against a decision to refuse transport can be made to the Transport and Student Support Panel. This is a small panel of elected members who will decide whether, in the circumstances of the individual case, to exercise their discretion and allow support either in whole or in part. For a transport appeal form and further information, please contact the Principal Admissions and Transport Officer on 0300 330 9472

Analysis of the SEND cohorts

These summaries are for the cohort of SEND students travelling in ESCC-funded transport in December 2014; they represent a snapshot of our provision. Tables of information prepared as analysis of the cohort have not been included in this appendix due to data protection issues – but we have analysed the current cohort by home town and destination, distance travelled and specific needs.

Year 12 – Year 14 (16-19 year olds) – these have a different profile to the older students

The average annual cost per head for transport of the 145 Y12-Year 14 students currently supported is £7,453. There are 3 residential placements with distances of 176, 183 and 184 miles. Of the remaining 142 students, the average distance to their placement is 10.9 miles (range 0.2 -47 miles, median 9.5 miles, only 26 have a journey of 5 miles or less).

24 of these students live less than 3 miles from their placement, with travel support still granted due to the severity of their needs.

The 2014/15 cohort have been categorised according to their primary presenting special needs or disabilities relating to travel to their placement as this may be helpful in consideration of how the Authority can or cannot reduce costs for transport. A total of 52% of this group have Autism Spectrum as their key SEND – although it should be noted that this basic label covers a very wide range of need.

Many of the young people with SEND in Year 12-14 are suitable for Independent Travel Training (ITT) and an increasing number are being referred to our commissioned service, which now has funding until August 2016. The Council are able to offer temporary transport on condition that the family cooperate with an assessment for and provision of ITT should this be appropriate.

Year 15 and Year 16 (19-21 year olds)

The average annual cost per head for transport of the 40 Y12-Year 14 students currently supported is £7,269. This cohort are transported to a range of FE providers and Independent Specialist Providers (ISPs) which have been specified as being the most suitable institution to meet their needs.

There are two residential placements with distances of 144 and 62 miles. Of the remaining 38 students, the average distance to their placement is 11.1 miles (range 1.4 -38.3 miles, median 11.7 miles, only 11 have a journey of 5 miles or less).

The vast majority of this cohort (36 of 40) are currently on Level 1 (or below) foundation courses due to their learning disabilities, eg Supported Education, Personal Progress. A small number have received some ITT and this has either not worked as they were not deemed safe, or they still require transport part-way, eg to the bus stop.

Post-16 students with non-standard timetables and additional costs

A number of students at FE colleges (12 students attending SDC Eastbourne and Lewes, Sussex Coast and K College) have non-standard timetables, which means that a number of additional taxi runs need to be laid on. Some of these differences in timing are only a matter of 15-30 minutes, with about half being under 90 minutes. The total estimated saving should the Authority insist that only start and end of day travel is provided has been estimated at £32,000 per year. Part of mitigation for this is continuing negotiation with the FE colleges to encourage standardised timetables.

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Risks for post-16 SEND and LIF students combined

Risk	Impact	Initial risk score (5 is high, 1 is low)			Proposed mitigation	Score following action to mitigate		
		Impact	Likelihood	Result		Impact	Likelihood	Result
1. Withdrawal of free transport for students from low income families, and increasing restrictions and travel charges for students with SEND, may deter or prevent them from continuing in post-16 education	Negative impact on driving economic growth, in particular increasing the numbers of NEETs, and lowering educational aspirations for young people. Economic gains (particularly via removal of free transport for over 470 post-16 students from low income families) may not be worthwhile in a context of increased costs elsewhere.	5	4	20	Hardship fund to support the most needy LIF students in continuing in education. Rolling communications plan to reach young people approaching the transition in good time to allow sensible post-16 choices without the assumption that transport will be provided. Provision of Independent Travel Training for students with SEND.	4	4	16
2. Changes have a negative impact on the wider family and welfare of the young person	Some families could fall into crisis and in the most extreme cases this could result in a child needing to become looked after	5	1	5	Oversight by Governance Panel, close liaison with SEND practitioners and colleges	3	1	3
3. Colleges with the most LIF students are adversely affected regarding the demand for bursary support	Demand for financial support outstrips resources	3	3	6	5 colleges with high numbers of LIF students receive a proportionate share of the hardship fund	2	2	4

Risk	Impact	Initial risk score (5 is high, 1 is low)			Proposed mitigation	Score following action to mitigate		
4. Reduction in enrolment numbers on certain courses	Impact on the viability of some colleges and sixth form courses. Likely to be greater impact on Plumpton College given their cohort and their rural location	3	3	9	We will monitor the impact of any changes in provision over time, with close monitoring of impact on Plumpton College in particular (see Appendix 7)	3	2	6
5. Policy changes in SEND travel, e.g. pick up at start or end of day only, cause issues with safety	The safety of vulnerable pupils could be impacted	4	2	4	Thorough risk assessments are undertaken, discussion and negotiation with colleges to clarify the terms of their provision	2	1	2
6. Parents of SEND students may produce a strong case for Independent provision if they feel that travel support to the named provider is limited	Increase in placement provision costs	2	3	6	Good communication with practitioners and parents regarding the revised offer, and potential for independent travel training if appropriate	2	2	4
7. A number of those affected by proposed changes are ESCC looked after children or care leavers	ESCC do not meet our duty as corporate parents / transport costs are met via another budget (cost shunting)	4	2	8	The budget for LAC and care leaver transport (SEND students) to be managed via a LAC budget in order to ensure efficiency	2	1	2
8. Some parents may use legal processes to challenge decisions as well as the robustness of the consultation process	Negative impact on staff time and ESCC costs	4	3	12	Robust legal advice, communications and consultation plan. Introduction of a specific and well-signposted post-16 SEND travel assistance policy	3	2	6

Post-16 travel assistance: Survey of other local authority practice

Web-based and networking research on post-16 transport offers resulted in comprehensive information for all 26 other county councils for SEND students. The information predominantly came from their webpages, but was also frequently hidden away in policy documents and is often relatively difficult to find for families or professionals.

The following issues were investigated:

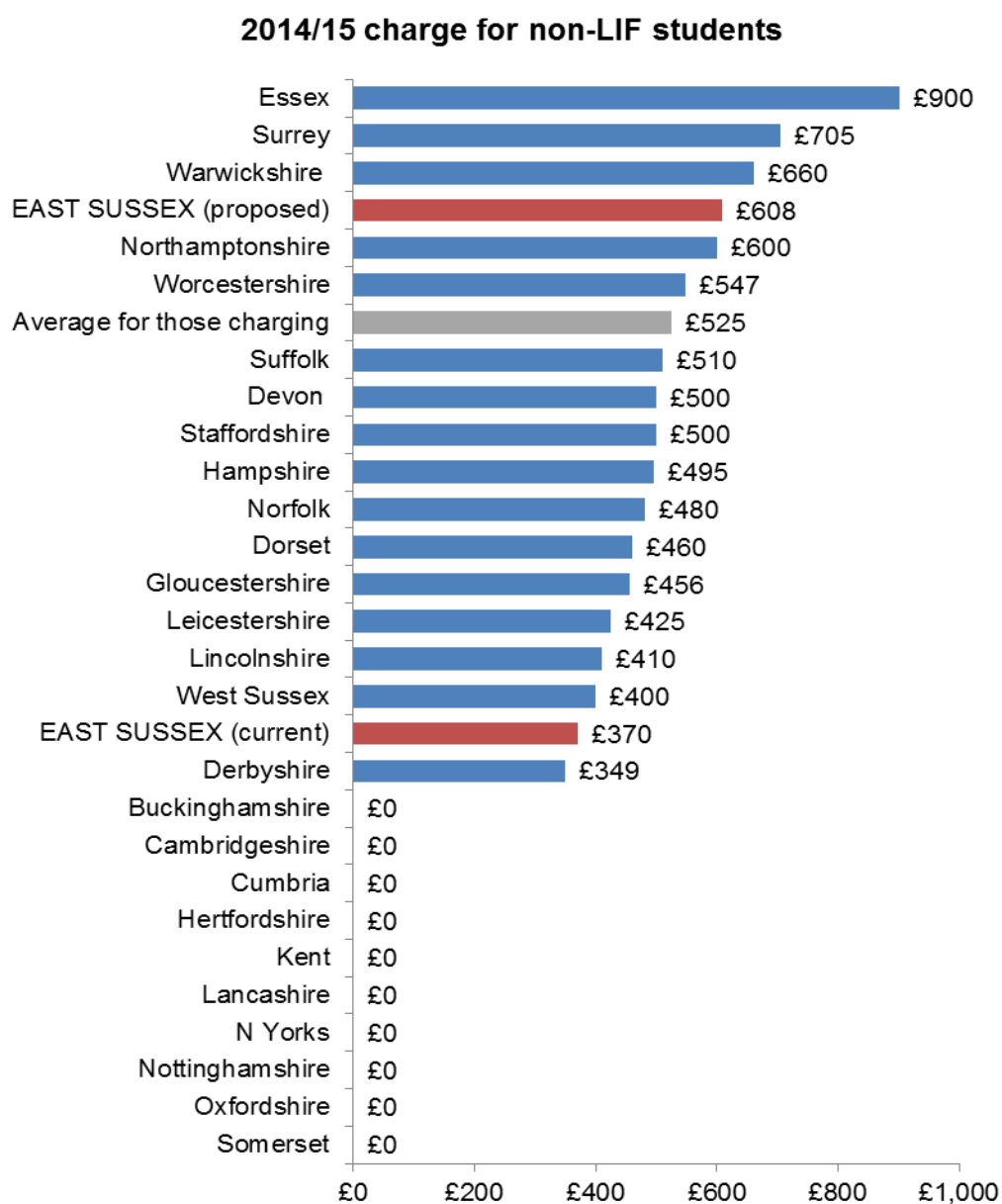
1. **How much is being charged in 2014/15 as a contribution towards post-16 SEND travel**
2. **Whether this charge is also applied to SEND students from low income families**

(a) Post-16 charge for SEND travel assistance for non-LIF / LIF students (2014/15) by county council

Local Authority	Students from Non-LIF	Students from Low Income Families
Buckinghamshire	zero	zero
Cambridgeshire	zero	zero
Cumbria	zero	zero
Derbyshire	£349	£233
Devon	£500	£250
Dorset	£460	£230
Essex	£900	£450
Gloucestershire	£456	£456
Hampshire	£495	zero
Hertfordshire	zero	zero
Kent	zero	zero
Lancashire	zero	zero
Leicestershire	£425	zero
Lincolnshire	£410	£410
Norfolk	£480	£360
N Yorks	zero	zero
Northamptonshire	£600	zero
Nottinghamshire	zero	zero
Oxfordshire	zero	zero
Somerset	zero	zero

Staffordshire	£500	£380
Suffolk	£510	£510
Surrey	£705	£705
Warwickshire	£660	£330
West Sussex	£400	zero
Worcestershire	£547	£547

(b) Comparison chart by county council



Equality Impact Assessment Chart: ESCC Proposal to Reduce the level of HTST support for pre-school and post-16 students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Proposal	Cohort affected	Potential negative impact on young people and families	Mitigation	Accepted Risks
<p>Proposals to make savings on current post-16 SEND travel assistance.</p> <p>(i) Offering support to those demonstrating the 'highest level of need' only by introducing tighter 'exceptions' criteria for SEND students and offering support which is more cost-effective, e.g. transport at college start/end times, use of a notability vehicle.</p> <p>(ii) Increasing the current post-16 transport contribution from £370 to £608.</p> <p>(iii) Introducing a 50% rate of contribution for low income families set at £304.</p>	<p>Post-16 SEND who do not demonstrate the highest level of need under the tighter exceptions criteria.</p> <p>SEND young people aged 16-25 and their families.</p> <p>Low income families with post-16 children with SEND, who require SEND transport assistance.</p>	<p>Not able to achieve aspirations set out in their EHC plan</p> <p>Increased risk of becoming NEET</p> <p>Increased negative impact on the wider family and welfare of the young person.</p> <p>Increased risk of not fulfilling their potential as they cannot attend the college/6th form.</p>	<p>Introduction of a specific and well-signposted post-16 SEND travel assistance policy.</p> <p>Rolling communications plan to reach young people approaching the transition in good time to allow sensible post-16 choices without the assumption that transport will be provided.</p> <p>Governance framework / well-defined process for all post-16 SEND travel applications (not just for young people going onto an FE course), with a new online application form and process removes the assumption that funded SEND travel will be provided post-16.</p> <p>Increased use of Personal Travel Budgets and Independent Travel Training (ITT) for post-16 SEND students (as well as ITT for younger students from Year 7) as appropriate.</p> <p>Robust assessment in place to establish those with the highest level of need receive assistance.</p>	<p>Young people may not be able to achieve the aspirations set out in EHC plan which covers an age span of 16-25.</p> <p>Fewer young people with SEND will receive travel assistance.</p>
<p>Proposal to continue to fund pre-school SEND travel on an exceptional basis, but to (iv) introduce a contribution along the same lines as for post-16 travel (£608/304).</p>	<p>Families / low income families of pre-school children with SEND who are granted travel assistance will be asked to contribute 608 / £304 towards travel arrangements.</p>	<p>Increased financial burden on the family.</p>	<p>Communicate clearly to all stakeholders, particularly Early Years staff.</p> <p>Clear financial assessment process in place.</p>	

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Report to: **Lead Members for Learning and School Effectiveness**

Date: **8 June 2015**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **Approval to consult on a review of discretionary post-16 support for low income families (LIF) and rural link transport provision for the 2016/17 academic year**

Purpose of report: **To ask the Lead Member for permission to consult between June and September this year on proposed reductions in support for students from LIF and post-16 students receiving link transport from rural addresses to their post-16 placements ('FE Link')**

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1) **The Lead Member is asked to approve consultation on the 2 proposals set out in 2.1 of this report to reduce spend on the discretionary home to school/college budget from the start of the 2016/17 academic year**
 - 2) **To note that if approved, two parallel consultations would take place over summer 2015; the first on reducing the level of support for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and the second, as set out in this report, on removing travel support for post-16 students from low income families (LIF) and FE link transport**
 - 3) **To note that if agreed, decisions on whether to proceed with these changes following the consultation final report and appropriate Scrutiny meetings, would be taken in the context of wider savings proposals by either the Lead Member or Cabinet in November 2015**
-

1 Background

1.1 It is anticipated that East Sussex County Council will need to reduce expenditure by £70-90 million between 2016/17 and 2018/19 and all areas will need to be considered. The Home to School Transport (HTST) budget was overspent in 2014/15, with expenditure of £10.78m against a budget of £10.72m, and approximately £1.5m of that used for discretionary transport.

1.2 During the 2012/13 to 2014/15 Medium Term Financial Plan there has been a systematic review of the HTST budget to reduce costs which included:

- a decision to only provide free transport to the nearest school for pupils living in joint community areas (who meet the eligibility criteria)
- the reduction of grants given to Post 16 low income students
- the post-16 low income criteria was amended to fall into line with the same criteria used for school aged children under extended transport rights

1.3 The last remaining areas of discretionary HTST expenditure are pre-school and post-16 SEND transport, post-16 transport for students from low income families (LIF), free link travel for FE students living in highly rural locations to the start of a continuing public transport journey, and a £15k subsidy with Brighton and Hove and West Sussex made to Southern Rail so that they can offer a discount to post-16 learners. This £15k rail subsidy is one of the mitigations for the proposals and will need to be maintained if changes are agreed. The remaining transport provision is statutory and we continue to ensure that delivery is as cost effective as possible.

1.4 If the consultation is not undertaken from June to September it will be too late to implement, if the Lead Member decides to do so, for the 2016/17 academic year.

1.5 If approval to consult is given, the Lead Member / Cabinet will be asked to decide whether to go ahead with the changes following the consultation and final report by November 2015.

1.6 Formal consultation on the proposals is planned with sixth forms and colleges during June and July, with an initial meeting to raise awareness on 19 May 2015.

1.7 It is recognised that the options put forward may have a significant negative impact on people's lives, although every effort will be made to mitigate the negative impact where this is possible.

1.8 The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee will be asked if and how they wish to become involved in the process at their next meeting on 15th June 2015.

1.9 **Appendix 1** gives estimated savings, cohort numbers and types of support for post-16 LIF students.

1.10 In addition to the proposal to cease travel assistance for LIF we are also proposing to cease free link travel for post-16 students from their rural addresses (which have no public transport links) to the nearest bus stop or train station for onward travel to their college placement. This will produce a saving of approximately £4-5k per annum. The nature of our current policy and provision for this small cohort is outlined in **Appendix 2**.

1.11 Potential savings per year based on current annual cost estimates for post-16 LIF accumulate to reach £401k of savings across the three financial years 2016/17 - 2018/19; which by 2018/19 or Year 3 (full impact) constitutes 1.7% of the total expected HTST budget, or 10.5% of the total discretionary budget. For FE link the three year total saving is approximately £7k, or 0.3% of the total concessionary budget by Year 3.

1.12 In making the savings estimates for this report, it has been assumed that implementation will start in September 2016, with young people and their families being informed about agreed changes in November 2015.

1.13 **Appendix 3** shows a HTST budget breakdown to provide context.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The proposals are:

(a) Removal of all support for post-16 students from low income families.

A number of other county councils, including several with similar issues around rural travel (for example West Sussex and Kent), no longer offer special funding or free transport for post-16 students from low income families, although many have a good subsidised transport scheme. The supported cohort constitutes 3.7% of the total number of East Sussex 16-19 year olds in education.

We propose to allocate 25% (approximately £60k) of the forecast 2015/16 saving as a hardship fund. We are exploring options with the most favourable currently being the sharing of the fund between 5 colleges whose students currently receive the majority of our support.

(b) Cessation of FE Link transport for new starters from September 2016

2.2 The outcome of the consultation on the Post-16 transport Statement for 2015/16 has recently been approved by Lead Member and will be published on the Connexions 360 website by the end of May. For 2016/17 the Post 16 transport statement will need to be amended to reflect the outcome of the proposed consultation set out in 2.1 above.

2.3 Any changes would be phased in with new starters only being subject to revisions from September 2016. Students awarded transport help in the preceding academic years will continue to receive the same support for the agreed duration of their course; up to 2 years. Any policy which was introduced as a result of this consultation would include an appeals process to consider exceptional cases, and equality issues would be considered at all stages.

2.4 **Appendix 4** details post-16 LIF students receiving travel assistance this academic year.

2.5 Reducing travel support carries with it a number of risks, outlined in a joint document (combined with risks for post-16 SEND students) in Appendix 7 of the SEND report.

2.6 Although it is regrettable to take this action, implementation will place us in a similar policy position to many comparable local authorities and is permissible under current legislation and guidance, as set out in **Appendix 5**.

2.7 **Appendices 6 and 7** the Equality Impact Assessments will form an essential part of the consultation process as it is likely that these proposals will have a negative impact on post-16 students from low income families and students receiving free link transport to post-16 provision. The consultation process will help us to identify the impacts and look at mitigations.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 Given the financial constraints set out in this report approval is requested to undertake the consultation.

STUART GALLIMORE
Director of Children's Services

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All Members

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Appendix 1	LIF Finance tables and information
Appendix 2	FE Link summary document
Appendix 3	Home to school transport budget breakdown
Appendix 4	Post-16 LIF cohort information
Appendix 5	Comparison with other local authorities
Appendix 6	Equality Impact Assessment LIF
Appendix 7	Equality Impact Assessment FE Link

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Finance tables and summary cohort information

1. Breakdown of total savings estimates– summary including cohort numbers

Potential total savings per year based on 2014/15 annual cost estimates are summarised below:

Financial Year	2016/17*	2017/18	2018/19	Total (3 year period)
Estimated total savings resulting from removal of post-16 travel support for students from low income families, whilst retaining 25% hardship fund)	£54,879	£164,224	£182,047	£401,149
Estimated number of young people aged 16-19 years old from low income families impacted (new starters)	204	212 more	45 more	

2. Breakdown of total savings estimates – higher detail

Financial Year	2016/17*	2017/18	2018/19	Total (3 year period)
Estimated total savings resulting from removal of travel passes and coach seats	£39,063	£117,147	£130,729	£286,939
Estimated total savings resulting from removal of Travel Grants	£34,109	£101,818	£112,000	£247,927
<i>Retention of 25% hardship fund</i>	<i>-£18,293</i>	<i>-£54,741</i>	<i>-£60,682</i>	<i>-£133,716</i>
Estimated total savings	£54,879	£164,224	£182,047	£401,149

* adjusted for part-financial year with changes for new starters from September 2016 (68% of full year)

- 2.1 The estimated totals for each financial year relate to the potential savings against an estimate for total 2015/16 costs if no changes were made.
- 2.2 In the 2014/15 academic year, 241 mainstream post-16 students from low income families (LIF) are supported with free travel passes at a cost of £131k, with another 233 supported with travel grants carrying an annual cost of £112k via a separate Admissions & Transport (A&T) budget.

3. Notes and assumptions for savings estimates

- 3.1 It should be noted that these figures are estimated from a December 2014 snapshot which was used to generate total annual costs for the 2014/15 academic year, and then adjusted for the 2015/16 financial year (during which the changes will be implemented with approximately 70% of the school travel days remaining).
- 3.2 If policy changes were introduced from September 2016, it is proposed that only those pupils starting a post-16 course in September 2016 should be affected, based on fairness and the

legitimate expectations of young people and parents who would have chosen a school or college based on the Council's admission criteria and transport policy at the time of entry to the school or college.

- 3.3 In addition, changes would be introduced at the start of September (and savings would result from around 130 school travel days from a total of 190 within the 2015/16 financial year). Therefore changes to discretionary provision would not result in full expected savings until the 2018/19 financial year.

4. Post-16 students from a Low Income Family – hardship fund

- 4.1 Proposal (a) is to cease transport for post-16 students from low income families (LIF) who are between 16 and 19 years old. This option is mitigated by the proposal to retain up to 25% of the forecast 2015/16 budget spend of £240k to act as a targeted hardship fund.
- 4.2 If post-16 transport as it now stands were to be 'ceased' for this group, this will be imposed on new starters only in September 2016. As travel support is offered for a maximum of 2 years per application, and the financial year straddles two academic years, savings will not be maximised until the third year following implementation (2018/19).
- 4.3 For the 2016/17 academic year, the identified hardship fund allocation would be half of the figure for the entire cohort, as roughly half of applicants for support from September 2016 will be expected to be starting new courses. The figures resulting from an accurate calculation using proportions of savings for each academic year are shown in Table 4:

	2016/17*	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Hardship fund available for academic year	£30,341	£60,682	£60,682	£60,682

5. Third Year savings and numbers impacted (based on 2014/15 cohorts)

Table 2: Percentage savings per year due to reduction in support for post-16 students from LIF

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Percentage of the total HTST budget plus Travel budgets (£10.9m)	0.5%	1.5%	1.7%
Percentage of the discretionary element of the budgets (£1.74m)	3.2%	9.4%	10.5%

So we anticipate 1.7% saving against total budget by third year if proposed changes to support for post-16 students from low income families were to be implemented from September 2016.

Table 3: Approximate numbers impacted by reduction in support by third year (2018/19)

Number of CYP impacted by third year of the changes*	Number of post-16 from LIF currently supported	Number impacted as % of post-16 LIF cohort	Number of ALL non-SEND CYP (stat + disc) currently given travel support	Number impacted as % of total non-SEND CYP with travel support
473	473	100%	4,782	9.9%

* estimated using 2014/15 figures

None of the post-16 students from low income families will continue to receive travel support from the Authority under the proposal, but the neediest cases will be able to access the 25% hardship fund.

FE Link policy and current cohort summary

'FE Link' or link transport is offered to 16-19 year olds who live in remote rural areas in the county which have no public transport, and takes the form of a free taxi service to the start of the nearest suitable public transport journey to college.

The Council has made this provision to compensate for the lack of good public transport in a very small number of remote residences in the county. Students receiving link transport have to pay for their ongoing journey.

As of April 2015, there are only 3 travellers on 2 taxis with an actual annual cost to the HTST budget of £4.4k, each being transported between 3 and 5 miles from their homes to either a train station or a bus stop. The offer is outlined in the 2015/16 post-16 Transport Statement as: *'Link transport: Some students (those living in the most rural locations) may be assisted to get to their nearest bus pick up point or railway station provided they attend the nearest appropriate provision. Contact the Admissions and Transport Team within the Children's Services Department at County Hall for more details.'*

These college students cannot share minibuses with younger school age students as they have to leave earlier, return later and are usually travelling in a different direction to the local secondary school – therefore per head this provision is relatively costly.

It is recognised that a very small number of future potential recipients may be impacted by a reduction in their post-16 transport support as a double

The details for each current recipient is set out below:

Year group	Area of residence	College	Approx Annual Cost
12	Netherfield	Bexhill	£1,400
13	Netherfield	Bexhill	£2,800
14	Wilmington	Sussex Downs Eastbourne	£200

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Home to School Transport Budget Breakdown

The Home to School Transport (HTST) budget year end spend was £10.78m in total.

£131k of the HTST budget (2014/15 academic year) has funded free or subsidised transport for 241 post-16 students from Low Income Families (LIF). £112k of a separate budget (not shown) also funds travel grants for 233 post-16 students from LIF.

A further breakdown of the 2014/15 budget with percentages of the total budget required for each activity is included below. These are estimated outturns at the time of writing as final year-end figures are not yet available. Due to the complexities of the budget, some minor details have been omitted for simplicity, eg some costs which are later recouped. However, the figures provide a reasonable indication of the budgetary context of the proposed areas for reductions (highlighted):

Description	% of total HTST budget	Estimated cost (rounded)
Hired Transport		
SEND transport statutory age (and £40k nursery)	46.2%	£4,952,000
SEND post-16 students hired transport	13.4%	£1,440,000
Statutory entitled students (due to distance)	13.5%	£1,449,000
FLESS/FLP/College Central	3.1%	£330,000
Unsafe routes (statutory age)	4.3%	£466,00
LAC with SEND funded by HTST	0.5%	£57,000
MEDG students/parent with medical problem	0.5%	£53,000
Pre-16 students from Low Income Families	0.4%	£41,000
Special Needs Outreach (travel between sites)	0.1%	£12,000
Post-16 students from Low Income Families	0.05%	£5,000
FE Link Transport	0.04%	£4,000
Total Hired Transport (estimate for 2014/15)	83.2%	£8,912,000
PTBs / mileage		
SEND Statutory age PTB	1.2%	£126,000
SEND post-16 students PTB	0.6%	£60,000
Total PTBs	1.7%	£186,000
Parental mileage scheme (Statutory students)	0.4%	£42,000
Public Transport (Freedom Pass/B&H bus ID)		
Statutory age students over distance	11.0%	£1,178,000
Post-16 students from Low Income Families	1.2%	£126,000
SEND Post-16 students public transport	0.01%	£1,000
Total public transport	12.2%	£1,305,000
Staffing Costs SLA with CET	2.5%	£271,000
Approximate total HTST budget	100%	£10,716,000

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Post-16 LIF students cohort summary

As part of the proposal to consult on discretionary home to school/college transport, one of the options is to cease transport for post-16 students from low income families (LIF)¹ who are between 16 and 19 years old. This option is mitigated by the proposal to retain up to 25% of the forecast 2015/16 budget spend of £240k to act as a targeted hardship fund.

If post-16 transport as it now stands were to be 'ceased' for this group, this will be imposed on new starters only in September 2016. As travel support is offered in most cases for 2 years and for some students for 3 years, any changes will not be complete until the third year following implementation (2018/19).

The hardship fund allocation would increase in line with demand, as only new starters will be subject to the new regime (so the fund will be the equivalent of 25% of the funding the students will have received in 2014/15, for those no longer receiving this full support from September 2016 – students awarded support prior to this time will continue to receive the same assistance). The ideal would be to use this funding to offer hardship fund support to those who most need it in order to continue their education; however there are a number of options for the nature of this support.

	Potential savings by Financial Year			
	2016/17*	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Option a Removal of funding Students from low income families - HTST budget	£39,063	£117,147	£130,729	£130,729
Travel Grants (non-HTST budget)	£34,109	£101,818	£112,000	£112,000
<i>25% hardship funds</i>	£18,293	£54,741	£60,682	£60,682
Total for Option a minus hardship fund	£54,879	£164,224	£182,047	£182,047
Total for Option a	£73,172	£218,965	£242,729	£242,729

* adjusted for part-financial year with changes from September 2016 (68% of full year)

For the 2016/17 academic year, the identified hardship fund allocation would be approximately half of the figure for the entire cohort, as roughly half of applicants for support from September 2016 will be starting new courses.

	2016/17*	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Hardship fund available for academic year	£30,341	£60,682	£60,682	£60,682

¹ Low income families are those in receipt of one, or more, of the following:

- Income support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit based on income of up to £16,190
- Employment and Support Allowance (income related)
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit

Recent changes impacting this cohort

It should be noted that spend on this cohort has already been reduced significantly from September 2014 as eligibility criteria for students in colleges/school sixth forms was adjusted to fall into line with school aged low income cases, and travel grant payment rates were also reduced by 4%. There are now 44% fewer young people being supported than a year ago, with an estimated reduction in annual spend of £190k between 2013/14 (the last full financial year prior to the change) and 2015/16 for total post-16 LIF transport including travel grants.

Analysis of the cohorts

A total of 473 post-16 students between Year 12 and 14 in the 2014/15 academic year are being offered free transport to sixth form or college by ESCC due to meeting criteria for low income (equivalent to the criteria for free school meals). They constitute 3.7% of the total 12,500 young people, living in East Sussex and age 16-19 years remaining in education.

236 receive free passes for public transport, with 5 using free organised or 'hired' transport - taxis and minibuses, via the HTST budget; and 233 receive travel grants (A&T budget). A further breakdown is below:

Travel Assistance via the HTST budget (bus passes and hired transport) 2014/15

Numbers by Year group	Freedom Pass*	Brighton & Hove ID**	Hired Transport	Total
Y12	78	23	3	104
Y13	82	28	2	112
Y14	18	7	0	25
Total	178	58	5	241

*£570 increasing to £608 from April 2015

**£290

The likely effect of removal of these free travel passes will be that the majority of these young people will still want to use the same passes but will need to purchase them (some may find other ways to get to college – walking, cycling, etc).

Where are they studying?

The following shows numbers of LIF students with free travel passes by post-16 provider:

Provider	Total	Provider	Total
ARK 6th Form at The Ridge	1	Plumpton Col@Plumpton	1
Bennett Memorial Diocesan Sch	1	Ringmer Community College	2
Bexhill College	51	Rye Studio School	2
BHASVIC	5	Sussex Coast Col@Hast MVC	4
BIMM	1	Sussex Coast Col@Ore Valley	7
Cardinal Newman	3	Sussex Coast Col@Station Plaza	22
City College	36	Sussex Downs Col@Eastbourne	59
DV8 Bexhill	4	Sussex Downs Col@Lewes	21
DV8 Brighton	1	Sussex Downs Col@Newhaven	1
Hailsham Community College AT	1	Uckfield Community College	3
Heathfield Community College	3	Uplands Community College	1
Homewood School and Sixth Form	1	Varndean College	6

Post-16 LIF students on Travel Grants 2014/15

This year, 232 post-16 students are receiving travel grants (A&T budget) – essentially cash payments to assist them with the full costs of transport to their sixth forms or colleges. The grants are paid in three instalments to a total of between £300 and £600 per year.

34% of this year's travel grant cohort attends Plumpton College – many students are presumed to pay for the Plumpton coach from the nearest stop. Another 28% attend Sussex Downs College (SDC) and 19% attend Sussex Coast College (SCC), with just 18% at the remaining 21 organisations. It is believed that most of these students use the grant as a contribution towards train travel costs.

The college attended, and number of students supported by grants by home town is shown below:

PLUMPTON		SDC		SCC	
Home town	Number	Home town	Total	Home town	Number
Eastbourne	19	Seaford	18	Bexhill	18
Hastings	10	Newhaven	15	Rye	7
Polegate	6	Eastbourne	8	Battle	6
Lewes	5	Peacehaven	6	Eastbourne	5
Seaford	5	Bexhill	4	St Leonards	3
Uckfield	5	St Leonards	3	Hailsham	1
Peacehaven	4	Battle	2	Hartfield	1
Rob'sbridge	4	Hailsham	2	Hurst Green	1
Heathfield	3	Pevensey	2	Polegate	1
Newhaven	3	Polegate	2	Wadhurst	1
St Leonards	3	Firle	1	TOTAL	44
Bexhill	2	Hastings	1		
Crowborough	2	Plumpton	1		
Hailsham	2	Rob'sbridge	1		
Wivelsfield	2	Rye	1		
Battle	1	Telscombe	1		
Etchingham	1	TOTAL	68		
Forest Row	1				
Rye	1				
Telscombe	1				
TOTAL	80				

The following table gives the percentage share of all post-16 LIF travel support (bus tickets and travel grants) by organisation. Bexhill College and City College Brighton & Hove also have a significant number of supported 16-19 year old students (50 and 38 respectively). The 5 colleges with the majority of supported students are highlighted.

Provider	Bus tickets		Travel grants			Totals			25% hardship fund (Y2)
	Freedom Pass (£608)	B&H Bus ID (£290)	Band 1 (£300)	Band 2 (£450)	Band 3 (£600)	Total number of students	Total cost 2014/15	As % of total budget	
ARK 6th Form at The Ridge	1	0	0	0	0	1	£608	0.25%	£152
Bennett Memorial Diocesan Sch	1	0	0	1	0	2	£1,058	0.43%	£265
Bexhill College	50	0	0	0	0	50	£30,400	12.47%	£7,600
BHASVIC	0	5	0	0	0	5	£1,450	0.60%	£363
BIMM	0	1	0	0	2	3	£1,490	0.61%	£373
Brighton Academy	0	0	0	0	1	1	£600	0.25%	£150
Cardinal Newman	0	3	0	0	0	3	£870	0.36%	£218
City College	0	36	1	1	0	38	£11,190	4.59%	£2,798
CSC H Heath	0	0	1	0	0	1	£300	0.12%	£75
DV8 Bexhill / Brighton	4	1	3	2	3	13	£6,322	2.59%	£1,581
EBNE Borough FC	0	0	0	0	1	1	£600	0.25%	£150
Hailsham Community College AT	1	0	0	0	0	1	£608	0.25%	£152
Heathfield Community College	3	0	0	0	0	3	£1,824	0.75%	£456
Homewood Sixth Form	1	0	0	0	0	1	£608	0.25%	£152
Northbrook College	0	0	0	0	2	2	£1,200	0.49%	£300
Norton Knatchbull	0	0	0	1	0	1	£450	0.18%	£113
Plumpton College	1	0	7	3	70	81	£46,058	18.90%	£11,515
Ringmer Community College	2	0	0	0	1	3	£1,816	0.75%	£454
Rye Studio School	2	0	0	0	1	3	£1,816	0.75%	£454
Sackville	0	0	1	0	0	1	£300	0.12%	£75
Shoreham Academy	0	0	0	0	1	1	£600	0.25%	£150
St Pauls	0	0	1	0	0	1	£300	0.12%	£75
Sussex Coast College	33	0	35	23	54	145	£73,314	30.08%	£18,329
Sussex Downs College	75	6	0	0	0	81	£47,340	19.43%	£11,835
The Judd	0	0	0	1	0	1	£450	0.18%	£113
Tonbridge Grammar	0	0	1	0	0	1	£300	0.12%	£75
Uckfield Community College	3	0	0	0	0	3	£1,824	0.75%	£456
Uplands Community College	1	0	0	0	0	1	£608	0.25%	£152
Varndean College	0	6	1	0	0	7	£2,040	0.84%	£510
West Kent College	0	0	0	1	9	10	£5,850	2.40%	£1,463
Not recorded	0	0	0	2	1	3	£1,500	0.62%	£375

We will need to consider how to allocate the hardship fund as this should perhaps not be directly proportional to the current budget breakdown by college, as some students will have travel costs above the amount they are currently awarded through a travel grant. For example, the costs for a student at Plumpton College using their subsidised transport is as follows:

Plumpton Ticket costs	ZONE 1	ZONE 2	ZONE 3	ZONE 4
Price per 10 journey ticket	£ 17.00	£ 25.00	£ 31.00	£ 37.50
Term 1 Ticket (14 weeks)	£185.00	£ 247.00	£ 308.00	£ 369.00
Term 2 Ticket (13 weeks)	£ 172.00	£ 229.00	£ 286.00	£ 343.00
Term 3 Ticket (9 weeks)	£119.00	£ 158.00	£ 198.00	£ 238.00
Total for termly Ticket	£476.00	£634.00	£792.00	£950.00

A significant number may therefore be faced with costs of £950 per year for a full-time course (and may be receiving a maximum of £600 via an ESCC travel grant). We will be exploring the fairest method for allocation with college colleagues as part of the consultation.

Plumpton College also have a greater proportion of students from low income families than other sixth forms and colleges and may therefore be disproportionately disadvantaged by changes impacting students receiving travel support due to low family income. 14.5% of their students aged 16-19 are currently receiving travel support, compared with 9.9% for Sussex Coast and 2.3% for Sussex Downs College.

Although a small number of individuals (5, with an average cost of £1,015 per year) we also need to consider if or how we will support those currently being offered organised transport.

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Post-16 travel assistance: Survey of other local authority practice

Web-based and networking research on post-16 transport offers resulted in comprehensive information for all 26 other county councils for SEND students, and information on availability of Low Income Families (LIF) transport funding for 13 local authorities. The information predominantly came from their webpages, but was also frequently hidden away in policy documents and is often relatively difficult to find for families or professionals.

The following issues were investigated:

1. **Whether or not the LA catered specifically for LIF students**
2. **Public transport offer in neighbouring counties**

1. Specific support for LIF students

Local Authority	Provision
Cheshire	LIF provision withdrawn Sep 14 but will consider hardship cases
Cornwall	No special provision for LIF - subsidised travel for all who qualify
Derbyshire	No special provision for LIF - concessionary bus fare for all
Devon	Post-16 travel scheme with 50% reduction in charge for LIF
E Sussex	Hired transport for 10 students, free bus passes for 380 students (value £570)
Essex	LIF students are asked to contribute £450 for transport (half the average cost of transport provision in Essex)
Herefordshire	Charge toward transport which removes almost all financial benefit for LIF
Kent	Kent Student Travel card for all – if LIF cannot afford it they can apply for help, but general offer withdrawn in 2012
Leicestershire	Yes – similar to our current provision
Norfolk	No special provision for LIF - post-16 travel scheme for all
Suffolk	No special provision for LIF - discretionary pass available for all at £510
Wiltshire	No special provision for LIF - subsidised transport scheme for all at £446
Warwickshire	No special LIF support. If suitable council or public transport does not operate near to a student, an annual travel allowance of £110 (or £220 if the student is from a low-income family) is available
W Sussex	None – was removed in 2011, although was timely as coincided with the replacement of the EMA scheme with 16-19 bursaries held by schools / colleges

2. Subsidised Public Transport in neighbouring county councils

Provision of subsidised post 16 bus travel arrangements is relatively widespread. Links to neighbouring shires schemes are provided below. However, these schemes require considerable investment. The Surrey scheme is understood to cost their Children's Services budget in region of £700K pa.

<http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/buses-and-trains/bus-tickets-passes-and-travel-discounts/student-fare-card-scheme>

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/transport-and-highways-policies/changes-to-travel-passes-for-young-people>

<http://www.yourspacewestsussex.co.uk/default.aspx?page=510>

East Sussex Subsidised Public Transport

Bus Travel

Young people in East Sussex up to the age of 19 years are able to purchase a weekly Freedom ticket (subject to obtaining either a 3-iD or Choice ID card) which offers potential savings and includes travel at weekends. The current cost is £15 per week and this will increase to £16 per week from April 2015 (currently 78 post-16 LIF students receive a free Freedom Pass awarded by ESCC). The scheme is not subsidised by East Sussex County Council. Freedom tickets can only be purchased on a weekly basis from the bus driver. There would be an overhead cost to providing termly tickets and bus operators would be more reluctant to participate due to issues of allocating income fairly and cash-flow.

Some East Sussex students use Brighton & Hove Bus Company routes and can buy an annual travel card for £290 (currently 58 post-16 LIF students receive a free B&H pass through ESCC).

Train Travel

In partnership with Brighton and Hove and West Sussex, ESCC provide a £15k subsidy made to Southern Rail, so that they can offer discounted rail travel between home and school or college for 16-19 year old students.

Equality Impact Assessment Chart: ESCC Proposal to remove all travel support for post-16 students from low income families

Option	Cohort affected	Potential negative impact on young people and families	Mitigation	Accepted Risks
Proposal A: Proposal to remove all travel support for post-16 students from low income families.	Low Income Young People and their Families (LIF).	<p>Increased financial burden on already low income families.</p> <p>Increased risk of becoming NEET</p> <p>Increased risk of not fulfilling their potential as they cannot attend the college of their choice</p> <p>Current Year 10s who will be affected by these proposals if adopted may have already started considering college choices and will need to be made aware of the potential financial impacts.</p> <p>Demotivating effect on Year 10 students who fear they may not be able to progress to college.</p>	<p>Allocate 25% (approx. £60k) of the current annual budget spend to school sixth forms and colleges to act as a targeted 'hardship fund'. Work closely with schools and colleges to explore how potential impact can be reduced by using this fund, 16-19 bursaries and other support.</p> <p>Start making stakeholders aware of this potential change.</p> <p>Rolling communications plan to reach young people approaching the transition in good time to allow sensible post-16 choices without the assumption that transport will be provided. Clear communication should be available by Nov 2015 ahead of final decision deadlines.</p> <p>Inform all stakeholders of consultation.</p> <p>Make professionals aware of policy proposals.</p> <p>Continuing provision of £15k subsidy (with Brighton & Hove and West Sussex councils) to Southern Rail to allow offer of reduced train fares for 16-19 year old students.</p>	<p>Hardship fund will be allocated and at the discretion of colleges and they may not be able to prioritise LIF.</p> <p>NEET increase.</p> <p>Fewer young people from low income families will receive travel assistance.</p>

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Equality Impact Assessment Chart: ESCC Proposal to remove the FE Link offer

Proposal	Cohort affected	Potential negative impact on young people and families	Mitigation	Accepted Risks
Removal of FE Link offer.	16-19 year olds who live in remote rural areas in the county where there is no public transport.	<p>More difficult to access public transport links</p> <p>Increased risk of becoming NEET.</p> <p>Increased risk of not fulfilling their potential as they cannot attend the college of their choice.</p> <p>Current Year 10s who will be affected by these proposals if adopted may have already started considering college choices and will need to be made aware of the potential financial impacts</p> <p>Demotivating effect on Year 10 students who fear they may not be able to progress to college.</p>	<p>Start making stakeholders aware of this potential change.</p> <p>Rolling communications plan to reach young people approaching the transition in good time to allow sensible post-16 choices without the assumption that FE Link offer will be available. Clear communication should be available by Nov 2015 ahead of final decision deadlines.</p> <p>Make professionals aware of policy proposals asap.</p>	<p>NEET increase.</p> <p>A small number of 16-19 year olds living in rural locations will not receive free link transport to a public transport stop, and will need to make their own arrangements.</p>

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Report to: **Lead Member for Learning and School Effectiveness**

Date: **8 June 2015**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **Review of the implementation of the Home to School Transport policy regarding children living within the shared community areas**

Purpose of report: **To inform the Lead Member of the effect of implementing the County Council's home to school transport policy as written for children living in shared community areas**

RECOMMENDATION

The Lead Member is recommended to agree the Home to School Transport (HTST) policy continues to be applied as written to ensure that children living within shared community areas are only provided with free transport to their nearest designated school, provided the eligibility criteria are met.

1 Background

1.1 In 2011, Members were given an undertaking that officers would review all areas of discretionary provision of home to school transport as part of the County Council's financial planning. These reviews are ongoing and over the next three years additional savings from the HTST will need to be modelled.

1.2 A report was submitted to the Lead Member in January 2014 following the consultation in September and October 2013, recommending that the County Council should only provide children living in shared community areas with free transport to the child's nearest designated school, providing the eligibility criteria are met. The Lead Member agreed this proposal noting the report anticipated full year savings of circa £50K. The actual number of freedom tickets issued to children living in shared community areas fell by 222 which relates to a full year's savings from September 2014 of £76,932. Savings from September 2015 are yet to be calculated but will continue over the next four years as the new implementation works through the secondary school year groups. In addition, as numbers of eligible pupils continue to fall, it could reduce the need for hired transport, as is the case with Chailey School, where fewer eligible pupils has resulted in the decommissioning of a coach for September 2015 producing an additional saving of £45K per annum. The local authority is however working with Chailey to support them to find alternative transport options for their pupils who can no longer purchase vacant seats.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The County Council's Home to School Transport policy remains unchanged and is shown as **Appendix 1**. Historically, however, free transport has been given to children in shared areas to any eligible school that serves their community area. This was a more generous implementation of the policy, and therefore discretionary. It also meant that children living in shared community areas had an unfair advantage over other children as transport could be paid to any eligible school serving their area, where other children had only one designated school. Therefore, some children in shared areas were being provided with free home to school transport, contrary to the County Council's policy.

2.2 The community areas in East Sussex are shown as **Appendix 2**. From September 2014, the policy has been applied to new applicants as written so that free home to school transport has been provided only to the nearest eligible school serving their community area (i.e. the nearest eligible designated school).

2.3 Consultation was undertaken in September and October 2013, and the vast majority of

respondents were not in favour of this change with 92.2% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing. This in itself was not surprising as it was anticipated that it would be unpopular with the families it would affect. It was not, however, a referendum, and unfortunately the County Council's financial situation no longer allows for the more generous provision of transport which is not in keeping with current policy and is therefore discretionary.

2.4 The change to the way the HTST policy was applied only affects new pupils so that those children currently receiving discretionary support under the old arrangements will continue to do so until their circumstances change (e.g change of school or home address).

2.5 Concerns were expressed by three headteachers, (Chailey, Heathfield and Willingdon) that the number of preferences for these schools would be affected in that parents would decide not to apply if the discretionary home to school transport for shared areas was withdrawn, but that the effects would not be seen until applications were made for transfer from primary to secondary school in September 2015.

2.6 It was therefore decided to undertake a review of preferences and report back to the Lead Member with a focus on the three schools in question. At Chailey and Heathfield, the number of stated first preferences has fallen slightly. However, the overall number of preferences for these two schools has risen slightly when comparing 2013 to 2015 (old transport arrangements versus new).

2.7 At Willingdon, the number of **first preferences** for the school (including late applications) from 2010 onwards are as follows:- 226 (2010), 158 (2011), 198 (2012), 191 (2013), 215 (2014) and 162 (2015). The 2011 cohort was smaller than other year groups. The intake for 2015 will be lower than the published number of 200 which will impact on the schools budget.

2.8 Again, comparing 2013 to 2015 (pre and post policy change) the numbers of preferences for several schools in the Eastbourne area have fallen. There has, however, been a marked increase at The Eastbourne Academy. This is likely to be due to a new well designed building, closer links with primary schools in the area and rising results. In addition, Gildredge House opened in September 2014 providing an additional 120 places in the area. The schools that felt the effect of this most were The Cavendish and Ratton. Willingdon's overall numbers rose in 2014 and fell back in 2015. It is not possible to say with any certainty whether this fluctuation is a direct result of the additional numbers of places provided by Gildredge House (and this school's rise in popularity evidenced by the increase in the number of their preferences), or the change in the implementation of the transport policy, or both. If transport was the sole reason for the fall in preferences for Willingdon, it could have been expected that the numbers at The Causeway would rise, being the nearest designated school in the area it shares with Willingdon. That has not happened which seems to suggest that parents will consider a variety of factors (not just free transport) when deciding on a school for their child. Preference levels vary from year to year too.

2.9 Preference data for Year 7 places for all secondary schools in East Sussex for entry in September 2013, 2014 and 2015 are shown as **Appendix 3**. Schools that serve shared areas are in red.

3. Equalities considerations

3.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out during the consultation in September/October 2013.

4. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

4.1 The County Council has statutory obligations to provide free home to school transport for qualifying children. However, in East Sussex the policy has been interpreted more generously to provide discretionary transport to children who are not entitled for that support under the current policy or legislative requirements. The County Council is no longer in a position to provide free transport to children who do not have a statutory entitlement.

4.2 From the information set out above it is not possible to say with any certainty the cause of the significant reduction of first preferences for Willingdon in 2015 and is likely to be a combination of factors. However given the savings that have emerged and the need to identify yet more savings from the HTST budget over the next three years it is recommended that the HTST policy is applied as written to ensure that children living within shared community areas

are only provided with free transport to their nearest designated school, provided the eligibility criteria are met.

4.3 It is further recommended that the Local Authority's efforts should be directed towards supporting schools to explore alternative transport options where there are gaps in public transport provision.

STUART GALLIMORE
Director of Children's Services

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Local Members: All

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – East Sussex Home to school transport policy

Appendix 2 – Community areas in East Sussex

Appendix 3 – Preference data for Year 7 places in 2013, 2014 and 2015

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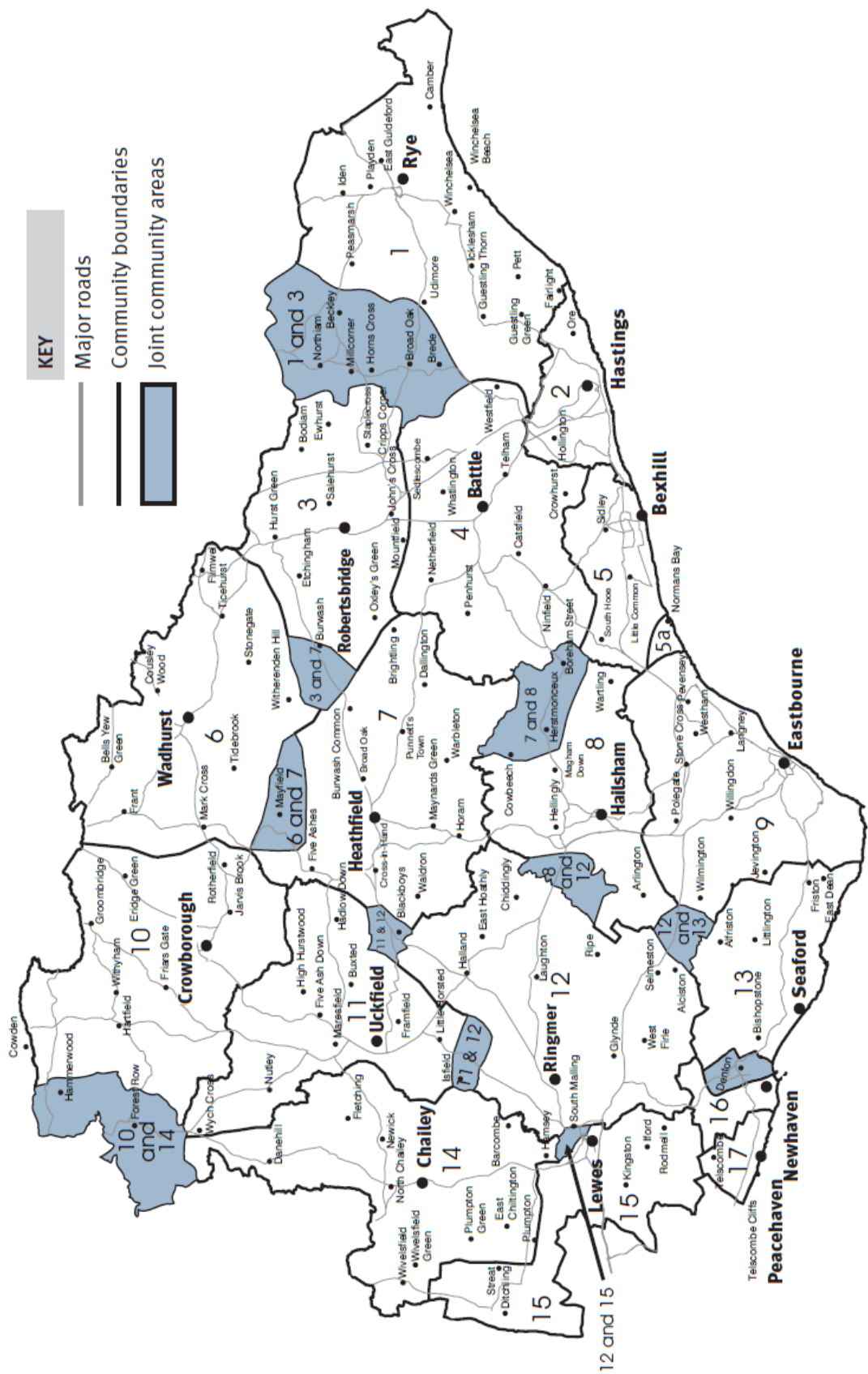
Appendix 1

East Sussex policy regarding home to school transport for children living in joint community areas

‘We will provide free transport between home and school if your child is eight years of age or over and lives more than three miles (4828 metres) from the designated* school,.....

**The designated school is the school suitable to your child’s age which serves your area, or if there is more than one school, the nearest school to your home which is suitable for your child and at which a place is available.’*

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Appendix 3

This shows the number of preferences received by the closing date for 2013, 2014 & 2015 entry. First preferences are shown in brackets and 'L' indicates late preferences. Schools serving shared community areas are in red. The numbers above the school name correspond to the community areas shown on the map in Appendix 2 although some school's individual arrangements may serve different areas and area 9 – Eastbourne, the community area has been sub-divided.

School		2013/14	Difference in 1 st preferences between 13/14 & 14/15 inc lates	2014/15	Difference in 1 st preferences between 14/15 & 15/16 inc lates	2015/16
	PAN	PREFS (1 st)		PREFS (1 st)		PREFS (1 st)
(9) BISHOP BELL	208	305+20L (180+10L)	+30 / +15.8%	360+7L (213+7L)	-18 / -8.2%	297+21L (186+16L)
(9) THE CAVENDISH	175 (200 in 13/14 & 14/15)	344+24L (150+14L)	-48 / -29.3%	321+26L (106+10L)	+2 / +1.7%	333+15L (113+5L)
(9) EASTBOURNE ACADEMY	180	127+15L (85+9L)	+28 / +22.9%	172+13L (113+9L)	+12 / +9.8%	166+23L (115+19L)
(9) RATTON	243	514+30L (265+13L)	-78 / -28.1%	487+19L (194+6L)	-10 / -5.0%	478+13L (184+6L)
(5a and 9) WILLINGDON	200	279+16L (179+12L)	+24 / +12.6%	337+10L (209+6L)	-53 / -24.6%	294+10L (156+6L)
(9) THE CAUSEWAY	189	190+16L (106+11L)	+4 / +3.4%	230+6L (118+3L)	-19 / -15.7%	168+16L (92+10L)
(9) GILDREDGE HOUSE	120	N/A	N/A	256+7L (150+6L)	+39 / +25.0%	307+11L (188+7L)
(14) CHAILEY	162	201+12L (111+9L)	+14 / +11.7%	249+6L (128+6L)	-16 / -11.9%	245+9L (112+6L)
(8) HAILSHAM	240	159+17L (141+15L)	+16 / +10.2%	190+11L (161+11L)	+8 / +4.6%	201+8L (172+8L)
(15) PRIORY	232	367+19L (232+12L)	+40 / +16.4%	477+11L (277+7L)	-13 / -4.6%	414+13L (261+10L)

(12) RINGMER	150	161+17L (100+13L)	+11 / +9.7%	234+9L (118+6L)	-29 / -23.4%	157+13L (85+10L)
(16/17) SEAHAVEN ACADEMY (Previously TIDEWAY)	150	109+19L (63+15L)	+7 / +9.0%	131+9L (77+8L)	+8 / +9.4%	136+12L (84+9L)
(13) SEAFORD HEAD	240	203+36L (160+33L)	+20 / +10.4%	248+16L (201+12L)	+38 / +17.8%	307+9L (242+9L)
(11) UCKFIELD	270	268+35L (227+25L)	+19 / +7.5%	341+16L (257+14L)	+19 / +7.0%	346+11L (281+9L)
(10) BEACON	280	252+13L (189)	+11 / +5.8%	276+6L (195+5L)	-27 / -13.5%	248+7L (167+6L)
(7) HEATHFIELD	240	261+4L (202)	-7 / -3.5%	254+8L (190+5L)	-2 / -1.0%	262+12L (183+10L)
(3) ROBERTSBRIDGE	130	233+9L (118)	+0 / +0.0%	255+7L (114+4L)	+19 / +16.1%	285+17L (127+10L)
(1) RYE COLLEGE	151	191+13L (118)	-8 / -6.8%	208+6L (106+4L)	+8 / +7.3%	200+7L (111+7L)
(6) UPLANDS	168	251+4L (138)	+0 / +0.0%	285+3L (135+3L)	+13 / +9.4%	286+8L (148+3L)
(17) PEACEHAVEN	180	221+7L (179+2L)	-3 / -1.7%	220+20L (162+16L)	+6 / +3.4%	244+10L (176+8L)
(2) HASTINGS ACADEMY	180	182+15L (144)	+40 / +27.8%	223+21L (166+18L)	+3 / +1.6%	230+21L (168+19L)
(2) HELENSWOOD	216	212+11L (161)	-44 / -27.3%	178+7L (115+2)	+12 / +10.2%	188+12L (120+9L)
(2) TSLA	300	265+21L (196)	+18 / +9.2%	280+29L (192+22L)	+27 / +12.6%	304+37L (209+32L)
(2) ARK WILLIAM PARKER	240	177+6L (128)	-18 / -14.1%	170+13L (102+8L)	-4 / -3.6%	143+16L (95+11L)
(5 and 5a) BEXHILL HIGH	330	182+24L (128)	+33 / +25.8%	184+15L (147+14L)	-12 / -7.5%	165+28L (124+25L)

(5) ST RICHARDS	200	252+2L (188)	+56 / +29.8%	322+11L (237+7L)	+3 / +1.2%	308+9L (244+3L)
(4) CLAVERHAM	230 (224 in 13/14 & 14/15)	435+7L (289)	+16 / +5.5%	499+8L (300+5L)	-5 / -1.6%	492+19L (289+11L)

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Report to: **Lead Members for Learning and School Effectiveness**

Date: **8 June 2015**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **Hastings Academy Trust: Process to end sponsorship**

Purpose of report: **To provide the Lead Member with information to support a decision to withdraw from the sponsorship of Hastings Academy Trust**

RECOMMENDATION

To seek approval for East Sussex County Council to withdraw from the sponsorship of Hastings Academy Trust

1 Background

1.1 The Hastings Academies Trust was formed in 2011 to sponsor two secondary academies in Hastings and St Leonards.

The Trust's sponsors are:

- The University of Brighton
- BT
- East Sussex County Council

1.2 The Hastings Academy and The St Leonards Academy have been in operation since September 2011. The Local Authority (LA) had a leading role in the creation of the Trust and development of the first two academies.

1.3 The LA in its role as a Trust member has supported the two secondary academies in their journey to 'Good' Ofsted judgements and the extension of the Trust to include seven local primary schools. Dudley Infant Academy, West St Leonards Academy and The Baird Primary Academy joined the Trust during the 2013-14 year, whilst Churchwood Primary Academy, Hollington Primary Academy and Robsack Wood Primary Academy joined the Trust in September 2014. Silverdale Primary Academy recently joined in February 2015.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The education landscape has changed significantly since the Trust was created and the New Academies Act in 2010 provided the opportunity for all schools to convert to academy status. Local Authorities are now not permitted to sponsor new academies. This has led the LA to review its role as a sponsor and it has reached the view that acting as a sponsor creates an unhelpful distinction in its relationship with the academies it sponsors and those that it does not sponsor. The Local Authority has a responsibility to champion educational excellence across all its schools and is committed to working with them irrespective of their status.

2.2 The decision to withdraw from the Hastings Academy Trust has been taken at the same time that the University of Brighton, as the main sponsor, has also reconsidered its role and agrees now is the right time to consider changing the sponsorship arrangement. The University now has broader ambitions across Sussex and is seeking more involvement in the Trust.

2.3 The LA will continue to work with schools in the Hastings Academy Trust in order to support their shared ambition for educational excellence and remains committed to supporting

them to achieve this. We will continue to work closely with the Academy Trust and support further improvements and any necessary expansion to accommodate more pupils if required.

2.4 The LA's role as a sponsor for other academies will also be reviewed going forwards and this will be done at a time that is appropriate to the situation for each academy trust.

2.5 The LA will need to give one year's notice of resigning from Hastings Academy Trust, which means that the resignation will take effect from July 2016.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 The Lead Member should approve the decision for East Sussex County Council to resign as a sponsor from the Hastings Academy Trust as continued sponsorship creates an unhelpful distinction between the academies it does sponsor and those it does not. The Local Authority has a responsibility to champion educational excellence across all its schools and is committed to working with them irrespective of their status.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

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Cllr Michael Wincott
Cllr Godfrey Daniel
Cllr Trevor Webb
Cllr Phil Scott
Cllr Kim Forward
Cllr John Hodges