

Report to: Transport and Student Support Panel

Date of meeting: 21 March 2017

By: Director of Children's Services

Title: Changes to the operation of the Transport and Student Support Panel

Purpose: To recommend to Governance Committee to amend the Terms of Reference for the Transport and Student Support Panel and agree a name to reflect its modified purpose

RECOMMENDATION

The Panel recommends that Governance Committee resolves to:

- 1) Agree to the amended Terms of Reference as set out in Appendix 1
 - 2) Agree that the Panel formally changes its name to Discretionary Transport Appeal Panel
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1 Background

1.1 The Transport and Student Support Panel was created when the school transport panel merged with the awards panel. Its purpose is to determine travel arrangements (under discretionary powers) for children who are not otherwise eligible and to award financial payments to further and higher education students to assist them with their studies.

1.2 The further education and higher education landscape has changed significantly in recent years. Higher education loans and grants are now administered by Student Finance England (formerly Student Loan Company) and financial support to further education students is dealt with by the education provider through Bursary Schemes. These superseded Education Maintenance Allowances (EMA) which were phased out in 2012.

1.3 The 'student support' function of the panel is therefore obsolete and there is the need to amend the terms of reference.

1.4 There remains the need to have in place a review/appeals procedure for parents to follow should they have a disagreement about the eligibility of their child for travel support.

1.5 The Transport and Student Support Panel is constituted for this purpose. However, its name is ambiguous. Members have also recently expressed a wish to rename this Panel to make it clearer for parents.

1.6 It is therefore proposed to change the name to the Discretionary Transport Appeal Panel.

2. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

2.1 It is recommended that the Panel recommends to the Governance Committee that it resolve to adopt the amended terms of reference to reflect the current and ongoing role of the Panel.

2.2 It is also recommended that the Panel recommends to the Governance Committee that it resolve to rename the Transport and Student Support Panel to Discretionary Transport Appeal Panel. This will better reflect the Panel's purpose and make clearer to parents that they are in an appeals process.

2.3 If approved, a report will be submitted to the Governance Committee.

STUART GALLIMORE
Director of Children's Services

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Terms of reference

Current

Transport and Student Support Panel

Terms of Reference

(i) To exercise the powers and duties of the County Council in relation to (i) the provision or payment of boarding and tuition allowances for individual pupils and (ii) awards to individual students for further and higher education, in both instances where the Director of Children's Services refers the case to the Panel for resolution rather than dealing with it under their delegated powers.

(ii) To consider individual cases and make arrangements on behalf of the County Council to pay for or provide transport to and from school for pupils whom the Director of Children's Services does not consider to qualify either statutorily or under the normal policy of the County Council for such transport.

Membership

Three members of the Regulatory Committee.

Proposed

Discretionary Transport Appeal Panel

Terms of Reference

(i) To consider individual cases and make arrangements on behalf of the County Council to pay for or provide transport to and from an education provider for pupils and students and whom the Director of Children's Services does not consider to qualify either statutorily or under the normal policy of the County Council for such transport.

Membership

Three members of the Regulatory Committee.