

Report to: Governance Committee

Date of meeting: 27 June 2017

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: Amendment to the Constitution: Transport and Student Support Panel

Purpose: To consider proposals to amend the Council's Constitution.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Governance Committee is recommended to recommend the County Council to agree to the Constitution being amended as set out in paragraph 1.6 below.

Supporting Information

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 These superseded Education Maintenance Allowances (EMA) which were phased out in 2012.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 to reflect this.

1.4 There remains the need to have in place a review/appeals procedure for parents/carers 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 and the Panel has expressed a wish to rename this Panel to make its role clearer for parents.

1.6 It is therefore proposed to change the name of the Panel to the Discretionary Transport Appeal Panel. The proposed changes to the Constitution are set out below:

Discretionary Transport Appeal 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 an education provider school for pupils and students 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.

2. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

2.1 In March 2017 the Panel agreed the proposals set out above in order to reflect the current role of the Panel and to make it clearer that the Panel's role is part of the appeals process.

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