

Title of report: **Changes to school transport policies**

Purpose of report: **To update the Panel on changes to school transport policies and seek agreement on the wording that allows appellants to make their request for verbal representations to DTAP.**

RECOMMENDATION

Agree to the proposed wording set out in Annex 1 of this document

1 Background

1.1 On 13 September 2021, the Lead Member for EISEND considered a report on changes to the council's transport policies for mainstream children of compulsory school age and policies of support for sixth formers and adult learners with SEND. The report can be found at [HTST Reportv final.pdf \(eastsussex.gov.uk\)](#). The Lead Member RESOLVED to approve the proposed amendments.

1.2 The main changes relate to:

- adopting a two-stage appeal process for all age groups; and
- allowing verbal representations at stage 2 appeal hearings.

Although the opportunity was taken to improve readability and accessibility when accessing the policies online eg for users of screen reader technology.

1.3 Allowing verbal representations at stage 2 appeal hearings has been the subject of review following criticisms of our process. During the period of the review, appellants have been invited to set out any reasons why they think they would be significantly disadvantaged in the bringing their appeal by not being able to make verbal representations to DTAP.

1.4 Moving forward, the intention is to add a new section to the stage 2 appeal form in order to consider an appellant request to make verbal representations. A senior officer will decide if the reasons are adequate.

2. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

2.1 It is recommended to adopt the proposed wording on the stage 2 appeals form as set out in **Annex 1** so as to allow appellants to set out why they consider they would be significantly disadvantaged in bringing their appeal without verbal representations.

Contact

Ian Crudge, Principal Admissions and Transport Officer
Email: ian.crudge@eastsussex.gov.uk

Annex 1 – proposed wording for the stage 2 appeal form

6. Attending an appeal hearing:

It is not usually possible for students/parents/carers to attend Appeal Panel meetings in person. It may be possible to provide verbal representations at the meeting in exceptional circumstances where a student/parent/carer would face significant disadvantage in making their appeal without this. Examples of significant disadvantage could include having a relevant disability such as severe dyslexia or a learning difficulty that makes written communication difficult and where it has not been possible to access support to set out in writing the reason for appeal.

It is expected that the verbal representation will be made via a telephone call or video call for a fixed duration at the start of the Appeal Panel hearing.

The Appeal Panel may have questions during a hearing and in that situation, they may ask for the supporting officer to seek clarification by making a telephone call to the parent/carer.

I would like to make a verbal representation at the meeting because I think we would be disadvantaged otherwise.

Please provide reasons:

I would like someone to else to make the verbal representation on my behalf.

Provide details on who you would like to represent you and why:

I require an interpreter.

Provide details on your requirements: