

## Scrutiny Board comments and response

### Discretionary Transport Scrutiny Review Board – 15 October 2015

#### 1. SCRUTINY REVIEW BOARD MEETING

- 1.1 At its meeting on 21 September 2015, the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee appointed a Review Board to consider proposed savings on the following two areas of discretionary spend on Home To School Transport:
- Travel support for post-16 students from Low Income Families (LIF) and FE link transport; and
  - Travel support for students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- 1.2 A summary of the key points made by the Board at its meeting on 15 October 2015 are set out below.

#### 2. REVIEW BOARD COMMENTS WITH RESPONSE

No.	Comment	Response
1	The Board were presented with a table setting out a number of potential risks, impacts and mitigations. One potential risk which the Board discussed in detail was the outcome that the proposed savings may deter students with SEND from continuing in Post-16 education. The Board felt that the mitigation to this risk did not produce a significant reduction and therefore asked whether further consideration could be given to how this risk might be reduced further and if not, whether the risk was worth taking.	<p>The Board were considering the original risk table presented as an Appendix for the report to Led Member on 8 June. Since that time and over the consultation period, the level of perceived risk following mitigation has been reduced from 4 x 4 (impact x likelihood) to 4 x 3 in <b>Appendix 9</b> to reflect the fact that the mitigations are now considered to be more effective, particularly as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-16 providers will have access to EFA bursary funding which can be used to support SEND students who no longer meet the SEND transport criteria</li> <li>• ESCC is developing a post-16 policy to inform work with families of post-16 children with SEND, which will help to manage expectations around a young person's educational pathway. This is likely to reduce the number of SEND transport applications which are submitted and/or rejected.</li> </ul> <p>It should also be noted that the risk measure methodology is not a scientific measure and is not for example take into account the numbers of young people likely to be impacted. There is still a risk that some CYP may be affected, however we hope that these numbers will be low.</p>
2	The Board asked whether consideration could be given to increasing the Post 16 SEND	The amount suggested for the higher rate was £750. A calculation shown in <b>Appendix 1</b>

No.	Comment	Response
	<p>transport contribution to an amount higher than the one set out in the proposals. This increased contribution could be used to lower the proposed introduction of a 50% rate of contribution to low income families who have post 16 children with SEND.</p>	<p>section 6 demonstrated that an increase to £750 would mean that low income families would need to be charged a reduced rate of £271 per year (to the nearest pound).</p> <p>It is recommended that this increase / decrease is not taken forward as it would negatively impact on the 'squeezed middle' who may only have a household income slightly higher than £17k/year. Also, £608 has been suggested as it is the same cost as a Freedom bus pass and is therefore easier to explain to families.</p>
3	<p>One risk identified in the papers before the Board related to 'Charges impact on families with pre-school children with SEND'. The associated impact states, 'Some families do not take up placements due to cost (£608 or £304 per year).' The Board asked the Department to give further consideration to the potential impact of this risk and in particular the impact this might have on the key goal of school readiness.</p>	<p>It is very difficult to assess the impact on the very small number (8-10 per year) of pre-school children offered special transport of the introduction of the charge as we do not currently assess for low income. A key mitigation is to improve signposting towards additional benefits, such as DLA for the child, and this key mitigation is now listed in the Equality Impact Assessment. Most of these children are extremely high needs and the practitioners who work with them advise them to apply for transport only when there is no other option for getting the child to nursery.</p>