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# **Executive Decision SEND Transport**

**Children and young people with SEND  
Home to School / College Transport  
Proposed Policies  
2025/2026 – 2027/2028**

**DRAFT Decision Report**

Lead Member Briefing

Decision to be taken by: Cllr Pantling

Decision to be taken on: TBC

Lead director: Sophie Maltby, Director SEND and Education

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**Will need to be filled in for Governance Services to proceed with publishing the decision. DO NOT DELETE. Governance Services will delete once they are satisfied due diligence has been done and the report is ready to publish.**

If this is a key decision has it appeared on the published forward plan	Yes
Anticipated date for decision (if required)	25 March 2025 (once scrutiny process concluded)
Date of relevant scrutiny commission – please detail name of commission(s)	Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee 25 February 2025
Date of paperwork entering public domain (note: if considered by scrutiny, this will be the scrutiny agenda publication date)	17 February 2025
Media considerations: Is a press release required? Will this be proactive or reactive?	Press release required. Proactive.
Please include details of other relevant meetings/briefings as part of decision/consultation process: This should include details of discussions with relevant stakeholders and/or ward councillors.	

## Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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- Report version number: 0.12

## 1 Summary

- 1.1 The Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for education is invited to approve two documents: (1) the Council's Updated Proposed SEND Home to School and College Travel Policy ("SEND Travel Policy") Appendix 1 for the academic years 2025-2026, and (2) the Council's Updated Proposed Post-16 Transport Policy Statement ("Post-16 Statement") for the academic year 2025-2026 (Appendix 2). The Assistant City Mayor is also invited to note that the Council's Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy ("Mainstream Policy") for the academic year 2021-2022 (Appendix 3) will continue in force.
- 1.2 The documents set out the approach that the Council would adopt during the 2025-2026 academic year to the provision of transport assistance to certain individuals who attend schools, colleges or certain other institutions:
- (1) children – i.e. children who are not yet of compulsory school age or who are of compulsory school age (broadly-speaking, children aged up to 16);
  - (2) young people – i.e. individuals who are of sixth form age (broadly-speaking, individuals aged between 16 and 18 and those aged 19 or over who are continuing on a course which they started before they turned 19);
  - (3) adults – i.e. individuals who are aged 18 or over, other than young people. This group includes young adults aged between 19 and 25 with special educational needs and disabilities ("SEND") who have an Education Health and Care Plan ("an EHCP").
- 1.3 If approved, the documents would provide for a significant change to the extent to which, and the way in which, the Council provides transport assistance to young people and young adults who have SEND.
- 1.4 In this report, the phrase "transport assistance" includes actual transport (e.g. a taxi or a seat on a dedicated bus) and financial support for transport (i.e. a financial contribution towards the cost of transport by way of a personal transport budget ("a PTB")).
- 1.5 Under the current SEND Travel Policy (Appendix 4) and the current Post-16 Statement (Appendix 5), the provision for transport assistance that is currently made by the Council in practice is, generally in the 2024-2025 academic year, as follows:
- (1) A council funded, internally provided bus journey. 574 all age passengers, 100 of those being young people and adults. Average bus route 16 miles within the City.
  - (2) A council, funded, internally arranged taxi journey. 814 all age passengers, 112 of those being young people and adults. These often travel much further distances (the furthest being 57 miles one way).
  - (3) Parents / Carers can elect to receive a PTB. A £500 annual payment and 45p/mile for 4 journeys per day. 211 all age passengers, 39 of those being young people and adults
- 1.6 As explained below, it is considered that it is no longer financially sustainable to maintain this level of provision, that it is necessary to find significant savings in the home-to-school/college transport

budget, and that it is therefore necessary significantly to reduce the nature and extent of the transport assistance provided to young people and young adults with SEND.

- 1.7 As a result, it is proposed that, during the 2025-2026 academic year (and potentially thereafter), generally young people and young adults with SEND would *not* be provided with any transport assistance, save in certain limited cases and where exceptional circumstances apply. Further, where transport assistance is provided, it would be provided in the form of a PTB only; the Council would no longer provide transport itself. It is considered that, in the circumstances facing the Council, this is the nature and extent of the provision for transport assistance that it is necessary for the Council to make.
- 1.8 It is recognised that the proposed changes are likely to be significantly disadvantageous for affected young people and young adults (and their families), and it is estimated that approximately 350 (and potentially up to 450) young people and young adults with SEND (and their families) are likely to be affected. The likely disadvantageous consequences of the proposed changes were reflected in the responses to the consultation on the proposed new SEND Travel Policy and Post-16 Statement, all of which opposed the changes.
- 1.9 Two potential alternative approaches are canvassed in section 4.8 below.
- 1.10 There is a statutory duty to publish the SEND Travel Policy and the Post-16 Statement on or before 31 May 2025. Accordingly, a decision as to what form the documents should take needs to be taken in good time to meet that deadline.

## **2 Recommended actions/decision**

- 2.1 The Assistant City Mayor is asked to consider the matters set out in this report and the Appendices. For the reasons set out, it is recommended that the Assistant City Mayor should:
  - (1) approve the SEND Travel Policy for the academic years 2025-2026 as set out in Appendix 1;
  - (2) approve the Post-16 Statement for the academic year 2025-2026 as set out in Appendix 2; and
  - (3) note that the Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy 2021-2022, as set out in Appendix 3, will continue in force.
- 2.2 By adopting the recommended policies, generally young people and young adults with SEND would *not* be provided with any transport assistance, save in certain limited cases and where exceptional circumstances apply. Further, where transport assistance is provided, it would be provided in the form of a PTB only; the Council would no longer provide transport itself.

## **3 Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement**

- 3.1 A citywide consultation was undertaken for eight weeks between 7 November 2024 and 2 January 2025, on citizen space. The Parent Carer Forum and a Parent Focus Group helped develop the consultation questions to support accessibility.
- 3.2 Consultation questions were shared with the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee for information, and extensive stakeholder engagement was implemented in line with

a communications plan (set out in Appendix 6). The information provided to consultees and the consultation questions are set out in Appendix 7.

3.3 The Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Committee intends to scrutinise this matter on 25 February 2025.

## 4 Background and options with supporting evidence

### 4.1 The legislative background

4.1.1 The main relevant duties on the Council are provided for by the Education Act 1996 (“the Act”). In broad terms, the relevant duties are as follows.

4.1.2 Under s 15ZA of the Act, the Council is under a duty to secure that enough suitable education and training is provided to meet the reasonable needs of: (1) persons in its area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 (i.e. in effect, young people), and (2) persons in its area who are aged 19 or over and for whom an EHCP is maintained (i.e. in effect, young adults with SEND).

4.1.3 The Council’s duties in relation to children of compulsory school age are provided for by s 508B of and Schedule 35B to the Act, which impose a duty to make home-to-school travel arrangements for certain “eligible children”, including certain children with SEND, free of charge.

4.1.4 For completeness, it should be noted that, under s 508A of the Act, the Council has a discretionary power to make school travel arrangements in relation to a child who is not an eligible child.

4.1.5 In relation to young people (see paragraph 1.2(2) above), under ss 509AA and 509AB of the Act, the Council has a duty to prepare and publish for each academic year a transport policy statement which specifies the arrangements for the provision of transport or otherwise, and for the provision of financial assistance, that the Council considers it necessary to make for facilitating the attendance of young people who are receiving education or training at: schools, an institution maintained by the Council which provides further or higher education, any further education institution, any 16-19 academy, or any other establishment at which the Council secures the provision of education or training under s 15ZA (together, “relevant institutions”). The transport policy statement must state the extent to which the arrangements specified in it include arrangements for facilitating the attendance at relevant institutions of disabled persons and persons with learning difficulties or disabilities (in effect, young people with SEND). As explained below, in this context, the key question that the Assistant City Mayor should consider is, in essence, what provision for transport assistance for young people c.

4.1.6 When considering this key question, the Assistant City Mayor must have regard to (amongst other things):

- (1) the needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to attend a particular establishment to receive education or training if no arrangements were made;
- (2) the need to secure that persons in Leicester have reasonable opportunities to choose between different establishments at which education or training is provided;
- (3) the requirements of s 15AZ in relation to persons of sixth form age;
- (4) the distances and journey times between the homes of persons of sixth form age in Leicester and relevant institutions at which education or training suitable to their needs is provided;
- (5) the cost of transport to the relevant institutions and of any alternative means of facilitating the attendance of persons receiving education or training at them;
- (6) the guidance issued by the Secretary of State (see Appendix 8).

Further guidance on certain of these matters is set out in paragraph 9 of the Secretary of State's guidance.

- 4.1.7 It is also necessary to consider the fact that, in considering whether or not it is necessary to make arrangements in relation to a particular young person or persons, the Council must have regard (amongst other things) to: (a) the nature of the route (or alternative routes) which the young person could reasonably be expected to take; and (b) any wish of the young person to attend a particular relevant institution on grounds of his or her religion or belief.
- 4.1.8 The Council is required to put into effect the arrangements specified in its transport policy statement for persons of sixth form age under s 509AA.
- 4.1.9 The Secretary of State's guidance explains that the overall intention of the duties in relation to young adults is to ensure that persons of sixth form age are able to access the education and training of their choice and, if support for access is requested, it will be assessed and provided where necessary (see para 6).
- 4.1.10 In relation to adults, under ss 508F and 508G of the Act, the Council has a duty to make such arrangements for the provision of transport and otherwise as it considers necessary for the purposes of:
- (1) facilitating the attendance of adults (including young adults with EHCPs) receiving education at institutions which are maintained or assisted by the Council and which provide further or higher education, or at institutions in the further education sector; and
  - (2) facilitating the attendance of young adults with EHCPs receiving education or training at institutions outside the further and higher education sector in cases in which the Council has secured the relevant education or training and the provision of boarding accommodation.
- 4.1.11 Any transport provided pursuant to such arrangements must be provided free of charge.
- 4.1.12 In considering what arrangements it is necessary to make for young adults with EHCPs, the Assistant City Mayor must have regard (amongst other things) to what the Council is required to do under s 15ZA in relation to such young adults. It is also necessary to consider the fact that, in considering whether or not it is necessary to make arrangements in relation to a particular adult, the Council must have regard (amongst other things) to the nature of the route (or alternative routes) which the person could reasonably be expected to take
- 4.1.13 In addition, the Council has a discretionary power to pay all or part of the reasonable travelling expenses of a young adult who receives education at a relevant institution but for whom no transport arrangements are made. The Council has a duty to prepare and publish for each academic year a transport policy statement which specifies the transport or other arrangements which will be made, and the travelling expenses which be paid, in relation to that year.
- 4.1.14 As explained below, in this context, the key question that the Assistant City Mayor should consider is, in essence, what provision for transport for young adults it is necessary or appropriate to make.
- 4.1.15 When deciding on what arrangements should be made, and on the contents of a transport policy statement, the Assistant City Mayor must have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State (see Appendix 8). The Secretary of State's guidance explains that the overall intention of the duties in relation adults is to ensure that those with the most severe disabilities with no other means of transportation are able to undertake further education and training after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday, in order to help them move towards more independent living (see para 11).
- 4.1.16 The functions referred to above should be exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children (see s 175 of the Education Act 2002).

4.1.17 In accordance with section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the Council must “have due regard”, when making decisions, to the need to meet the following aims of our Public Sector Equality Duty

- (a) eliminate unlawful discrimination;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not;
- (c) foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

4.1.1. The Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 10) surrounding this decision commenced on 28 June 2024. The rights of those with protected characteristics has been considered throughout every stage, including pre-consultation and during the drafting of the proposed policies.

4.1.2. Protected groups under the public sector equality duty are characterised by age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

4.1.3. When making decisions, the Council (or decision maker, in this instance the Lead Member) must be clear about any equalities implications of the course of action proposed. In doing so, it must consider the likely impact on those likely to be affected by the recommendation; their protected characteristics; and (where negative impacts are anticipated) mitigating actions that can be taken to reduce or remove that negative impact.

4.1.4. As further reflected in the Equalities Impact Assessment, the council understands the current climate and the impact on young people with SEND. It remains in the best interests of all who can travel independently to learn to do so, and that synchronises with the Preparing for Adulthood Strategy.

## 4.2 Current transport and travel support for young people and young adults with SEND

4.2.1 The Council's current approach to the provision of transport and travel support, and the transport policy statements required by the Act, are set out in three documents:

- the Mainstream Policy for the academic year 2021/2022 (Appendix 1),
- the SEND Travel Policy for the academic year 2021/2022 (Appendix 4), and
- the Post-16 Statement for the academic year 2024/2025 (Appendix 5).

4.2.2 In relation to children of compulsory school age who do not have SEND, the Mainstream Policy sets out what the Council provides by way of travel assistance. Under that policy, eligible children are provided with bus passes at no cost to them or their families. This is supported by the [‘Choose how you move’](#) travel planning resources.

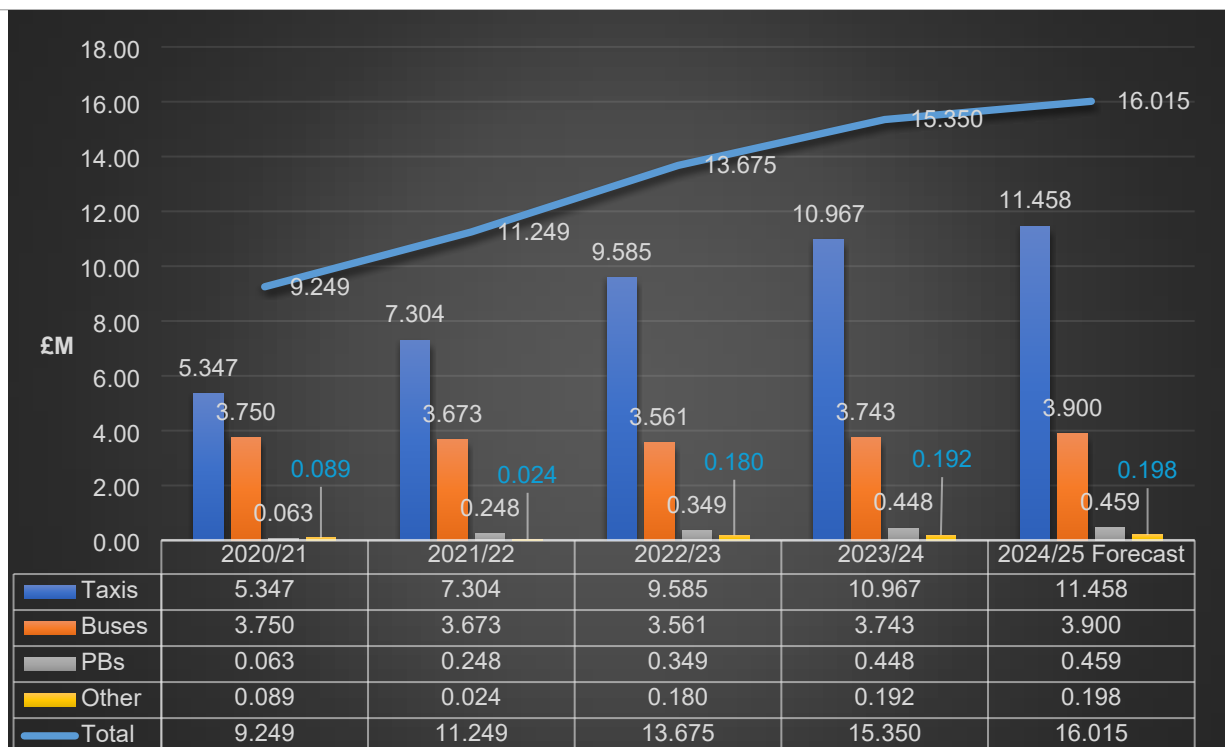
4.2.3 In relation to children of compulsory school age who have SEND, the Council's current approach is set out in the SEND Travel Policy for the academic year 2021-2022 (which has been rolled over to the current academic year) and involves an analysis of individual needs to decide what transport assistance should be provided. Such transport assistance might for example take the form of the provision of a bus pass, a taxi, a seat on a dedicated bus (which might be specially adapted), or the provision of a PTB. A PTB is a cash payment to a parent or carer comprising a fixed sum of £500 per annum plus a rate of 45 pence per mile, on the basis of four journeys (i.e. two journeys each way to and from school) per day.

- 4.2.4 The SEND Travel Policy for the academic year 2021-2022 also sets out the provision that will be made for young persons with SEND (see pages 7-9) and the provision that will be made for young adults with SEND (see page 9).
- 4.2.5 In relation to young persons with SEND, the SEND Travel Policy explains that the Council may provide travel assistance to a young person who (a) is resident in Leicester, (b) started his or her course prior to his or her 19th birthday, (c) attends the nearest appropriate institution, (d) attends an institution which is more than 3 miles' walking distance from the young person's home (unless the route is unsafe or the young person has a disability which impacts on his or her ability to walk it), and (e) attends a full-time, publicly-funded course. The SEND Travel Policy also specifies certain factors which the Council takes into account when assessing whether a young person is eligible for travel assistance: (a) whether the young person has additional needs or a disability which gives rise to a serious risk of danger to the young person or others, (b) whether the young person has a mobility difficulty which requires specialised facilities (such as a wheelchair-accessible vehicle), (c) whether the young person might require medical or personal care during the journey, (d) the complexity of the journey, and (e) whether travel is an essential requirement to fulfil the learning outcomes identified in the young person's EHC Plan.
- 4.2.6 In practice, this means that young persons with SEND receive the same support as section 4.2.3.
- 4.2.7 In relation to young adults with SEND, the SEND Travel Policy explains that the Council will consider providing travel assistance for young adults with SEND only where: (a) the Council considers it necessary to facilitate the attendance of a young adult at an institution which provides further education and which is maintained or assisted by a local authority, or other institutions within the further education sector; or (b) where the Council has secured the provision of education or training outside the further education sector and the provision of boarding accommodation in connection with that education or training, and the Council considers that the provision of travel assistance is necessary to facilitate the learner's attendance.
- 4.2.8 The Post-16 Statement for the 2024-2025 academic year states as follows (see page 10):  
"For those young people with special educational needs, who have an ECHP, which indicates a transport need, they will continue to receive assistance with transport between the ages of 16 and 25. The local authority has a discretionary power to provide transport assistance to those over compulsory school age."
- 4.2.9 In practice, young adults with SEND receive the same support as compulsory school age children with SEND in section 4.2.3.
- 4.2.10 The recommended policies don't make any changes to the provision for transport assistance which is made for children or young people of compulsory schools age who do not have SEND.
- 4.2.11 The recommended policies do mean that young adults with SEND would be treated the same as young adults of post 16 education age, namely they would be impacted by the change to reduce transport assistance available to them.

### 4.3 The cost of current and future travel assistance

- 4.3.1 Over recent years, the total cost to the Council of providing transport assistance to all children, young people and young adults with SEND has grown year-on-year, as illustrated by the following chart.





4.3.2 The cost for post-16 the 2023-2024 financial year was in the region of £1.94 million (approximately 13% of the total), and the cost for the current financial year is projected to be in the region of £2.34 million (approximately 15% of the total), an increase of £400,000 (approximately 21%).

4.3.3 It should be noted that the projected cost for the current academic year is substantially below that which was originally projected; in January 2024, it was projected that the cost for the current year would be in the region of £4 million. It is understood that the difference between the original and the current projected costs is attributable to: (a) a reduction in the costs of taxis that resulted from a new procurement exercise and a contract re-design; (b) a fall in applications for transport assistance, which might have been caused by confusion over who would be eligible for transport assistance; (c) improvements in the processing of applications and appeals; and (d) improvements in the quality of the data. However, it is not expected that any similar diminution in projected costs will or could be achieved in future years.

4.3.4 Due to the changes in projections consultees may have been provided with what are now thought to be overly pessimistic figures. It should be noted that projections do not factor in demand and are based on those children and young people within the system who currently receive transport assistance.

4.3.5 During the current financial year, it is projected that the transport assistance which is being provided to young persons with SEND and young adults with SEND will break down as follows:  
 (1) 100 young people and young adults were provided with a seat on a dedicated bus, at a cost of approximately £0.68 million.  
 (2) 112 young people and young adults were provided with a taxi, at a cost of approximately £1.57 million.  
 (3) 39 young persons and young adults were provided with a personal transport budget, at a cost of approximately £0.09 million.

4.3.6 On current projections (which are predicated on a conservative assumption that there will be no additional demand beyond that currently in the system), if there is no change in the Council's approach, it is anticipated that in the 2025-2026 academic year the cost of the provision of transport assistance to young people with SEND and young adults with SEND will increase by

£1.13 million (approximately 48%) to approximately £3.47 million (representing approximately 22% of the total cost of transport assistance for individuals with SEND). It is anticipated that this cost would break down as follows:

(1) 157 young people and young adults would be provided with a seat on a dedicated bus, at a cost of approximately £1.07 million.

(2) 151 young people and young adults would be provided with a taxi, at a cost of approximately £2.28 million.

(3) 55 young persons and young adults would be provided with a personal transport budget, at a cost of approximately £0.12 million.

4.3.7 The position in relation to funding transport support for all individuals with SEND (i.e. children, young people and young adults) during the 2024-2025 financial year is projected to be as follows:

Funding source	2024/25 cost
Total projected service cost	£16,015,000
Dedicated schools grant (DSG) contribution	£360,000
Income from external clients	£46,000
Net cost	£15,609,000

4.3.8 Accordingly, the net cost of transport support for all individuals with SEND for the 2024-2025 financial year is projected to be £1 million over budget.

4.3.9 Work has taken place to reduce pressure on budgets for transport of children with education, health and care plans, including proposals to change the policy for post 16 children (subject to consultation) and to encourage the use of personal transport plans. Demand for transport is already falling for post 16 children, but costs and demand continues to rise for other children. A pressure of £0.8m is built into the 2025/26 budget.

#### 4.4 The proposed policy – post 16 and above

4.4.1. It is proposed to make significant changes to the provision for travel assistance which is made for young persons and young adults with SEND. The proposal is that the Council would during the 2025-2026 academic year (and potentially thereafter) adopt the same approach to both young people and young adults with SEND. In summary:

(1) only a very limited category of young persons and young adults with SEND would be potentially eligible for travel assistance, i.e. only young persons and young adults who have “complex” SEND needs (as defined);

(2) potentially eligible young persons and young adults would be provided with travel assistance only in very limited “exceptional circumstances”; and

(3) travel assistance would be provided in the form of a PTB only.

Each of these points is explained in more detail below.

4.4.2. As also explained below, the proposed changes are likely significantly to reduce the numbers of young persons and young adults with SEND who receive travel assistance from the Council. In effect, the changes would involve the withdrawal of travel assistance from the vast majority of

young persons and young adults with SEND who currently receive it, and significantly reduced numbers receiving travel assistance in the future. Further, in those few cases in which travel assistance would continue to be provided, the proposed changes would involve the withdrawal of transport (in the form of, for example, taxis or seats on a dedicated bus) and the provision of a PTB instead.

4.4.3. As to the categories of young people and young adults with SEND who would potentially be eligible for transport assistance, it is proposed that they would be limited to young people and young adults who meet each of the following criteria:

- (1) he or she is resident in Leicester;
- (2) he or she started his or her current programme of education or training proper to his or her 19<sup>th</sup> birthday;
- (3) he or she has “complex SEND needs” (see below);
- (4) his or her placement is specified in his or her EHC Plan;
- (5) he or she is attending the nearest appropriate education or training provider;
- (6) either:
  - (a) he or she lives more than 3 miles’ walking distance from the education or training provider, or
  - (b) if he or she does lives 3 miles’ walking distance or less from the education or training provider, he or she is unable to walk too and from the education or training provider because of he or she has a disability or because the walking route is unsafe; and
- (7) his or her course is full-time (i.e. at least 540 study hours per year) and publicly-funded.

4.4.4. The rationale for each of the above is:

- (1) so that Leicester resources benefit Leicester residents.
- (2) the law states this must be factored into consideration;
- (3) and (4) are because the council must ensure that limited financial resources support those most in need;
- (5) if a third party chose another setting to meet need it is deemed to be reasonable that they would be accountable for transport;
- (6) mirrors statutory guidance for all ages
- (7) ensures that resources are appropriately targeted to support progression

4.4.5. It is proposed that a young person or young adult would be treated as having “complex SEND needs” only where one or more of the following apply:

- (1) the young person/adult has a diagnosed terminal illness which has a severe impact on his or her current physical and/or mental health and which is likely to significantly reduce his life expectancy; and/or
- (2) when accompanied, the young person/adult’s additional needs or disability places him or her or others at a severe and serious risk of danger during the journey to and from school; and/or
- (3) the young person/adult has a mobility difficulty which requires the provision of specialised seating or a specialised vehicle (e.g. a vehicle with tail-lift access) which is not available to him or her (including on public transport where that has to be relied upon); and/or
- (4) the young person/adult is likely to require medical intervention or personal care during the journey to and from school.

4.4.6. As stated in the Draft Revenue Budget Report for 2025/2026 (page 2, section 2.1):

“As members will be aware, the medium-term financial outlook is the most severe we have ever known. Like many authorities, we face increasing difficulties in being able to balance our budget. Some authorities have already reached this position and been forced to issue a formal report under section 114 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. In previous years, we have used a “managed reserves policy”, by which specific reserves have been set aside to support budgets and buy us time to make cuts. The available resources for this are rapidly running out.”

4.4.7. With further reference to the financial reasons for necessary change the report continues (s4.9 on page 6):

“We have reached a stage where any further cuts are bound to be painful and leave discretionary services stretched to the limit. This is what we are now compelled to contemplate.”

4.4.8. Post 16 SEND transport is a discretionary service. It may be asked whether this service could be subsidised from another fund elsewhere in the council, the answer is that there is no other money available to do that.

4.4.9. The council has a reported financial shortfall of £47m in 25/26 rising to £90m in 2027/2028. Statutory services cannot be cut, and all discretionary services are being looked at. The council has a discretion surrounding how it delivers post 16 and above SEND transport support.

- (1) the needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to attend a particular establishment to receive education or training if no arrangements were made;
- (2) the need to secure that persons in Leicester have reasonable opportunities to choose between different establishments at which education or training is provided;
- (3) the requirements of s 15AZ in relation to persons of sixth form age;
- (4) the distances and journey times between the homes of persons of sixth form age in Leicester and relevant institutions at which education or training suitable to their needs is provided;
- (5) the cost of transport to the relevant institutions and of any alternative means of facilitating the attendance of persons receiving education or training at them;
- (6) the guidance issued by the Secretary of State (see Appendix 8).

4.4.10. It is well documented that the council planned to implement the post 16 changes to transport assistance in the 2024-2025 academic year. It was intended to adopt a need based, holistic analysis to each case rather than be prescriptive. Because that was the approach, parents / carers were invited to provide information to explain why transport should be retained. A panel of officers analysed cross service information and expertise to determine the level of difficulty for young people and families. Following analysis of those situations the definition in section 4.4.11 was developed.

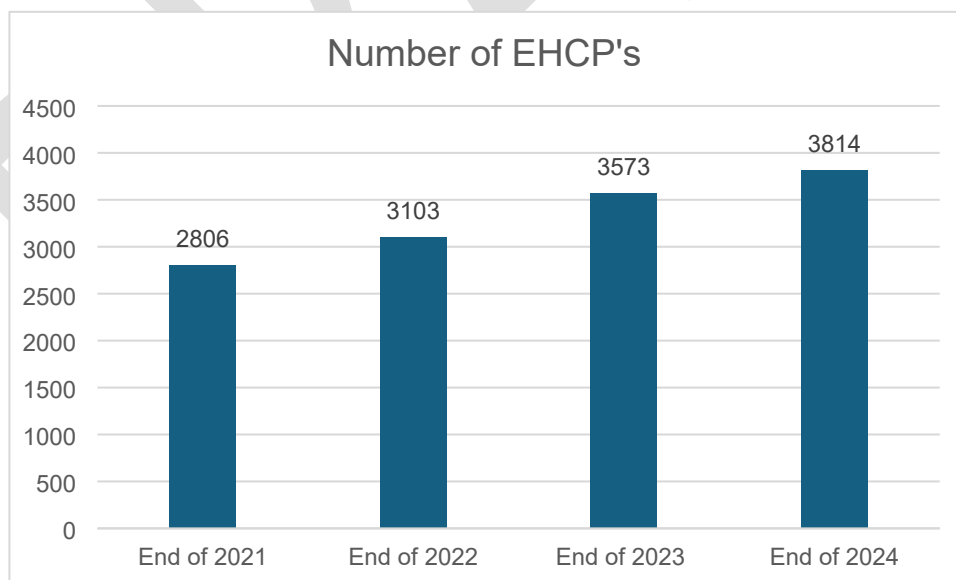
4.4.11. As to the “exceptional circumstances” in which a potentially eligible young person or young adult would be provided with transport assistance, it is not proposed to set out an exhaustive definition of exceptional circumstances. However, the following examples of what are likely to constitute exceptional circumstances are proposed.

(1) The young person/adult missed a significant majority of year 11 due to ill health, and the Council has agreed that he or she will repeat that year in full.

(2) The placement named by the Council is a “considerable distance” from the young person/adult’s home; the placement was not named by the Tribunal as a parental preference; there is no closer setting that can meet the young person/adult’s needs; and, taking into account the availability of public transport, caring or employment responsibilities mean that the young person/adult’s parents or carers are unable to provide transport themselves.

(3) The young person/adult's parents or carers have at least one other child (i.e. aged under 18) who has an EHC Plan and who attends an institution which is different to that attended by the young/person adult, and that child (or children)

- 4.4.12. For the same reason as 4.4.10 above the first 2 exceptional circumstances criteria were developed.
- 4.4.13. The third example of an exceptional circumstance has been added as a result of responses received during the consultation exercise.
- 4.4.14. The proposed policies detail the arrangements that the council consider it necessary to make to facilitate the attendance of young people and young adults in education and training. In particular the following considerations have been made:
- 4.4.15. "the needs for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to attend a particular establishment to receive education or training if no arrangements were made".
- There is a good range of provision for children, young people and adult learners in Leicester City.
  - Our aspiration is to reduce travel and for young people and adult learners to be connected to their local communities, the council recognises that friendships developed in education settings plays a significant part in developing those community ties. The proposed policies may mean that young people/adults choose settings more locally to them and succeed in making those vital human connections.
  - Leicester was arguably impacted more severely than any other City by Covid. It cannot be determined with certainty that has had a correlation on children with SEND but the council's Special Education Service has recorded the following data:



- The rise is attributed to an increase in Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) needs, speech, language and communication needs including autism.
- These figures do not factor in those who are supported by reasonable adjustments at the SEND support level within schools.

- Building confidence in the community is not just about preparing for adulthood (which is critical for success and happiness in the future) but enjoying childhood. It is vital for the future of the City that it's children and young people feel confident and able to enjoy and navigate their surroundings.
- d) Travelling to school is part of developing independence, for young people usually develops around Year 7 when they move into Secondary School.
- e) The council aims for children, young people and adults with SEND, to maximise independence. For this reason it considers it necessary to divert limited non-discretionary resources to ensure as much support as possible is available to promoting the above aims.
- f) Currently 55 young people and adults travel out of Leicester City by council funded taxi for education, 4 of them travel beyond Leicestershire. They may be able to find educational placements locally that would be more beneficial to them.
- g) The council has to ensure it can sufficiently meet the likely increasing travel assistance needs of children, who have to attend school and it cannot afford to do that with the current levels of discretionary spend on young person/adult travel assistance.
- h) The council has continued providing an increased level of transport assistance to young people and adults when compared to many other local authorities
- i) The definition has been drafted deliberately narrow to ensure the support is targeted to those with the most complex needs - e.g the group of young people and adults who would not be able to attend without support.

4.4.16. The council needs to secure that persons in Leicester have reasonable opportunities to choose between different establishments at which education or training is provided;

- a) There is a range of provision within Leicester to support choices that are available to meet needs. It may be that some young people may not be able to attend a course/an institution specified on their EHCP in order to meet their educational needs. Where this happens, EHCP reviews can take place to ensure alternate options are found.
- b) The farthest distance that a child travels is 57 miles one way, for young people/ adults it is 33 miles.
- c) There are good travel resources in Leicester, such as concessionary travel, school buses, 16 to 19 bursaries. Leicester has a good network of cycle lanes that young people and adults who are able can use.

4.4.17. The council needs to consider the distances and journey times between the homes of persons of sixth form age in Leicester.

- a) For these purposes, the policy proposes that "considerable distance" is defined as a journey time of 75 minutes or more (including time to walk to any pickup point), calculated using the most effective means of transport available (provided that, if the most effective means of transport is public transport, no more than two changes are required).
- b) This is in line with reasonable journey time within the statutory guidance for younger children.

4.4.18. How the council has considered the cost of transport to the relevant institutions and of any alternative means of facilitating the attendance of persons receiving education or training at them, for this reason a personal transport budget is available in exceptional circumstances to support those journeys where there is a potentially, unavoidable high cost.

- a) Of the young people/ adults impacted by the proposed policy 55 attend education settings within Leicester City
- b) In some instances the public transport options provide affordable solutions
- c) The PTB has been developed to provide financial support in the most complex cases. It may not be the case that a PTB will fully cover the cost of travel but it is intended to contribute

towards it. There may be other financial support available as detailed in the Post 16 Statement.

4.4.19. It is proposed that the following examples of what (taken in isolation) are unlikely to constitute exceptional circumstances:

- (1) The young person/adult is has a single parent/carer.
- (2) The young person/adult's parent(s) or carer(s) work.
- (3) The young person/adult's parent(s) or carer(s) have another child or young person for whom they are or who attends a different school (subject to point (3) under paragraph 4.4.11 above)
- (4) The young person/adult attends an independent school which is outside the Council's area.
- (5) The young person/adult's parent(s) or carer(s) are unable to drive or do not have access to a car.
- (6) The young person/adult uses a wheelchair.

4.4.20. The reason for the above in 4.4.19 is because, in isolation they do not mean that a young person cannot travel independently, and other options may be available which mean that it is reasonable to parents/carers to provide support.

4.4.21. It is proposed that, where it is decided that a young person or young adult with SEND is eligible for transport assistance, a PTB will be offered. It is proposed to be provided to parents / carers, legal guardians and young adults themselves where they have capacity to manage finances.

4.4.22. A PTB is deemed necessary to provide affordable support to mitigate hardship. It also enables young people and families to make choices about how it is spent.

4.4.23. Should the changes set out above be implemented as per the recommended policy, it is projected that in the 2025-2026 academic year the cost of the provision of transport assistance to young people with SEND and young adults with SEND would reduce by £3.01 million to approximately £0.46 million (representing approximately 3% of the total projected budget of transport assistance for individuals with SEND). It is anticipated that no young people or young adults with SEND would be provided with a seat on a dedicated bus or a taxi, reducing the costs of that transport assistance to zero. It has been assumed that 196 young people/young adults would be provided with a PTB, at a total cost of some £0.46 million.

4.4.24. The assumed figure of 196 young people/young adults is based on a broad, anecdotal assessment based on insights from complaints and appeals in advance of the 2024/2025 changes, that approximately 50% of young people/young adults who would, if the current approach were maintained, qualify for transport assistance would be eligible for transport assistance under the new approach. The cost was calculated on the basis that cost for each eligible young person/young adult would be equivalent to the current average cost per learner regardless of age, it is acknowledged that data quality has been and remains a risk.

4.4.25. Although the SEND Travel policy is for longer than the next academic year it doesn't mean that the Post 16 Statement is pre-determined because the Post 16 Statement element of the SEND Travel Policy is deemed to be a separate component reviewed annually. This is made clear by an additional statement in the SEND Travel policy to that effect

## 4.5 The proposed policy – compulsory school age

4.4.26. As with those in post 16 and above education, the requirement to review transport arrangements during Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) reviews is removed unless travel is a learning outcome. This is to reflect the fact that the travel support application process is generally separate from EHCP reviews. The following wording is omitted from the proposed draft policies under this option:

*Annual Review*

*When a Personal Travel Budget or SEND travel is agreed for a child with a statement of special educational needs or an EHCP, travel arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis at the statement/plan review meeting. Parents / carers will be expected to sign a declaration agreeing to the terms and conditions of the agreement.*

4.4.27. There is an amendment to the wording around travel training. Before it said that if unsuccessful, travel support would continue. It has now been amended to say that will only happen if the child/young person is eligible.

4.4.28. Appendix 1, page 14, section 8.2 includes the italicised words below

*“If they are not ready or suitable for training, a future review date will be set, and they will continue to be provided with travel assistance if they remain eligible.”*

4.4.29. In some instances, young people who are over 16 may not be able to travel independently but they may not be eligible for council funded SEND transport support. In many of these more complex cases, there is likely to be entitlement to other support due to the level of need.

4.4.30. It is proposed that for all ages, where children and young people are eligible and it would meet the need, free travel may be by bus pass and a parent may be offered a bus pass to accompany their child. Appendix 1, page 14, section 8.3.

4.4.31. The logic is that this helps get the young person used to the journey with the parent, it is more cost effective and more environmentally friendly.

4.4.32. It is proposed that, for all ages in the travel policy there is improved clarity about multiple addresses. The proposed policy (Appendix 1, page 17, section 9.4) explains that:

*If a pupil has more than one place that may be considered a home address, parents/carers must nominate a primary address for travel purposes.*

*Home addresses should be for primary carers and travel to the homes of extended family members will not usually be considered a home address.*

*The council acknowledges that families need flexible arrangements and will support travel to multiple addresses where it is specifically highlighted and agreed at the point of application. In year arrangements for changes will require a new application.*

*Where there are multiple home addresses being requested the home address closest to the child or young person’s school or college will be considered the primary home address. That primary home address will be used to determine eligibility.*

*The council will not generally support applications which mean that travel to multiple addresses will result in increased journey time or cost of provision. Personal Transport Budgets may be the best option to meet need in these situations.*



- 4.4.33. In the past the council has not consistently withdrawn support due to challenging behaviours. It is intended that this is adopted going forward as failure to do so enables poor behaviours and is harmful to children, young people and those providing transport.
- 4.4.34. In some cases, the council may investigate whether transport is being correctly provided, this could be mid-year. If a claim is proven to be ineligible transport could be withdrawn with 4 weeks' notice.
- 4.4.35. If travel is temporarily or permanently withdrawn for behavioural reasons parents would be responsible for getting their children to school and for any costs incurred.
- 4.4.36. It is proposed that travel to or from pick up points may take place rather than a door-to-door service.

#### 4.6 Impact of the proposed policies

- 4.6.1 The decision to implement the proposed policies results in the significant change to post 16 and above SEND Transport provision detailed previously.
- 4.6.2 It should be clearly highlighted that, based on projected estimates 151 young people with SEND who currently receive council funded taxis to take them to school and college, would not receive that service in 2025/2026. Additionally, 157 of the young people now supported by journeys using the in-house council bus service would also not receive those journeys next academic year. 55 of those students currently receiving personal transport budget support are also likely to be impacted.
- 4.6.3 However, based on projected estimates, 196 young people might be eligible to receive personal transport budget support. This assumes that 50% of the post 16 and above cohort would be eligible, plus those assumed to be eligible previously under option 2.
- 4.6.4 The respondents to the consultation told the council that if this option were decided upon, families would be impacted severely. 88% of adults felt the proposed policies were a bad idea and 81% of children and young people thought the same.
- 4.6.5 29% of adults said their child will not be able to continue in education.
- 4.6.6 If this change is implemented there is a risk that some young people may stop attending education and possibly become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). This is proven to affect their future life chances.
- 4.6.7 If any change is implemented, the timeframe surrounding the proposed policies means that young people could have started courses and may now need to find alternate transport arrangements in some circumstances.
- 4.6.8 If this change is implemented there is a risk that there will be increased pressure on parents / carers and an adverse impact on family's lives. 29% of adults and 25% of children and young people said 'there would be too much pressure on me'.
- 4.6.9 The council has tried to mitigate these risks by offering Independent Travel Training and has a good track record of providing this valuable training to schools / colleges and parents / carers. For those who can travel independently it is a significant positive within the draft policies that services continue to encourage that.

4.6.10 Due to this, in addition to general eligibility criteria greater clarity surrounding 'exceptional circumstances' has been developed. However, it remains the case that in the vast majority of cases under the proposed policy, post 16 SEND transport will not be provided for the 2025/2026 academic year onward.

4.6.11 Summary financial analysis of deciding upon the consulted upon policies and reducing the service as per the proposed policies that were consulted upon is as below:

2025/26 Projected P16 Taxi costs	2025/26 Projected P16 Internal bus costs	2025/26 Projected PTB costs	Potential cost	Projected cost control
£0	£0	£40,497	£40,497	£3,428,131

4.6.12 For the purposes of this calculation the top 5% of the most expensive, post 16 taxi journeys were assumed to most likely be representative of journeys that would meet the very limited exceptional circumstances criteria. Average costs per pupil per annum were used for calculation purposes.

4.6.13 The highest cost journeys are typically those where young people have to travel farthest, this is often also due to the level of need that they have.

#### 4.7 The consultation response to the proposed policies

4.4.37. The policies that were consulted upon are contained in Appendix 10 (Travel policy) and Appendix 11 (Post 16 Statement)

4.4.38. The consultation exercise was carried out by means of online survey that was publicised as per the communications plan (Appendix 6). Paper copies of the survey were available but were not requested.

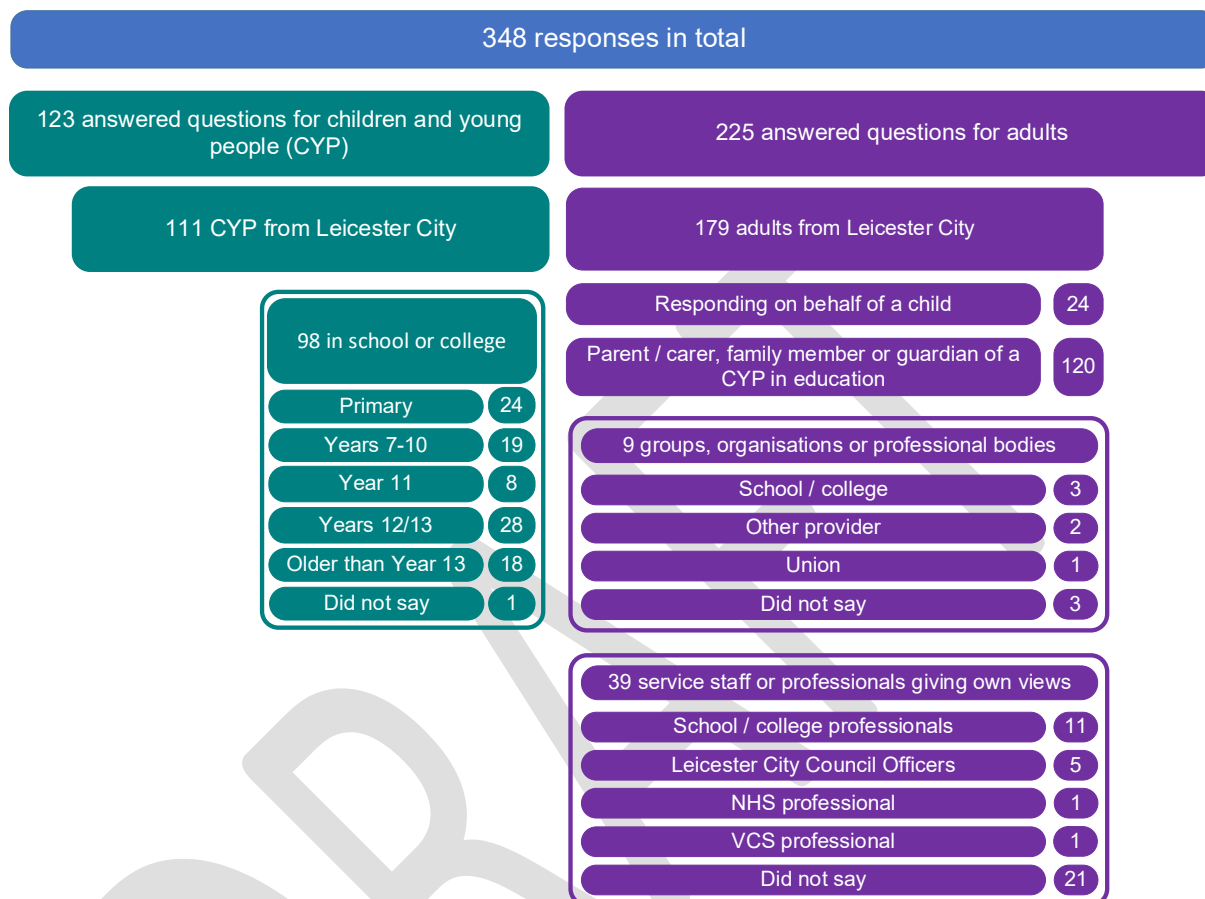
4.4.39. Appendix 12 contains a quantitative data summary of the consultation responses. Appendix 13 contains comments received by Leicester Children and Young People. Appendix 14 contains comments received by adults who may be from Leicester

4.4.40. The Assistant City Mayor is asked to read Appendices 12 – 14.

4.4.41. A summary of the responses received is set out below. The summary focuses on the themes that emerged from comments from respondents who are resident in Leicester, but materially similar themes emerged from the comments from respondents who are resident elsewhere.

4.4.42. Figure 1. sets out a breakdown of the respondents to the consultation:

Figure 1.



4.4.43. The following is a summary of the comments made by young people with SEND from Leicester City.

- The statements describe the challenges faced by students with disabilities, particularly concerning transport to school and college. Many of the students depend on special transport services because of their disabilities, which include autism, anxiety, and other severe conditions, making it unsafe or impossible for them to travel independently. The loss of this transport support would severely impact their education, mental health, and overall well-being.
- Parents of these students are also under significant strain, as they often cannot take on the responsibility of transporting their children, because of work commitments, financial limitations, or physical disabilities. The financial burden of alternative transport options, such as taxis, would be difficult to bear. These changes would affect the whole family, increasing stress and creating barriers to education.
- The individuals express feelings of abandonment by local authorities, frustration with government policies, and concern about the future if transport

support is cut. They emphasise the importance of this assistance for students' safety, education, and mental health, calling for continued support and for more funding to be allocated to education and transport services for special needs students. They also highlight that not having transport could lead to isolation, worsened mental health, and a loss of educational opportunities.

- The main call is to continue providing accessible transport services for students with special needs, to ensure they can access education and maintain their safety, independence, and social connections.

4.4.44. The following is a summary of the comments made by parents of young people with SEND (Year 11 upward), from Leicester City who say that they will be affected by the proposed policy.

The responses reflect widespread concern over proposed changes to transport services for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The key issues include:

1. **Education Access:** Reliable transport is crucial for children with SEND to attend school or college. Without it, they may face barriers to education, missing school / college or essential services.
2. **Financial and Emotional Stress:** Many families already struggle financially and emotionally to care for their disabled children. Removing transport services would add to this burden, potentially forcing parents to reduce work hours, lose / change jobs, or incur high costs for private transport.
3. **Safety and Independence:** Public transport can be unsafe for children with disabilities, including physical disabilities, autism, or anxiety. Parents highlight the importance of safe, structured transport options to help children build independence while minimising anxiety.
4. **Legal and Human Rights:** Some responses argue that removing transport services could violate children's rights to education and protection from discrimination, especially for those who cannot travel independently.
5. **Requests for Continued Support:** Parents urge local councils to continue providing tailored transport services for SEND students, considering each child's unique needs and the serious consequences families face without this support.
6. **Specific Needs of Children with Complex Disabilities:** For children with autism or severe learning disabilities, public transport is often not an option. The removal of transport services could increase anxiety, disrupt education, and put children at risk.
7. **Inadequate Alternatives:** Many families report a lack of suitable alternatives, particularly for children with complex needs. Without local authority transport, children may miss out on education, requiring more care and support.
8. **Financial Burden on Low-Income Families:** The policy could disproportionately affect low-income families who cannot afford alternative transport. Some families face the prospect of losing jobs or incurring high costs to arrange suitable transport.
9. **Concerns Over Fairness and Discrimination:** The policy is criticised for failing to consider neurodiverse children or those with mental health challenges, potentially leading to discrimination and unequal access to education.

**10. Long-Term Consequences:** The removal of transport services could have long-term negative effects, including limited education and employment opportunities, and increased reliance on social care and benefits.

Overall, parents are calling for a more flexible, individualised approach to transport support, ensuring that children with SEND have equal opportunities for education, safety, and social development. They argue that the proposed changes could lead to further financial strain on families and increased costs for public services in the long run.

4.4.45. The comments from these parents / carers most affected are representative of the significant majority of adults comments. Respondents generally did not support the policy changes, although 56% of adults felt that the policies were clear.

#### 4.8 Alternatives to the proposed approach

4.8.1 If the decision was taken to continue with the current arrangements, it would mean that the council may continue to achieve its statutory equality objectives set out in s 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the public sector equality duty) at the same level. There would be no change to provision or costs of delivery.

4.8.2 Under this option, as in the past, the local authority discharges its statutory duty by adopting the same approach for all children and young people with SEND regardless of age, including those who are young adults between 19 and 25 years old. Transport support has been provided by the council.

4.8.3 A decision could be made to implement the exact policies that were consulted upon. This is essentially the same as the proposed policy in this report for the same reasons in s 4.4 but excluding the additional exceptional criteria that was developed in response to the consultation.

4.8.4 This would result in a projected 196 young people not receiving PTB support.

4.8.5 Summary financial analysis of deciding upon the policies that were consulted upon is as below:

2025/26 Projected P16 Taxi costs	2025/26 Projected P16 Internal Bus costs	2025/26 Projected PTB costs	Potential cost	Projected cost control
£0	£0	£40,497	£40,497	£3,428,131

4.8.6 For the purposes of this calculation the top 5% of the most expensive, post 16 taxi journeys were assumed to most likely be representative of journeys that would meet the very limited exceptional circumstances criteria. Average costs per pupil per annum were used for calculation purposes.

4.8.7 Adopting the proposed policies which were consulted upon results in a projected cost control in the region of £3.4m for the 2025/2026 academic year. This does not factor in any change in demand and is based solely on calculations around the support to the children and young people that the council currently supports.

4.8.8 Figure 2 (next page due to formatting requirements) contains a decision summary matrix.

Figure 2 – Post 16 SEND Transport Options Summary Matrix

	Description	2025/26 Projected P16 Taxi costs	2025/26 Projected P16 PATS costs	2025/26 Projected PTB costs	Potential cost	Cost control	Main benefit	Main risk
Recommended policy	Withdraw Post 16 and above SEND transport support from in the region of a projected 360 young people, unless amended, limited exceptional circumstances apply (and then PTB support is to be provided). Projected estimate that 196 young people retain PTB**	£0	£0	£462,231**	£462,231	£3,006,397	Retains an additional level of support for families with more than one SEND child in different schools	There remain service reductions and affordability issues
Adopt the policy consulted upon	Withdraw Post 16 and above SEND transport support from in the region of a projected 360 young people, unless very limited exceptional circumstances apply and then Personal transport budget (PTB) support is to be provided). Assumed that 17 young people retain PTB.	£0	£0	£40,497*	£40,497	£3,428,131	Affordability	Significant service reduction
Don't change policy	Do nothing – in the region of a projected 360 young people with SEND continue to receive SEND transport, where eligible, as they have done before	£2,281,383	£1,067,600	£119,645	£3,468,628	£0	Higher level of provision continues	Affordability

\* For the purposes of this calculation the top 5% (16 journeys) of the most expensive, post 16 taxi journeys were assumed to most likely be representative of journeys that would meet the very limited exceptional circumstances criteria. Average costs per pupil per annum were used for calculation purposes.

\*\*For the purposes of this estimate is assumed that 50% of the total post 16 cohort (363 / 2 is 182) who currently receive SEND transport and will be in post 16 and above in the 2025/2026 academic year are multiple siblings with SEND attending different schools that may be eligible under option 3. In addition, those eligible under option 2 are also added (16). Totalling 196. Calculations are based on the same average journey cost developed with Finance and not actual journey data.

## 5. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

### 5.1 Financial implications

The latest projections show the SEND transport service if £1m above budget. If there is an increase in under 16 service provision the overspend will increase further. Like all services across the council, this service needs to keep within budget.

Mohammed Irfan, Head of Finance

17 February 2025

### 5.2 Legal implications

The statutory provisions in relation to transport obligations are contained in the Education Act 1996. The relevant parts are set out in the body of the report. In summary, the council has a duty to make home to school travel arrangements, free of charge, to any child who is eligible. The eligible children are defined within the Education Act, and all categories relate to those who are of compulsory school age.

In contrast, there are separate provisions for those who are not of compulsory school age. The report sets out the proposed changes to the relevant local policies and details the arrangements that the council consider are necessary to facilitate the attendance of young people and relevant young adults in education and training post the age of 16. In particular the decision maker should have regard to the specific matters set out in paragraphs 4.1.5 to 4.1.15 above.

The Public Sector Equality Duty also requires the council in the exercise of its functions to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The statutory guidance requires the local authority to consult widely on any proposed changes with all interested parties. Consultations should last for at least 28 working days during term time. In compliance with these requirements, the proposed policies have been subject to the consultation exercise set out in the body of this report.

The results of the consultation should be analysed, prior to any final decision being made, to ensure that any decision making is lawful, follows a fair process and is reasonable.

The Post-16 Transport Policy Statement is required to be published on or before 31 May for the following academic year.

A party may seek to challenge a decision by way of an application for judicial review, where there is scope to challenge the reasonableness and fairness of, or the process followed in reaching, a decision in accordance with the judicial review principles.

Julia Slipper, Principal Lawyer (Education & Employment); Tel ext 6855

17 February 2025

### 5.3 Equalities implications

Under the Equality Act 2010 (including the local authority and schools), have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

SEND children and young people and young adults are likely to face challenges when integrating into some aspects of social life and whilst independence can be beneficial, without support it may also be detrimental to their growth. Suitable school transport is often crucial for children who have additional needs, it is a key part of enabling them to attend school regularly and benefit from their educational experience. Local authorities must comply with the public sector equality duty. They must consider the potential effect of their transport policy on disabled people, both disabled children and disabled parents.

The report seeks a decision regarding which version of the Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Home to School and College Travel Policy 2025/2026 to 2027/2028 - and Post 16 Travel Policy Statement 2025/2026 should be adopted. These proposed policies include the effect of a withdrawal of post 16 SEND Transport provision from the start of the 2025/2026 academic year unless there are very limited 'exceptional circumstances'. Families will have the right to appeal, and cases would be considered on an individual basis.

The report considers the following:

**Option 1:** do nothing/retain the current service

Under this option there will be no equality implications as the service will continue as at present.

To ensure that equality implications of the following options have been taken into account, an EIA has been carried out and has been updated to include findings from the consultation, students with Special Educational Needs, particularly those with an EHCP are likely to be adversely affected by the proposal.

**Option 2:** Change the service as per the consulted upon draft proposed procedures, including the general withdrawal of Post 16 SEND transport support unless limited 'exceptional circumstances' exist.

This option broadly removes post 16 SEND transport unless there were very limited 'exceptional circumstances', this will impact on children and young people with SEND, most relevant would be the protected characteristics of age and disability.

**Option 3:** As Option 2 but with extended 'exceptional circumstances' to families with multiple children with SEND at different schools



Feedback from the consultation has led to an additional option 3 being developed. The consultation was on a proposed policy which broadly removed post 16 SEND transport unless there were very limited 'exceptional circumstances'. The newly developed option still reduces support significantly but provides some increased support in certain circumstances. It is not possible to entirely mitigate the impact of this proposal for all young people, most relevant would be the protected characteristics of age and disability.

Equalities Team

6 February 2025

#### 5.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are substantial carbon emissions (and air pollution emissions) generated by home to school transport overall in the city and in broad terms the 'carbon intensity' (the quantity of carbon emissions per student-mile) for different modes of transport will go up according to the following hierarchy:

Walking and cycling (non e-bike)	Zero emissions
E-bike	Very low emissions
Public bus	Moderate emissions due to multiple passengers per bus (and reducing, on average, as electric buses introduced)
School bus	Moderate emissions (Likely higher than public bus as most school-organised services use older, more polluting vehicles.)
Minibus	Somewhat higher emissions – due to fewer passengers per vehicle and, where applicable, door-to-door service. Electric minibuses not yet widely available/affordable.
Taxi/private hire or private family car	Likely to be highest emissions. However, emissions lower if the vehicle is a smaller model a hybrid or fully electric. Also lower if the journey is shared.

Currently, SEND transport provision contributes to the council's carbon footprint through:

- emissions from fleet vehicles i.e. the minibuses referred to in the report. Emissions from these are estimated to be in the region of 200-250t per year, and
- emissions from taxi journeys arranged and funded through Passenger Transport, for which it hasn't been possible to reliably estimate the carbon emissions, due to mileage and vehicle data not being available.

The carbon emissions impact of the options presented in the report will depend on any alternative travel arrangements put in place by affected families. All of the options would lead to a reduction

in the council's own carbon footprint, due to journeys shifting from council-arranged travel, which is counted as part of the council footprint, to privately organised travel.

In terms of the impact on the city-wide carbon footprint, which includes council services and all other activity in the city, the changes are unlikely to have a significant impact assuming that journeys continue to be made either by taxi/private hire or private family car.

Duncan Bell, Change Manager (Climate Emergency). Ext. 37 2249

22.01.25

**5.5 Other implications** (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None applicable

## 6. Background information and other papers:

- [Preparing for adulthood strategy 2021-2025](#)
- ['Choose how you move'](#) resources
- ['Connecting Leicester' vision](#)

## 7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1 - Updated Proposed DRAFT SEND Home to School and College Travel Policy 2025/2026 to 2027/2028

Appendix 2 - Updated Proposed DRAFT Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2025/2026

Appendix 3 - Mainstream Home to School Transport Policy 2021/2022

Appendix 4 - Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Home to School and College Travel Policy 2021/2022

Appendix 5 - Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2024/2025

Appendix 6 - Communications plan

Appendix 7 - Consultation questions

Appendix 8 - Statutory guidance

Appendix 9 - Equalities impact assessment

Appendix 10 - Proposed DRAFT SEND Home to School and College Travel Policy (The Travel Policy) 2025/2026 to 2027/2028

Appendix 11 - Proposed DRAFT Post 16 Transport Policy Statement 2025/2026

Appendix 12 - Leicester adult consultation comments.

Appendix 13 - Leicester young people consultation comments.

Appendix 14 - Consultation response quantitative data analysis

**8. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?**

8.1 No. Consultation responses in Appendices 12 and 13 are redacted as, although pertinent to the decision maker, those who made comments did not consent to publication.

**9. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why?**

9.1 Yes. Due to all wards being affected and the size of the budgetary implications.

DRAFT