
Proposed Post-16 Transport Policy Statement for the 2026 – 2027 academic year

Decision to be taken by: Assistant Mayor (Children &
Young People)

Decision to be taken on: 1 May 2026

Lead director: SEND and Education

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Maria Coulson, Strategic SEND Transport Lead
- Author contact details: maria.coulson@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1.0

1. Introduction and Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the proposed policy for the provision of transport assistance to young people and adult learners in education or training. The council must publish these arrangements in a Post 16 Transport Policy Statement (TPS) each academic year by 31 May.
- 1.2. The 2025 – 2026 academic year saw a change to this policy with levels of discretionary support provided to young people and adults (aged 16 to 25) who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) altered. The policy was successfully implemented and consequently no changes are proposed for the 2026 - 2027 academic year.
- 1.3. The Council currently supports transport needs through a combination of taxis, bus journeys and personal transport budgets (PTBs). There is a statutory requirement to provide support to children of school age; provision for the post-16 age group is discretionary. As at February 2026, over 250 post-16 students were receiving such support.
- 1.4. In light of the Council’s budgetary outlook and in line with best value duty, Council services must demonstrate diligence surrounding spending. This was the reason that the Post-16 Transport Policy Statement and assistance it contains was reviewed in advance of the 2025 – 2026 academic year. The review, consultation and scrutiny resulted in policies which reduced some entitlement to service and enabled the council to ensure support was justifiable and targeted efficiently to meet need. Many authorities had already done this, but Leicester maintained provision until an approach was developed that encourages independence and meets need while simultaneously contributing towards cost control.
- 1.5. Following consultation concluding in February 2026, the proposed policy for the 2026 – 2027 academic year seeks to continue existing arrangements with no amendments. This is because the policy mitigations ensuring needs are well met have proven effective. The proposed approach continues to help promote independent travel where this is possible, further strengthening what we have done to promote independence and to help prepare young people with SEND for adult life; the Council provides travel training to support this which is being enhanced.
- 1.6. The proposed policy for post-16 transport retains the qualifying criteria for assistance, which requires “complex SEND.” In essence, a student has “complex SEND” if he or she is unlikely to be able to travel independently. Those who qualify for support will receive a personal transport budget (PTB); alternative support will only be available in limited circumstances.
- 1.7. The policy is unchanged for children of compulsory school age. These do not have to be reviewed annually.
- 1.8. All references in this report to people (students) who are post statutory school age “with SEND” means those with an Education Health and Care Plan (an EHCP).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Assistant City Mayor is asked to:

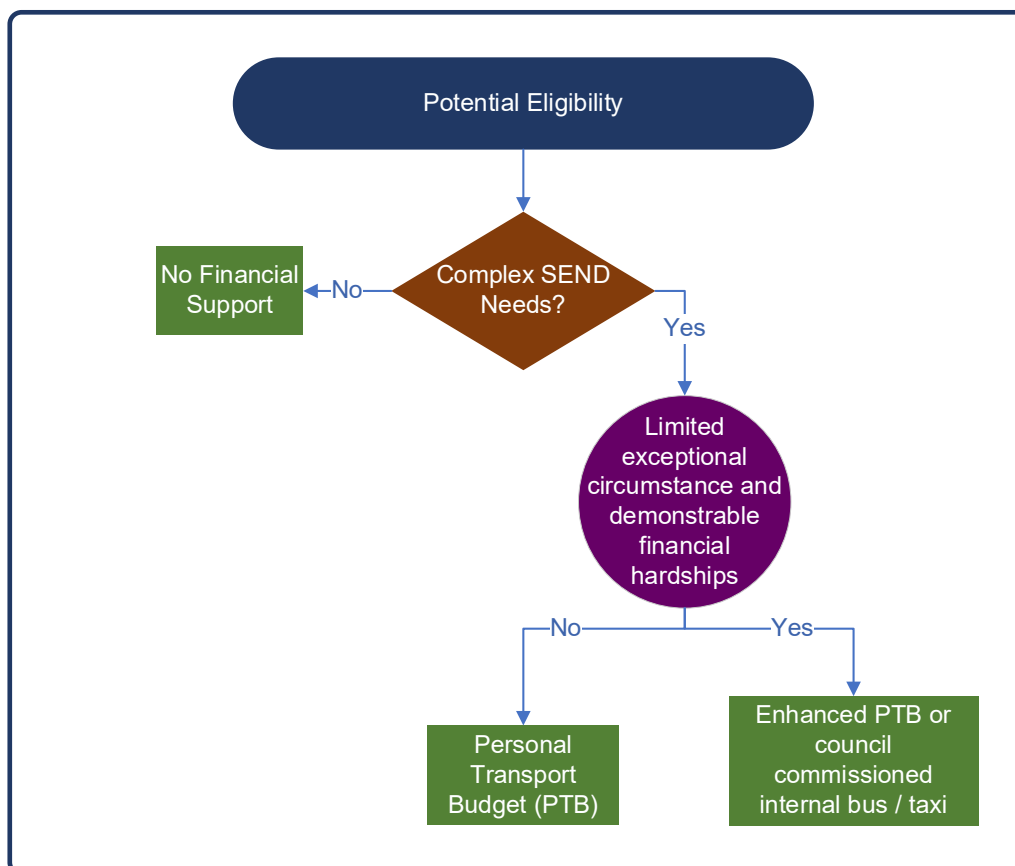
- approve the Proposed Post 16 Transport Policy Statement for the 2026 - 2027 academic year, as set out in Appendix 1

3. Current Scheme

- 3.1. The Council's policies for the current academic year are published and available here: [Home to school transport | LCC Family Hub](#).
- 3.2. The broader policies set out arrangements for provision of transport assistance to the following groups who attend schools, colleges or certain other institutions:
- children who are not yet of compulsory school age or who are of compulsory school age;
 - **"young people"** – individuals who are of sixth form age (between 16 and 18 and those aged 19 or over who are continuing on a course which they started before they turned 19), including young people with SEND; and
 - **"adults"** – individuals who are aged 19 or over. This group consists of young adults aged between 19 and 25 who have SEND.
- 3.3. This decision report surrounds support for young people and adult learners contained within the Post 16 Transport Policy Statement for the 2026 – 2027 academic year. The other policies for children in compulsory education do not require annual review.
- 3.4. The law makes separate stipulations about support to "young people" and to "adults", who are the chief concern of this report. Each is treated in the same way in our current policy: this enables us to ensure we provide the right level of support to meet their individual needs.
- 3.5. The assistant mayor is asked to note that we do not make any transport provision for young people or adults who do not have SEND. The proposed policy continues to adopt the same approach, as it is not considered necessary or appropriate to expend the Council's scarce resources on young people or adults who do not have particular needs.
- 3.6. This report uses the term "student" to refer to both young people and adults.
- 3.7. The current policy states that the Council may provide travel assistance to a student with SEND, subject to them having "foundation eligibility" as follows:
- resident in Leicester and started his/her course prior to their 19th birthday;
 - attends the nearest appropriate institution;
 - attends an institution which is more than 3 miles' walking distance from the student's home (unless the route is unsafe or the student has a disability which impacts on his or her ability to walk); and
 - attends a full-time, publicly funded course.
- 3.8. A potentially eligible student will be entitled to support in the form of a PTB if he or she has "complex SEND needs". A PTB is a sum of money which can be used to pay for any means of transport (including a lift in a family car, or a bus pass). The current rate is 45p per mile plus £500 per year. Otherwise, a potentially eligible student will not be entitled to support. Support can be increased and include taxi or bus provision if a student also has "limited exceptional circumstances" and failure to provide this support would lead to "demonstrable financial hardship". The rationale is as follows:
- (a) The "complex SEND needs" test is used as a proxy for identifying those students who would otherwise be unable to travel independently and therefore need support. This is because they are more likely to have physical disabilities, learning disabilities or other health issues that suggest without support they face more challenges travelling to school or college;
- (b) Those whose circumstances are such that support needs "topping up" are identified through consideration of "limited exceptional circumstances". The "demonstrable financial

hardship” test identifies those who would not have the means to top up support from their own resources.

3.9. The decision process is shown in the diagram on the next page:



3.10. The policy explicitly provides the same qualifying criteria for both young people and adults, so that all post 16 students are treated consistently, in recognition of the fact that those with SEND may take longer to complete courses.

3.11. The “complex SEND needs” test is defined as follows, together with the rationale for each criterion. One or more of the following criteria must be satisfied to create entitlement to a PTB:

Test	Rationale
A diagnosed terminal illness which has a severe impact on the student’s physical or mental health and which is likely to significantly reduce his/her life expectancy.	Being expected to walk can cause additional strain to the student at a time when their health is deteriorating. Providing a PTB helps prevent this. Further support for “exceptional circumstances” could be considered for severe cases.
If required to travel independently, the student’s SEND needs or disability would jeopardise his/her safety or that of others	The nature of their SEND means that it is likely to cost more to safely support them to get to their institution. They are more likely to need a parent/carer or professional to accompany them.
Has a mobility difficulty which requires the provision of specialised seating or a specialised vehicle which would otherwise be unavailable	Whilst many wheelchair users can successfully travel independently, there are cost, dignity and time implications for a young person whose mobility difficulty means they cannot. There may also be increased risk of injury. This makes accessing education more challenging.

Likely to require medical intervention or personal care during the journey to and from school.

There are cost, health, dignity and time implications for the young person which mean that they face additional hardship due to their needs. This makes accessing education more challenging.

- 3.12. Based on the Council’s experience of appeals, this definition of “complex SEND” should identify students who are unlikely to be able to travel independently. It is similar to the approach adopted in other authorities’ policies.
- 3.13. “Limited exceptional circumstances” are considered on a case-by-case basis. Applications can be made in cases where a student or a parent/carer believes the student’s needs are such that the standard PTB offer will be insufficient and without further support they could not travel to attend their place of education. Other reasons may exceptionally be considered.
- 3.14. Whilst each case is considered on its own merits, the following will not normally constitute “exceptional circumstances”:

Example	Rationale
Has a single parent/carer.	This does not impact the student’s ability to travel independently.
Parent(s) or carer(s) work.	This does not impact the student’s ability to travel independently
Parent(s) / carer(s) have another child or young person who attends a different school	This does not impact the student’s ability to travel independently
Attends an independent school which is outside the Council’s area.	This does not impact the student’s ability to travel independently
Parent(s) / carer(s) are unable to drive or do not have access to a car.	This does not impact the student’s ability to travel independently
Student uses a wheelchair.	This may (but need not necessarily) impact the student’s ability to travel independently, but “exceptional circumstances” could be considered where specialised seating or a specialised vehicle is required.

- 3.15. **‘Demonstrable financial hardship’** mirrors eligibility for free school meals (essentially, calculated on the household income of the parents/ carers - the one with the main caring responsibility if separated). Where a student is living independently, the test is applied to their own means. This is a nationally recognised measure of financial hardship.
- 3.16. Families in financial hardship are less likely to have their own transport or have the means to supplement travel costs. Focussing resources on those in financial hardship supports those most unable to attend education without support.
- 3.17. As at 5 February 2026 support under the current policy has been provided as follows:

Post 16 Provision	Number of students supported
Personal Transport Budget	79 (30%)
Council commissioned transport	183 (70%)
Total	262

- 3.18. Those with no recourse to public funds who can demonstrate comparable income levels are not excluded from the same level of support.
- 3.19. The process for decision making and an appeals procedure is set out in the policy.

4. The proposed policy and rationale

- 4.1. The proposed policy contains no change to the current scheme because analysis suggests that no change to entitlement is required for the following reasons:
- Applicant feedback is broadly positive
 - Students in post-16 are getting support under the policy
 - Initial and ongoing NEET analysis substantiates need is being met
 - Opportunities to understand operational improvements for next year are well understood
 - Families would benefit from stability, clarity and reassurance regarding available support
- 4.2. The central principle that needs must be met on an individual basis and blanket approaches must be avoided is well understood and embedded practice.
- 4.3. It was recognised in the 2025/26 policy that young people who are already engaged in programmes of study may be at the mid-point of achieving their qualifications. Given the potential disruption through implementation of a new policy at that juncture, it was proposed to allow a twelve-month transition period: those who were in year 12 receiving transport provision continued to receive the same provision during their year 13. The majority of those on two-year courses would have been in year 12, moving into year 13: others already engaged on a fixed length two-year course were considered on a case by case basis. This transitional arrangement was to apply for the academic year 2025/26 only, as such it has been removed from the 2026/27 proposed policy.
- 4.4. The key driver for change in the 2025/26 policy was the Council's budget outlook. Like many authorities, the Council was, and is, facing substantial gaps between its expenditure and income in the years ahead. The Council's budgeted spending for the next 3 years is currently supported by reserves, which is not sustainable.
- 4.5. The Council's Revenue Budget Report for the financial year 2026/27 projected an estimated shortfall of £10.3m between recurrent income and expenditure by 2028/29, after assuming savings of £23m will be found. The Council is also seeking to constrain growth in the cost of demand led services.
- 4.6. The average cost per post 16 journey type is:

Transport type	Average annualised cost per student (£)
Taxis	9,700
Seat on a Council provided bus	7,300
Personal Transport Budget	3,800

- 4.7. The current policy affords the necessary flexibility to meet need and demonstrate due diligence surrounding spend. In addition, in some cases there are good service reasons to discourage the more expensive modes of transport which are less likely to promote independence. Alternatives which encourage independent travel provide a better preparation for adult life (where individual needs allow).
- 4.8. The Council accounts for the cost of SEND transport in its entirety. Thus, we have accurate historical records for the total cost, but the cost of post-16 transport has to be extrapolated from caseload as and when required.

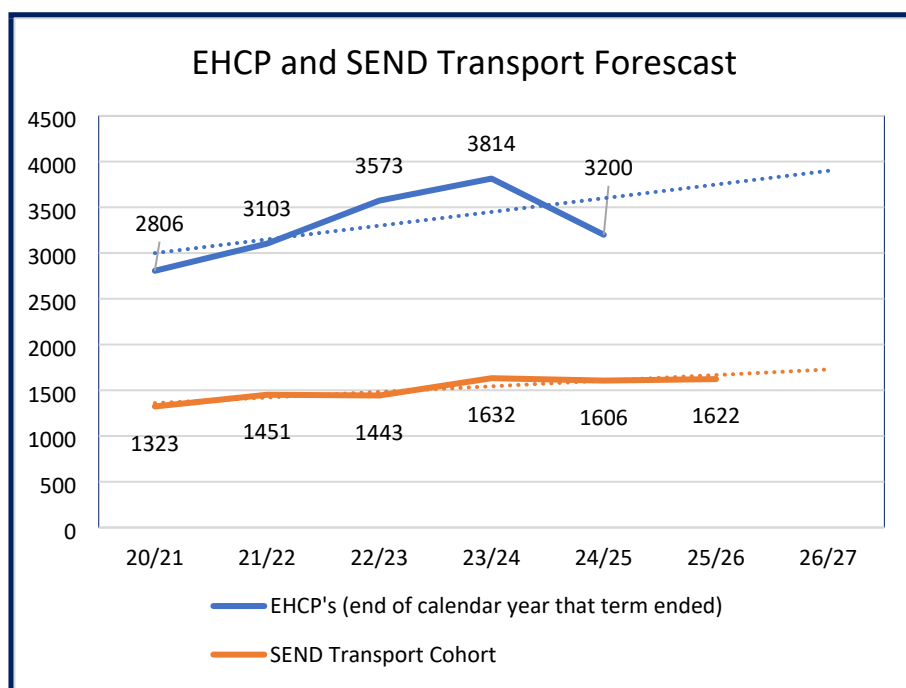
4.9. Over recent years the cost to the Council of providing SEND transport (all ages) had grown year-on-year, this was projected to continue as demand for service rises. However, this trend has been controlled by a programme of transformation. There has been a full cohort retendering exercise in the 2024 / 2025 academic year following a change to the council's Dynamic Purchasing System for Taxi services. This, coupled with robust quality assurance has resulted in a reduction in some costs.

4.10. There has been effective cost control in this area but a continued focus and investment in preventative services such as independent travel training remains required due to the council's broader financial challenges. This service's budget is likely to revert to increasing at pace if the focus to equip all students with SEND who can travel independently does not remain. If those students are not equipped with vital independent living skills to prepare them for adulthood their life outcomes are reduced. The policy implemented supports this approach while meeting need.

4.11. This can be seen in the following table: a small contribution from Dedicated Schools' Grant (£0.4m in 2024/25) has been deducted from these figures:

2021/2022 (£m)	2022/2023 (£m)	2023/2024 (£m)	2024/2025 (£m)	2025/2026 (Forecast) (£m)	2026/2027 (Forecast) (£m)
10.8	13.3	14.7	14.3	12.4	13.1

4.12. The trend can also be seen from the following graph. This projects future demand for travel support under the proposed policies (all ages). It also shows forecast growth in the number of EHCPs, which (whilst EHCPs do not necessarily lead to travel assistance) also helps indicate likely future demand for travel support:



4.13. As of March 2026, 262 post 16 students were receiving support at a cost of approximately £1.9m per year:

Post 16 Support Type (2025 – 2026 academic year)	Numbers	Annual Cost (£m)
Taxis	107	1.04
Council provided bus	76	0.56
Personal transport budget	79	0.3
Total	262	1.9

Post 16 Support Type (2024 – 2025 academic year)	Numbers	Annual Cost (£m)
Taxis	108	1.3
Council provided bus	60	0.4
Personal transport budget	40	0.1
Total	208	1.8

- 4.14. It should be noted that there was an exception in place for those in year 12 moving to year 13 which skews a pre policy / post policy direct comparison between the academic years reflected in the data in 4.13. However, this data shows that need and demand for service has increased as expected by around 25%. It shows the cost of provision rising by £0.1m (5.5%). If the cost of provision had simply risen by the same percentage the council expenditure on post 16 provision would be £2.25m rather than £1.9m. This is because the most effective ways to provide support are being maximised. There has been a 97.5% increase in personal transport budgets and a 27% increase in those receiving transport support by internal bus.
- 4.15. In addition to the cost control through efficiency in this area it should be emphasised that ensuring support is in place for those who may become NEET was a paramount consideration at every stage of implementation and is now a routine part of operational delivery. For all ages service is developing at pace for those in the most complex situations, involving multi-disciplinary teams including youth justice, social care and NHS colleagues.
- 4.16. Those students whose EHCP (unusually) specifies transport as an educational requirement will continue to receive this.
- 4.17. When considering the recommendations to this report, the assistant mayor must consider what provision for transport assistance it is necessary or appropriate to make for students, and whether or not the recommendations to this report achieve this. In respect of adults, she must consider whether the policy facilitates their attendance at educational institutions to the extent she considers necessary; and whether the arrangements ensure that those with the most severe disabilities with no other means of transport are able to undertake further education and training after their 19th birthday, in order to help them move towards more independent living.
- 4.18. In respect of young people, the assistant mayor must have regard to the following legal criteria. Because the existing and proposed policies apply equally to adults and young people, the same factors have been considered for both adults and young people – the assistant mayor will need to consider whether this enables her to make the judgement required. In essence, a balance remains to be struck between the Council’s forecast budget position and the needs of those most in need of support to continue their education. Although this remains a judgement as we can only estimate the Council’s budget outlook and annual impact of the proposed policy. However, this is now based on improved understanding following implementation in the 2025/2026 academic year:

Legal Criteria	Comment
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.	<p>Leicester is a compact city measuring 7.8 miles in diameter at its widest point. It is well served by transport links in the whole area. Where a student has access needs, a PTB may be provided and, in exceptional circumstances, additional support provided appropriate to their needs.</p> <p>The availability of additional support is focussed on those who would be most vulnerable to non-attendance if no arrangements were put in place.</p>

<p>The need to secure that students have reasonable opportunities to choose between different establishments</p>	<p>Leicester is well served with education and training providers. There are 14 post-16 providers who have over 500 city residents aged 16-25 with an EHCP on their roll. The city has a train station and two bus stations. There is a well-developed transport network to local county towns and regional cities. The choice of an establishment in the surrounding county can be requested and could be supported if the cost was comparable to undertaking an appropriate course in the city taking into account the transport cost, or if there was no appropriate course in the city. If the cost was significantly different the request would not be supported if the student's needs could be met elsewhere. A challenge could be mounted to an unfavourable decision through appeal.</p>
<p>The duty to provide enough education and training to meet the reasonable needs of students.</p>	<p>The city is well served with appropriate education and training institutions as discussed above. The 262 students currently receiving support attend 36 different institutions.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>Of the 262 students currently receiving support (which includes young people and adults), 91 are attending institutions within the city of Leicester. A further 171 attend institutions out of the local authority area. Average journeys are 7.9 miles for young people and 8 miles for adults each way. There is one journey further than Leicestershire where a student has a 35 miles single journey taking 58 minutes one way by car. Some of Leicester's educational institutions have additional bus contract arrangements, which learners or their parents can use to purchase places. Travel of more than 75 minutes by public transport is unlikely to most educational or training institutions within the city area. Some circumstances in which a student has a placement far from home could constitute "exceptional circumstances."</p> <p>The definition of complex SEND has been developed to take account of the impact that a learning difficulty or other disability may have on a student's ability to travel to their education setting without incurring stress, strain or difficulty. Some may also be able to demonstrate "exceptional circumstances."</p>

<p>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</p>	<p>Travel distances are short within the city. Bus fares are set by the operators, and adult fares are charged once a student reaches the age of 16. Fares are however currently capped by the Government at £3 for a single journey until March 2027. Locally, fares are also limited to £6.30 per day and £24 per week regardless of the number of journeys, either in the city or in a wider “flexi area” which stretches into the county. Students of any age can buy a season ticket for a year (£612). More details on fares and the extent of the “flexi area” can be found here: multi operator ticketing — Leicester Buses. Certain categories of disabled user may also be eligible for free bus travel under the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme, described here: (Apply for a disabled person's bus pass). This will entitle them to free bus travel, nationally, between certain times of the day. The city council provide a local enhancement to the scheme to extend hours of operation and provide train travel between certain stations.</p> <p>Where a student has complex SEND need (which could increase the cost of travel) a PTB would be available. The PTB provides the flexibility to choose the mode of travel. For higher levels of need, further support could be available. Some FE colleges also offer direct support to students, and the Government has a bursary fund.</p> <p>Support for those with higher levels of need is targeted to those who need it most, by virtue of requiring applicants to demonstrate financial hardship were support not to be given. The provision of support for families experiencing financial hardship is in line with other local authorities’ provisions.</p> <p>It is recognised that those with SEND may take longer to complete courses. To address this, the new policy treats young people and adults consistently with no “cut off” point at age 19.</p>
<p>Guidance issued by the Secretary of State to ensure young people can access education and training of their choice, and to assess and provide support for access where necessary.</p>	<p>These requirements are addressed above.</p>
<p>The nature of the route (or alternative routes) which the young person could reasonably be expected to take.</p>	<p>The nature of the route is addressed above.</p>
<p>Any wish of the young person to attend a particular institution on grounds of his or her religion or belief.</p>	<p>As Leicester is a multi-cultural city, providers are accustomed to meeting the needs of different faiths. If there was an individual need to meet a religious requirement, this could be considered in its individual context.</p>

4.19. This is the context in which retention of the existing transport policies are proposed. As the service is discretionary, the Council feels compelled to demonstrate that discretionary support

provided to those with SEND in post 16 education and older, is necessary to meet their needs. This keeps Leicester in line with national practice.

- 4.20. In summary, we are not proposing to exercise our discretion to provide more than is currently in place, which is working well and is now recommended.

5. Consultation

- 5.1. The council has a duty to consult on the TPS annually. As there are no changes a full, city wide consultation is not required. The following were contacted in late January and asked to email any feedback by 15 February 2026:

- All schools / colleges were asked for feedback and to distribute a letter to those in year 11 and older
- Parents who the council holds email addresses for in year 11 and older were emailed
- All East Midlands councils
- The Parent Carer Forum
- The Big Mouth Forum
- SENDIASS
- Community organisations : Mosaic 1898 and Leicester Charity Link

- 5.2. Emails from 6 parents / carers were received. All were seeking support and have been signposted to relevant operational channels. Only one made a comment on the policy and they expressed hope that there are no further changes.

- 5.3. Discussion of the proposal took place with the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission on 20th January 2026. Minutes of that meeting can be found here: [Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission, 20 January 2026](#). At this meeting, implementation last year was received positively and the proposed way forward was supported.

6. Risk

- 6.1 There are no changes proposed, and therefore there is minimal risk. Implementation risks were successfully mitigated by operational and procedural controls.

- 6.2 If not applied correctly there is a risk that students will be awarded support beyond what the policy envisages, and (conversely) that students will be unable to attend education in circumstances where the policy states that they should be supported. To mitigate this risk, we will continue to ensure that officers are appropriately trained and skilled and that the policy is interpreted in a consistent manner. Adequate oversight remains essential and an internal audit of the 2025/2026 implementation due to conclude in the Spring term will support diligence in this area. There is a two-stage appeals process, but this only addresses the situation where students are inappropriately denied support and not the converse.

- 6.3 There is also a risk that some students who do not meet the definition of complex SEND (and who therefore don't qualify for support) prove in fact to be unable to travel independently. There is a risk that these students could drop out of education because they can't get to their courses. The same risk applies to those whose applications for "limited exceptional circumstances" are unsuccessful. Analysis of those who are NEET will continue to be an ongoing and routine part of service delivery. We will seek to tailor travel training to address these needs if and where they become apparent.

- 6.4 Fuel prices have a significant impact on the cost of this service. Current high costs of fuel are projected to cause a 15% increase in council commissioned transport costs.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 After considering the successful implementation of the proposed policy in 2025/2026, the Council's overall financial position, the rationale for change, the legal criteria to be taken into account in any new policy, the minimal views of consultees and the equality implications, the Assistant Mayor is invited to consider whether or not the proposed policies will result in transport assistance for students which she considers necessary (as further described at para. 4.18 above), and if so to approve the recommendations

8. Financial Implications

There are no significant changes proposed in this report for the 2026/27 SEND Transport Policy which therefore does not lead to any additional savings and there is no request in this report for any additional funding. The service is expected to cost £13.1m in 2026/27 and this will be funded from the existing budget held by the service.

For context, the changes in the SEND Transport Policy in 2025/26 meant that £2.1m savings were identified, of which £1.9m has been delivered to date.

Signed: Mohammed Irfan, Head of Finance

Dated: 20 April 2026

9. Legal implications

The statutory provisions in relation to transport obligations are contained in the Education Act 1996. In broad terms, the relevant provisions are as follows:

- Under sections 509AA and 509AB of the Act, for young people of sixth form age, 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, including young people with SEND.
- Under sections 508F and 508G of the Act, for young adults, the Council has a duty to make such arrangements for the provision of transport and otherwise as it considers necessary for the purposes of 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. Any transport provided pursuant to such arrangements must be provided free of charge.

The report seeks approval for the proposed Post-16 Transport Policy Statement for the academic year 2026/2027 which sets out the manner in which the Council proposes to provide transport assistance to all students over the age of 16, which includes both young people and young adults, with and without SEND, as set out above. There are no changes proposed to the arrangements the Council currently has in place, with the exception of the removal of the transitional arrangements in place for 2025/2026.

The statutory framework sets out that in preparing the policy, the Council should consult: other local authorities considered appropriate, the governing bodies of relevant institutions, proprietors of 16 to 19 Academies in the area, persons in the local authority's area who will be of sixth form age when the statement has effect, and their parents. In compliance with these requirements, the proposed policy has been subject to the exercise set out in the sections 5.1 and 5.2 in the body of this report to seek the view of the relevant stakeholders.

The results of the consultation exercise 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. In taking the decision on whether to approve the policy, the decision maker should consider what provision for

transport assistance for young people is it necessary and appropriate to make with regard to the specific considerations set out in the statutory framework and statutory guidance.

The Post-16 Transport Policy Statement is required to be published on or before 31 May 2026.

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.

Signed: Julia Slipper, Principal Solicitor (Employment & Education)

Dated: 9 April 2026

10. Equalities implications

Our Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requires us to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic as defined by the Equality Act 2010 (sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, race, religion or belief, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, age) and those who do not. The Council also has an obligation to treat people in accordance with their Convention rights under The Human Rights Act, 1998.

This report seeks approval to implement the proposed Post 16 Transport Policy Statement for the 2026-2027 academic year. An equality impact assessment (EIA) has been completed, and it attached to the proposed policy statement. The EIA has identified a number of actions that will be progressed and monitored throughout the implementation of the policy. These include ensuring accurate data is collected on the protected characteristics of those using the service, enhancing independence skills for young people aged 16+ through the travel training offer, and maintaining ongoing stakeholder engagement to monitor policy delivery. Where any areas of concern are identified, appropriate and timely action will be taken to mitigate potential impacts. An appeal process is in place and those who are NEET will continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis.

Signed: Sukhi Biring, Equalities Officer

Dated: 5 February 2026

13. Climate Emergency implications

There are no significant climate emergency implications directly associated with the recommendations of this report. More widely, however, SEND Transport is a significant source of carbon emissions for the council, due to the use of vehicles to transport service users. As such, consideration should be given to opportunities to reduce emissions from this service, as appropriate and feasible, such as the use of lower emission vehicles and public transport as well as route planning to maximise efficiency. Alongside reducing emissions and potentially costs, this could have a further positive impact through supporting service users to independently use sustainable transport modes in the future, increasing their range of transport options.

Signed: Phil Ball, Sustainability Officer

Dated: 2 February 2026

14. Background information and other papers: None, excepted where referenced in the report.

15. Summary of appendices:

- Appendix 1 - Proposed Post 16 Transport Policy Statement, for 2025/26
- Appendix 2 - Equalities impact assessment

Statutory guidance can be found here: [Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training](#)

16. 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)? No

17. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why? No.