

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING/ DECISION MAKER:	Cllr Kevin Guy, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	
MEETING/ DECISION DATE:	On or after 28 th September 2020	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 3231
TITLE:	Home to School Transport – Safer Routes to School	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
List of attachments to this report: The Policy including examples of how routes are assessed.		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 The Policy on approving Home to School Transport for pupils when routes are deemed to be unsafe has been revised to explain clearly how officers will assess routes as hazardous. The policy also explains how parents can request exemptions to the policy and how such requests will be considered.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member is asked to adopt the policy as set out in this report.

3 THE REPORT

Introduction

- 3.1 This document sets out how Bath & NE Somerset Council will assess a walked route to school. The principles below are based on current national good practice guidance and procedures used in comparable Local Authorities.

Background

- 3.2 Parents and carers are responsible for ensuring their children receive an appropriate education which in most cases includes ensuring regular attendance at school.
- 3.3 Where a child of school age (4-16) lives within the statutory walking distance of their nearest qualifying school the Council will provide transport assistance if it considers that the route from home to school is such that a child accompanied by a responsible parent, carer or other person could not walk it in reasonable safety.
- 3.4 The law requires parents and carers to ensure that a child is accompanied on their journey to and from school if necessary. Parents and carers are therefore expected to make suitable alternative arrangements if they are unable to personally accompany their child.
- 3.5 The statutory walking distance is not necessarily the shortest distance by road. It is the shortest route along which a child, if accompanied by a responsible person, could walk from home to school in reasonable safety. As such the measured route may be longer than expected and may include footpaths, bridleways and other pathways, as well as recognised roads. The route from school may also differ from the route to school.
- 3.6 The assessment will be made by Officers in line with national good practice guidance. Assessments do not determine whether a route is safe or dangerous - all routes should be thought of as presenting some risk. Instead the assessment will determine whether transport should be provided at taxpayer expense because a particular walking route presents exceptional safety hazards.
- 3.7 The Policy sets out the assessment principles by which officers will assess the risks associated with any specific walking route.
- 3.8 The Policy explains the appeals process in relation to the transport eligibility.

4 STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The policy and processes have been considered against all relevant Department for Education and Department for Transport guidance.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

- 5.1 The policy has no specific resource implications
- 5.2 The assessments of specific routes will aid the consideration of investment in traffic and highway improvements to support the safe travel of specific communities.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 There are no equalities impacts associated with this report

8 CLIMATE CHANGE

- 8.1 By identifying schemes to make safety enhancements the pupils and other locals will be encouraged to walk rather than utilising vehicular transport.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 None

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 The policy has not been consulted on formally, but as individual schemes generate safe routes consultation within communities and schools will look to obtain engagement from locals and parents.

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Background papers	
Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format	