## Bath & North East Somerset Council

| DECISION MAKER: | Cllr Paul May, Cabinet Member for Children's Services | |
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| DECISION DATE: | **On or after 10th June 2024** | EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:<br><br>**E 3529** |
| TITLE: | **SEND Home to School Travel Policy Review** | |
| WARD: | All | |
| **AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM** | | |

**List of attachments to this report:**

- The SEND Home to School Travel Policy 2024
- Equalities Impact Assessment
- Risk Assessment
- DfE Travel to school for children of compulsory school age – Statutory guidance for local authorities Jan 2024
- Consultation Summary Report
- Policy comparison document

## 1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The current SEND Home to School Travel Policy has not been updated for several years and since then a number of DfE guidance updates have been issued. This has caused the current policy to become out of date. The SEND travel policy has been reviewed and rewritten in line with new Department for Education guidance. It has also been updated to clarify the eligibility criteria and to outline all travel support options for SEND children and young people more clearly.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

**The Cabinet Member is asked to;**

**2.1 Proposal:** Agree to adopt the new policy as set out in the appendices

## 3    THE REPORT

3.1 The B&NES Home to School Transport Policy required updating due to new statutory guidance issued in January 2024. The policy had become outdated, causing confusion for parents and operational difficulties within the team.

3.2 The Policy has been updated to meet this new guidance, and to allow for consistent decision making under the policy. This will allow us to better manage our resources.

3.3 The consultation process has been followed robustly, including writing to 477 parent/carers, contacting 69 schools, 36 transport providers, B&NES parent carer forum, consulting our B&NES colleagues. Feedback was given online, via the telephone and at 6 in person events.

3.4 A comparison document highlighting the changes is provided in the appendix.

## 4    STATUTORY CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 **Education Act 1996**, section 508b states that local authorities must provide travel provision to and from school for eligible children. Schedule 35B outlines the eligibility criteria.

4.2 **DfE Travel to school for children of compulsory school age – Statutory guidance for local authorities Jan 2024** provides guidance on what should be in the relevant Local Authorities policy.

## 5    RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCE, PROPERTY, PEOPLE)

5.1 **DfE Travel to school for children of compulsory school age – Statutory guidance for local authorities Jan 2024** states that Local Authorities should make the most efficient use of council resource when allocating suitable travel provision.

## 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 and is attached.

## 7    EQUALITIES

7.1 A comprehensive equalities impact assessment has been carried out and is included in the attachments. Alternatively you can find it here: https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/SEND-HTST-Policy-Review-EIA.pdf

## 8    CLIMATE CHANGE

8.1 This policy looks to encourage the use of public transport and shared transport whenever this can meet the needs of the child or young person.

## 9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

9.1 None

## 10 CONSULTATION

10.1    We have consulted with Cllr. Paul May, the Section 151 officer and the Monitoring officer.

10.2    We have written to all parent/carers of children with SEND school travel support, emailed all schools and settings with SEN placements, all Rainbow Resource card holders, Bath Parent Carer Forum members and taxi companies. There have been posts on social media (LWB, Corporate & BPCF) and a press release. We have also attended 6 in-person drop-in events across the Authority area. The policy was also discussed at the CAHW PDS Panel in May.

10.3    A summary report of the consultation feedback is also attached.

| Contact person | Laura Donnelly – Head of SEND |
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| **Background papers** | None |
| **Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format** ||