

Level One Equality Impact Assessment Pro-forma

1	Title of function or policy to be assessed Proposed reduction in the Special Educational Needs and Looked after Children Transport/Travel Budget of £70k for the financial year 2014/15
1a	Existing or new policy or function/service? Existing Service Budget
2	Lead officer on assessment Ian McGuff
3	Members of assessment team Pauline Sharratt, Huw Powell, Trish Brittain, Chris Ballinger, Jane Prashar
4	Head of service Tony Wells
5	Date initial assessment began 29/10/2013
6	Date assessment completed 24/06/2014
	Aims of policy or function/service
7	<p>What are the aims and objectives or purposes of the policy or function/service?</p> <p>The objective of the budget is a) to enable the Directorate of Children's Services to assess and deliver the statutory travel and transport needs of pupils with Special Educational Needs and Looked after Children and b) to promote sustainable means of travel to school and FE establishments/provision in certain cases. A 70K budget reduction represents a 2.5 % reduction against the 2013/14 set budget.</p> <p>Proposed efficiencies for the financial year 2014/15 may ensure that the reduction will be achievable without adversely affecting eligible children and young people supported by the relevant 0-19 Transport Budget</p> <p><i>The proposal is that a post is created (secondment or temporary contract for 1 year) which will have responsibility for driving forward the offer and take up of Personal Travel Budgets (PTB's). The post to be officer grade and to have no other duties apart from fast tracking the development of the PTB scheme and achieving savings in year. Post holder to report to DSLT on a monthly basis identifying savings made and take up of the scheme.</i></p> <p><i>Note: PTB's are being developed by many Authorities because it is recognised as a VFM way of delivering a statutory duty.</i></p>

	<i>In addition it is intended that further savings are achieved as the number of looked after children in the authority is reduced as a result of other work that is taking place in the Children and Families Division.</i>			
8	Who is it intended to affect or benefit (the target population)? Children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Looked after Children within the borough who qualify for transport assistance to attend their place of education or assessment.			
9	What do you think are the main issues relating to the equality areas below within the policy or function/service?			
	Issues			
Age	The proposed budget must be of sufficient value to ensure that eligible children and young people requiring travel support are not prevented from accessing it because of their age. If eligible 19-25s may be affected by this proposal.			
Disability	The proposed budget must be of sufficient value to ensure that eligible children and young people who qualify for travel and transport support are able to access the provision regardless of their disability.			
Gender	There are no gender proscribed practices funded by the budget.			
Ethnic origin	Ethnicity is not an eligibility criterion or consideration for the assessment or provision of travel and transport for eligible children funded by this budget.			
Religion or belief	The eligibility criteria for travel and transport funded by this budget do not discriminate on the basis of religion or belief other than as set out in the Education and Inspections Act 2006.			
Sexual Orientation	The sexual orientation of children or adults is not a consideration when assessing the travel and transport needs of eligible children funded by this budget.			
	Monitoring Information			
10	Are there systems in place to monitor the current and future impact of this policy or function/service in relation to	Yes	No	Not applicable/ appropriate

	Age	Yes		
	Disability	Yes		
	Gender	Yes		
	Ethnic origin	Yes		
	Religion/belief	Yes		
	Sexual Orientation	Yes		
11	<p>Provide details of the systems used and data collected for each of the equality strands. If you answered no or n/a to any above please explain why.</p> <p>Age: This budget supports the SEN element of the home-to-school transport policy which covers an age range of pre-school assessment (SEN) through to year 11 or year 14 for young people with a severe learning difficulty. Age and year group are recorded on the ONE System which is a Transport Management database. Age qualifying criteria are set by legislation and cannot be reduced or altered by the LA.</p> <p>Disability: The ONE System database used to manage the provision of home-to-school transport records the specifics of each child or young person with a disability. The transport policy supported by this budget ensures that no eligible children or young people are refused travel support because of their disability.</p> <p>Gender: Gender is recorded on the application form for transport and is entered onto the ONE System database if not already held. Gender is also recorded on driver and escort application forms and is entered onto the ONE System database. The gender of an escort or driver may be recorded and specified to cover the safety of a child or children. There are no gender barriers to accessing transport for children and young people under this budget line.</p> <p>Ethnic Origin: Ethnicity is monitored from information contained within transport requests. The request is in electronic format and the monitoring field is mandatory (the form cannot be submitted without the field being completed). The ethnicity of each applicant is then entered onto EMS if not already held.</p> <p>Religion/belief: The policy supported by this budget line complies with education law and provides free travel support for eligible children in year groups 7 to 11 to attend the nearest available school chosen on the grounds of faith or belief. The provision is means tested and children who qualify have the entitlement recorded on the ONE System when travel support is provided.</p> <p>Sexual orientation: Sexual orientation is recorded (if supplied) on the Disclosure & Barring application form for contract staff employed in the Children's Services Transport Contract which is in part funded by this budget line. The sexual orientation of children and young people is not</p>			

	recorded, considered or evaluated.
12	<p>From the monitoring information are there differences between outcomes and the objectives of the policy or function/service? If there is no usable monitoring information available, what is your understanding of your customers?</p> <p>There are no groups or individuals (who qualify for transport) discriminated against by the policy this budget supports or its outcomes. Entitlement to free travel support is in-line with legal requirements and national guidelines for 0-19 year olds. There is a robust review and appeals system in place for 0-16 year olds so that each transport application refused under policy also advises the sender of the right to review and encloses a review application form. Each review is carried out by a Divisional Manager separate from the Transport Team. Each review letter also advises the recipient of the right to appeal to through Legal & Democratic Services.</p>
13	<p>Is there a need to gather better or more information than is currently available to assess the impact of this policy or function/service? What information is needed?</p> <p>The service supported by this budget line is monitored by Head teachers, parents, Carers, Specialist Officers from HI, VI, Physical & Sensory, Social Workers, EWS Officers and by annual user surveys. Applications for transport are submitted by teachers and social workers who act as an advocate for the child. Requirements for the 19-25s are being identified through by key professionals and stakeholders. There is no need for further equalities monitoring of the service as this is already comprehensive.</p>
	Differential / Adverse Impacts
14	<p>Are there any customer groups which might be expected to benefit from the policy or function/service but do not?</p> <p>Customer groups are clearly established within the policy supported by this budget line – if a child qualifies for travel support there are no barriers to provision other than for Health and Safety reasons.</p>
15	<p>Are there any customer groups which are not satisfied with the policy or function/service, or have made more complaints?</p>

	Yes: applicants who do not qualify for support from this budget line because of home-to-school travel support policy eligibility criteria which is aligned with national standards.
16	<p>Are there factors or barriers within the policy or function/service which could contribute to differential or adverse impacts? (these factors may be unintentional)</p> <p>The policy supported by this budget line allows for only those children who qualify for home-to-school transport/travel support to be provided with it. An application based solely on age, disability, gender, ethnic origin or sexual orientation would not necessarily entitle a child to transport. This may result in certain groups being entitled to transport by virtue of distance while those who live nearer to the school are required to walk. This is counterbalanced by the review and appeals procedures which have the power to overrule policy and make exceptional provision.</p>
17	<p>Does the policy or function/service have any differential or adverse impacts on certain groups? If so explain what they are and the reasons for the differential/adverse impacts?</p> <p>The policy allows for only those children who qualify for home-to-school travel support to be provided with it. An application based solely on age, disability, gender, ethnic origin or sexual orientation would not necessarily entitle a child to travel support.</p>
	Conclusions
18	<p>As a result of this assessment is a level two full impact assessment required: No</p> <p>The proposed reduction in the 2014/15 budget that supports SEN and LAC travel and transport coupled with proposed efficiencies is not of sufficient value to adversely affect the ability of eligible children and young people to access an educational placement or assessment of SEN. The policy supported by the budget line will continue to allow those children who are unable to walk safely to their place of education or assessment to have access to suitable transport that will ensure accessibility. <i>Key to this statement is creation of an officer post with responsibility for the take up of PTB's by eligible families.</i></p> <p>Due consideration will continue to be given to disability, age and religion or faith. There are no restrictions placed on ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.</p>

19	Further Actions – whether proceeding to a level 2 assessment or not please detail any actions necessary within the policy or function/service highlighted as a result of this initial assessment. There must be a periodic review of the equalities impact assessment; this will be aligned with any future cuts to the budget line GCGC RASA.	
20	Date to commence Level 2 assessment if required	n/a
21	Signed Assessment Supporting Officer:	Date
22	Signed Head of Service:	Date