

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CABINET

1 SEPTEMBER 2015

REPORT OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RATIONALISATION OF LEARNER TRANSPORT

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present Cabinet with the recommendation of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in response to their consideration of the subject of Rationalisation of Learner Transport.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 3 April 2013 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 The Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee has considered the issues around the provision of learner transport on a number of previous occasions and have produced recommendations relating to the rationalisation of the service in order to obtain efficiency savings.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 At its meeting on 29 July 2015, the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a report from the Children's Directorate setting out the progress made in relation to the rationalisation of Learner Transport for pupils with a Special Educational Need (SEN).
- 4.2 Following detailed discussion with Officers and consideration of the report, during which the Committee briefly discussed the Local Authority's other transport services, the Committee agreed to make the following recommendation to Cabinet:

The Committee recommend that a comprehensive policy review of all transport within the Local Authority be undertaken as a matter of urgency to consider all possible means of utilising the Authority's transport vehicles in order to achieve efficiency savings.

Members further recommend that:

1. *Officers determine where there is best practice in Wales, in terms of Learner Transport, and that this is used to majorly inform the review;*
2. *Legal issues and potential legal concerns are considered as part of the review;*
3. *The Review utilises empirical evidence and facts and seeks these out where they may not be already known;*
4. *Consideration be given to further mainstreaming transport for pupils with SEN as far as possible, given that many of these pupils are attending mainstream schools and classes;*
5. *The use of escorts be considered as part of the review, and whether they can be better and more effectively utilised;*
6. *Consideration be given to revisiting innovative schemes such as the Volunteer Driver Programme to assist with Learner Transport;*
7. *A process be determined through the review to continuously assess and track the take up of transport throughout the year, in order to inform future provision.*

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 The work of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

- 6.1 There is no Equality Impact Assessment that has been carried out in relation to this report, however, any potential changes made to the Authority's transport policy following a review being undertaken would then require an EIA.

7. Financial Implications.

- 7.1 This report itself does not have any financial implications; however any changes implemented as a result of a review of transport services and policy, may have direct financial implications for the Authority.

8. Recommendation.

- 8.1 Cabinet is recommended to consider the recommendation of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to Learner Transport and Transport Services within the LA.

Andrew Jolley,
Assistant Chief Executive – Legal & Regulatory Services
6 November 2013

Contact Officer: Rachel Keepins
Scrutiny Officer

Telephone: (01656) 643613

E-mail: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Democratic Services - Scrutiny
Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background documents

Cabinet:
Report and Minutes – 12 November 2013

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny:
Report and Minutes dated:
30 September 2013
17 February 2015
29 July 2015