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To: The Chair and Members
of the Cabinet

County Hall
Topsham Road
Exeter
Devon
EX2 4QD

Date: 28 February 2023

Contact: Karen Strahan, 01392 382264

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CABINET

Wednesday, 8th March, 2023

A meeting of the Cabinet is to be held on the above date at 10.30 am in the Committee Suite (Clinton / Fortescue) - County Hall to consider the following matters.

Donna Manson
Chief Executive

A G E N D A

10 Education Travel Review: Approval to arrangements for subsequent academic year (Pages 1 - 54)

Report of the Director of Children and Young People's Futures on the Education Travel Policy Review, attached.

An Impact Assessment is also attached and available at <http://devon.cc/lapolicies>.

Electoral Divisions(s): All Divisions

Members are reminded that Part II Reports contain exempt information and should therefore be treated accordingly. They should not be disclosed or passed on to any other person(s). They need to be disposed of carefully and should be returned to the Democratic Services Officer at the conclusion of the meeting for disposal.

EDUCATION TRANSPORT POLICIES FOR 2023-25

Report of the Interim Head of Education (Delivery)

Please note that the following recommendations are subject to approval by the Cabinet and confirmation under the provisions of the Council's Constitution before taking effect.

1. Note that Education Transport Policies were proposed and consulted on by the Local Authority.
2. Approve the Education Transport Policies summarised at **section 2** below.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Local Authority (Devon LA) has a statutory responsibility to make arrangements for eligible children to travel between home and school.
- 1.2 It must also consult on arrangements that are lawful, consistent, and transparent for not less than 28 days.
- 1.3 This paper is to report the outcome of the consultation and to present an Education Transport Policy and a Post-16 Education Transport Policy for consideration and determination.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Members are requested to:
 - a) approve an Education Transport Policy 2023-25
 - b) approve a Post-16 Education Transport Policy 2023-25

with detailed recommendations set out in **section four**.

3. CONSULTATION

- 3.1 In previous years, the Education transport policies have been the subject of consultation as part of the annual consultation on admission arrangements which is held between 1 November and the first week in January. Transport policies up to and including the academic year 2023-24 have been determined by Cabinet.
- 3.2 Devon's policies meet its statutory duties to provide free school transport under specified circumstances. The LA has also exercised its discretion to provide transport under other circumstances, with or without a parental contribution towards its financial costs.
- 3.3 LA officers undertook a review of all discretionary school transport in the autumn half term and a review of the level at which parental contributions to costs were set. This was part of the LA's financial sustainability programme. To allow time for this review to take place, transport policies were not including in the annual admissions consultation in November 2022 to January 2023.

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- 3.4 A separate Home to School Transport consultation took place between 16 January and 2 March 2023, hosted at <https://www.devon.gov.uk/haveyoursay/consultations/home-to-school-transport-consultation/>
- 3.3 Details of the consultation were notified to stakeholders:
- elected members
 - all Devon schools
 - senior LA officers
 - MPs
 - FE Colleges in Devon and in neighbouring LA areas
 - trade union representatives (NESUWT, Voice, ASCL, ATL, NEU, GMB, NAHT, NUT, Unite, Unison)
 - Parent Carer Voice
 - Exeter and Plymouth Dioceses
 - Devon Schools Leadership Services
 - Department for Education
 - Youth Parliament Devon
- 3.4 A meeting was held with the Equality Reference Group membership of which includes representatives from Age UK, Young Devon, Living Options Devon, Intercom Trust, Devon Faith and Belief Forum, Fawcett Devon, and the Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council.
- 3.5 A letter was sent direct to all potentially-affected parents – those paying contributions to LA transport costs because they have children use a concessionary seat or under the post-16 transport policy.
- 3.6 Responses to the consultation are detailed at **Appendix One**.

4. EDUCATION TRANSPORT POLICY

- 4.1 As part of the financial sustainability programme, officers reviewed all forms of discretionary entitlement to transport support, and the level of parental contribution.
- 4.2 From that review, no changes to discretionary entitlement were proposed for consultation.
- 4.3 The review found that revenues from parental contributions for concessionary seats and from contributions to costs for post-16 passengers was £297,000 in the 2022/23 financial year. An increase in contributions from £600 to £800 per academic year was proposed. Factors in this position:
- An £800 contribution would achieve an increase in revenue of £63,000 in the academic year 2023/24, £95,000 for the full financial year 2024/25 to mitigate sharply rising costs for the LA.
 - There has been no increase in the level of contributions since September 2018.
 - There has been a very significant increase in costs to the LA in commissioning home to school transport, with rates increasing for new contracts at around 30%
 - A £30 discount where parents and carers pay the full year cost in full would remain.
 - Post-16 students should be able to seek financial support from their sixth forms and Further Education Colleges' post-16 bursary fund.

- The proposed figure is below most of Devon's neighbouring LAs:

Cornwall 2022-23: £540

Devon 2022-23: £600

Dorset 2022-23: £825 – not yet decided on a rate for 2023-24

Plymouth 2022-23: £541 – increasing for 2023 by RPI in January

Torbay 2022-23: £682 – increases are usually in line with the price of a Stagecoach pass for post-16 passengers. Concessionary transport is not available in Torbay.

Somerset 2022-23: £850.00

Wiltshire 2022-23 £850 – increasing for 2023-24 to £900

4.4 £800 was proposed for consultation in Devon for 2023-24.

4.5 Responses were received to the consultation, detailed at **Appendix 1**. In light of the responses, officers reviewed options again and suggest a staged increase in the contribution rate.

A £690 contribution would achieve an increase in revenue of £63,000 in the academic year 2023/24, £95,000 for the full financial year 2024/25.

In order to give parents and young people as much notice as possible, it is proposed that a contribution level of £900 apply for the next academic year, 2026-27.

Recommendation to members: that the level of parental contributions rise incrementally over the next academic years:

£690 in 2023-24

£750 in 2024-25

£800 in 2025-26

£900 in 2026-27

4.6 It was further proposed that the increase in contributions be effective from September 2023. An increase from September 2024 would lead to a significant delay in impacting on the financial sustainability programme.

Recommendation to members: that the increase in the level of parental contributions take place from September 2023.

4.7 Parents take transport entitlement into consideration when submitting applications for school admission. It has been proposed that policies are set for 3 academic years at a time to help parents to better understand what the policy will be. The two policy documents have been redrafted in a simpler, shorter format.

Recommendation to members: that education transport policies be determined for three academic years at a time.

4.8 Where a school extends its admissions catchment area, Devon will decide which school to recognise for catchment transport purposes. Devon's strategy is to provide free transport on catchment school grounds to one primary school and to one secondary school. While keeping the impact on parental preference under review, the approach is not to remove the existing catchment transport eligibility. Statutory eligibility is unaffected in all cases.

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- 1 Uffculme School proposed and has determined an increase to its catchment area, taking in the primary school catchment area for Willand School. This area is in the catchment area for Cullompton Community College.

Recommendation to members: to continue to recognise Cullompton Community College as the catchment school for transport purposes in the Willand School catchment and not to recognise Uffculme School for school transport purposes.

- 2 Matford Brook Academy proposed and has determined to introduce a primary and a secondary-phase catchment area for 2024-25. These two areas are in the catchment areas for Alphington Primary School, Exminster Community Primary School, Ide Primary School, and Kenn Church of England Primary School and for Teign School, West Exe School, and Dawlish College.

Recommendation to members: to continue to recognise Alphington Primary School, Exminster Community Primary School, Ide Primary School, and Kenn Church of England Primary School and for Teign School, West Exe School, and Dawlish College as the catchment schools for transport purposes where the new Matford Brook Academy catchments are introduced and not to recognise Matford Brook Academy for school transport purposes.

5 FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 By increasing parental contribution levels, the LA will increase revenue which will offset the costs of providing school transport to all pupils. Where post-16 passengers make other arrangements, there will be savings where the LA is able to reduce the size of vehicles.

The anticipated increase in revenue in the 2023/24 financial year is £54,000 reflecting the increase will not come into effect until the start of the 2023/24 academic year. A full year effect of this increase is anticipated to be in the region of £82,000 for the financial year 2024-25.

- 5.2 An Equality Impact Needs Assessment was carried out on proposed changes to policy. This is published at <http://devon.cc/lapolicies>
- 5.3 The entitlement to free transport from homes in the newly-introduced catchment areas for Matford Brook Academy to their recognised transport catchment area schools will be unchanged, with no increase in costs. Where there is a statutory entitlement on nearest school grounds from these homes to Matford Brook Academy, there may be an increase in costs with a new route. That increase in costs would be offset as transport would not be required for that child to the more school recognised for transport on catchment school grounds.

8 SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The transport policy supports the principle of providing support for children to attend their schools.

9 EQUALITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Equality of access to education opportunities is a fundamental feature of education transport policies. All policies for consideration have been subject to an Equality Impact Needs Assessment, at <http://devon.cc/lapolicies>

10 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 Supporting school transport is a statutory function of Devon County Council. Setting fair, transparent, and legal policies ensures that Devon meets its duty and enables parents, schools and other interested parties to have confidence in them.
- 10.2 The transport policies have been proposed and the subject of consultation under guidance from the department for Education. They meet the LA's statutory requirements, include additional provision that is discretionary which support children's attendance at a local school and facilitate a realistic choice of school for many families.

11 RISK MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 The key risk is that transport policies are not determined in good time for parents to make an informed choice over the schools they wish to apply for from 2024. This would mean that Devon County Council was not compliant with the requirements of the School Admissions Code. It would be liable to censure from the Department for Education and the Office of the Schools' Adjudicator (OSA).

12. CONCLUSION

- 12.1 Devon County Council has a major role in access to education: through school transport and school admissions. It must set a transport policy that informs parents clearly about eligibility and makes the provision it is required to do and any provision it chooses to do by discretion in a fair and consistent manner.

It must do this in an efficient a manner as possible, ensuring through route planning and review that passengers arrive at school able to benefit from and enjoy their education.

The recommendations in this paper will ensure Devon County Council meets its statutory responsibilities in respect of school transport.

Julian Wooster
Director of Children and Young People's Futures

ELECTORAL DIVISION: All

Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Skills: Councillor Andrew Leadbetter

Contact for enquiries: Andrew Brent, Senior Policy Officer 01392 383000

Local Government Act 1972. Background Papers:

Appendix One – responses to consultation

<p>Councillor Carol Witton</p>	<p>Will the cabinet member please provide a report on the approximate number of seats on school transport sold to families at the current rate of £600 per seat per annum, and the total income this provides to the authority. Will the cabinet member also provide an assessment of the amount expected to be raised by the proposed increase in the concessionary rate to £800 per seat per term, and explain whether any calculations have been made in arriving at this figure as to the number of families currently purchasing a seat who would no longer do so at the higher rate.</p> <p>Reply: There are currently 444 chargeable Post 16 passengers and 163 concessionary passengers, a total of 607 passengers</p> <p>The budgeted income in the 2022/23 financial year is £297,000. The anticipated increase in income in the 2023/24 financial year is £63,000 reflecting the increase will not come into effect until September 2023, the start of the 2023/24 academic year. A full year effect of this increase is anticipated to be in the region of £95,000.</p> <p>This anticipated increase in income is lower than the full impact across all 607 passengers reflecting that some may find alternative transport arrangements.</p> <p>Concessionary passengers utilise spare seats on contracted transport and any drop off in numbers would be a direct loss of income. However some routes do have waiting lists. For Post 16 passengers there may be some savings in transport costs for the County Council should a passenger no longer travel on our contracted transport. These savings have not been calculated.</p>
<p>Councillor Linda Hellyer, Bideford</p>	<p>I am writing in response to the consultation concerning school transport. While I can see the need to put the cost up, £800 per annum is a lot of money and will adversely affect those families on lower incomes. Presumably, they will pay for each term rather than £800 in one hit? Will there be any facility for families to pay in instalments if they cannot pay £266plus a term? What about families on e.g. Universal Credit, or Special Guardians (who are often retired) who are on Low incomes.</p> <p>What sounds like a good idea to help our budget, could have very serious effects for the children of families on low incomes.</p> <p>Also, regarding all the DCC mini buses taking children with Send to special schools, do these families make any contribution?</p> <p>Reply: In response to the questions you raised, I can advise that the majority of Post 16 pupils, on a low income, will be able to apply for financial assistance from the School or College bursary fund to assist them with making a payment to either a public service transport provider or towards the financial contribution for Devon County Council transport. This is currently the case and will continue. For those attending a School or College that does not have a bursary fund, pupils can request a reduction in the annual amount direct from Devon County Council during the assessment of needs process. The assessment of needs process</p>

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	<p>is something all Post 16 pupils will need take part in if they are unable to use public transport and need to request an alternative form of transport from Devon County Council.</p> <p>The payments for both Post 16 pupils and concessionary passengers can be made in various different ways. Payments can be made by either monthly direct debit, termly or for the year in full.</p> <p>All pupils travelling on concessionary seats or Post 16 basis are charged the financial contribution, this is regardless of passenger need or the type of transport provided. For example, someone of Post 16 age traveling in a wheelchair accessible vehicle with a passenger escort is charged the same as a Post 16 aged passenger traveling in a standard taxi or mini bus.</p> <p>These changes will not effect any entitled Primary or Secondary age passenger.</p>
<p>Councillor Debo Sellis, Tavistock and Gulworthy</p>	<p>Have all the schools been invited to share this with parents? Should I forward to the Town and Parish Councils in Tavistock and Gulworthy?</p> <p>Reply: This is being shared with all schools and we are asking them to share details of the consultation with parents/carers in newsletters or emails being sent out to parents/carers.</p> <p>We are writing directly to the parents/carers who are existing concessionary seat users or post-16 passengers who are directly affected by these proposals.</p> <p>I would be grateful if you could forward to the Town and Parish Councils of Tavistock and Gulworthy.</p>
<p>Councillor Paul Henderson, Chulmleigh and Landkey</p>	<p>I have to say I am a little uncomfortable with the proposed 33% increase in concessionary seat pricing. Many families are struggling with household bills and this is not a small amount of money for them to find.</p> <p>Reply: thank you for your response to the consultation. Once the consultation closes, the responses will go to Cabinet either through a Cabinet Decision Form or through full Cabinet for decision, so we appreciate your response.</p>
<p>HO, parent</p>	<p>I already feel it is wrong that we have to pay for our daughter's transport for 2 reasons. 1) Although she is now 17, she is still required by law to be in education and due to her many additional needs, she has no choice but to attend a school that is a fair distance away. The decision has always been in her EHCP that she requires the supports only a special school can give.</p>

	<p>Additionally, again due to her special needs, she is not mentally capable of taking public transport such as a bus to school which would be considerably cheaper for us parents to pay. We are already struggling to pay the cost of her transport as it is and cannot feasibly afford an increase of £200. However, if the price rises we would have no choice but to pay it for the reasons stated above. We do not have the luxury of just moving her to the closest local school which we would do if she was mentally capable of such a move. I feel it is unfair to impose such costs on the parents of children who have to travel long distances to school because it is the only suitable school to manages their child's needs.</p> <p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p>
<p>CG, parent</p>	<p>In response we disagree with the proposals due to</p> <p>They are well above the cost of living increase and national rates of inflation.</p> <p>In regards to this we would recommend means testing all applicants that live over 2 miles from school and then making these people pay. Also a more robust decision making process for areas that are on the borderline of the free school transport. A map would be best to show the areas precisely. And would negate the need for disagreements in distances.</p> <p>Also allowing this that pay a seat from the beginning of the school year.</p> <p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p> <p>Cabinet will not be able to impose any contribution to the costs of providing transport for those children who have a statutory entitlement to free transport: that is those who attend the closest suitable school that is available where that is further than a maximum walking distance of 2 miles for children up to the age of 8 and 3 miles for those aged 8 and above. There are extended entitlements for children who live in low income households, for who transport must be provided without charge.</p> <p>The LA online mapping system https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place/school-designated-areas/ is used to assess whether a child is entitled to free transport. Measurements are made according to published criteria by Transport Officers.</p>

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	<p>The availability of concessionary seats is reviewed regularly. Places have not been made available at the start of the academic year because demand for seats by entitled passengers and, from that, the size of vehicles, can be subject to significant change in September. It would be very disruptive for concessionary passengers to have a seat withdrawn because an entitled passenger required it or because a smaller vehicle was to be commissioned. Making concessionary seats available from half term minimises the risk of this occurring as passenger lists settle.</p>
<p>Councillor Alan Connett, Dawlish</p>	<p>1) I noted the commentary below in the consultation on home to school transport costs. It's not entirely clear to me what the continued recognition means in practical terms for children who, for example, live in the Dawlish College 'catchment' within my electoral division (Exminster & Haldon), but may wish to attend the new Matford Brook Academy. Similarly, what is the effect, if any, on primary age children in Exminster, Ide and Kenn. Before I can comment on these aspects, could you explain what the intention of the proposal is please.</p> <p>2) Devon is consulting on its proposals to increase the discretionary charge by £200 to £800 for children and post 16 students who are not entitled to statutory school transport but have the benefit of a concessionary seat. In the preamble to the consultation, the council did not explain how it arrived at a £200 increase other than to say that there have been no increases since 2018. I submitted my response using the online consultation survey and also highlighting the lack of clarity - and have received no response to the points raised/my concerns.</p> <p>Q4. AC Response: The consultation does not explain how the proposed increase of £200 (to £800) has been arrived at. It states there has been no increase since 2018 - but not what how the £200 was arrived it. The consultation says the charge is a contribution to the cost, implying it does not cover the cost, but similarly does not say what the cost of a seat is. As this is a discretionary offer to which helps fill vacant seats it is a benefit to the council to defray the cost of running the service. On the basis that there is no explanation, I am against the proposal.</p> <p>Q6. AC Response: Same comments as I gave in response to Question 4. Additionally, it is not clear what, if any, account the County Council takes of the impact the increases will have on families (or the post 16 students themselves) with low incomes. Has there been an equality impact assessment of this proposal?</p>
	<p>Reply: Many thanks for your response to the School Transport consultation. I confirm we have received your on-line response to the survey and are currently collating all these responses.</p>

	<p>Apologies for the delay in coming back to you. In response to your questions:</p> <p>Q4. The £200 proposed increase reflects the savings target required through the financial sustainability programme for the County Council and takes into account high transport inflation on contractor surrenders which is around 30%. The proposed charges would still be below the majority of our Local Authority neighbour’s 2022-23 rates.</p> <p>Q6. I can advise that the majority of Post 16 pupils, on a low income, will be able to apply for financial assistance from the School or College bursary fund to assist them with making a payment to either a public service transport provider or towards the financial contribution for Devon County Council transport. This is currently the case and will continue. For those attending a School or College that does not have a bursary fund, pupils can request a reduction in the annual amount direct from Devon County Council during the assessment of needs process. The assessment of needs process is in place for all Post 16 pupils if they are unable to use public transport and/or no suitable alternative transport is available and therefore request an alternative form of transport from Devon County Council.</p>
SB, parent	<p>Makes it unaffordable to get my son to school!</p> <p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p>
KH and DH, parents	<p>We are writing in response to your proposals to increase the contribution towards concessionary seat passengers for school transport in September 2023.</p> <p>Firstly, the proposed increase is excessive in relation to current inflation. We have two children who use concessionary seats on the bus, and if the cost of their passes were to increase from £600 to £800 we would no longer be able to use this service. We suspect that we are not the only family who feel this way, especially in the light of the current cost of living crisis, and therefore it is quite possible that you will lose ALL current income from concessionary seats.</p> <p>If we no longer used the school bus, this would entail us driving to school and back each day, often just behind or in front of the school bus. Our aim has been to be as sustainable as possible and to minimise the use of the car, but your proposals would make this impossible.</p>

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	<p>Furthermore, the quality of the current bus service has recently fallen way below standard. The children are regularly left waiting for half an hour or more for the bus to turn up, and sometimes the driver does not collect them at the designated stop at all. In light of this, the proposal to pay more is unacceptable to us.</p> <p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p> <p>Thank you for telling us about this matter. Please provide further information about the service provision you have been experiencing and it will be investigated for you.</p>
KS, parent	<p>I am writing to you about the letter I received through the post dated the 16th January 2023. This is regarding the cost of a spare seat on school transport starting in September 2023.</p> <p>I understand that the cost of petrol and other elements have increased but I know from personal experience that the income in to my household has not increased . I feel that putting it up by the amount that the you have proposed will see family's, who are already on a low income, have to squeeze the extra money from somewhere else.</p> <p>With the price increase from other bills there really is not a lot of money left to live on and then to put a further strange of £67 to find each term is a bit to much I feel.</p> <p>Some of these child are to vulnerable to use public transport so there only means of a safe and secure way of getting to their setting is by the transport that you offer. I know personal the piece of mind that comes knowing that my child is arriving where they need to be safe and calm ready to take on the day. I can not say that of public transport.</p> <p>I appreciate that you do have to increase the price but maybe not quite as much as this.</p> <p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p>
DD, parent	<p>I strongly believe that in the current financial climate a 33% rise in the cost of the transport provision in question is grossly unjust, unfair, and downright disgraceful.</p>

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	<p>Children will be forced to walk on dangerous roads because their parents can no longer afford the transport that they need.</p> <p>Will there be any special dispensations for children with additional needs that can not cope without the transport provision?</p> <p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p>
<p>SR, parent</p>	<p>I think considering the current economic climate, this idea is ridiculous. I personally, as a single mother to four children, find it extremely difficult to find £600 just so my child can get to and from school, where do you suppose I find an extra £200?</p> <p>Apart from the fact it's our nearest school anyway and therefore I shouldn't have to justify my child attending, I must be paying a large part of the fuel costs for all the other kids on the bus. Are you seriously trying to suggest that it costs you £800 per year to transport one child on a bus that I know for a fact has plenty of empty seats? It costs you the same whether he's on that bus or not, so I'd like to know why you are even considering this rise. So I can pay for all the other areas the council are failing? People are financially crippled anyway at the moment and you want us to find an extra £200 a year for a journey that is going ahead regardless of whether my child is on it?</p> <p>I think you get my stance on the matter, I think it's disgusting that it's even been suggested. Perhaps if there were less brexit supporting, Tory voting half wits on the council you wouldn't be in this mess.</p> <p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p>
<p>LC, parent</p>	<p>We are in receipt of your letter dated 16 January and we would respectfully like to request that the increase in fees for post 16 passengers be reconsidered.</p> <p>Our daughters go to [], [C] is currently post 16 and will continue her post 16 in September, [E] will begin her post 16 in September. We will therefore have two children taking the bus that are post 16.</p> <p>There is no safe route for the girls to walk or cycle to school and the public bus will take hours for them to get to school, therefore we use the school bus.</p>

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	<p>However, having both girls in post 16 and having to pay for the bus is a huge financial stress on us and we don't know how we will be able to pay for this and if the amount is increased there is absolutely no way we can afford it and we don't know how we will get our daughters to school.</p> <p>This is a huge worry for us. We are already financially struggling and to have these additional costs will completely destroy us. Please can you consider the huge impact that this will have on the children being unable to get a further education due to transport costs.</p>
	<p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p>
HM, family member	<p>I'm emailing regarding a letter I've received about transport arrangement cost for September 2023. The letter was addressed for my sister [TA] who will be moving to a different college in September. We are still in the process of getting a confirmed place at [] however, throughout the years [T] has been in education we have never needed to pay for her transport. [T] currently attends [] where they had helped us apply for a bursary. We are hoping to have the same thing arranged for [T] next college. Please get back to me with possible ways we can get that sorted.</p>
	<p>Reply:</p> <p>I can confirm that the annual contribution for your sister's transport has previously been paid by [] via their bursary funding. This was paid direct to the Education Transport Team within Devon County Council.</p> <p>As [T] will be 19 years of age by September 2023, an assessment of transport need will be required to determine if transport will need to continue to be provided by Education Transport when she moves to her new school placement. If it is determined that transport will need to be provided by the Education Transport team, there would not be any cost.</p> <p>I would recommend you contact the Education Transport team in May to discuss the process further. You can contact the team by emailing: schooltransportservicequeries-mailbox@devon.gov.uk.</p>
Nigel Williams, NASUWT National Executive	<p>NASUWT does not want to get into a debate about parent's exercising choice and having to pay the additional travel costs.</p> <p>However, the burden on travel for Post 16 young people is a great concern especially those who live in sparse remote communities who without car transport are in a very difficult place attending their nearest place of study. Whilst it is accepted they may have access to reduced fares this must be a problem for some young people. Noted that in a high fares, profit driven</p>

	<p>“public “bus services provision and greatly underwritten by the LA in sparse areas a fresh look is needed on what burdens this proposal may be putting on families in rural areas especially for Post – 16 pupils.</p> <p>Reply: The increase in the annual contribution amount will only effect those pupils of Post 16 age or pupils requesting a concessionary seat who are not entitled to free school transport from the local authority. The assessment process and criteria of those effected will not change and should public service not be available, and it is felt the Local Authority needs to provide transport, then alternative transport will be provided.</p> <p>Pupils of Post 16 age, attending a sixth form or further education setting, should be able to apply to the educational settings bursary fund for financial assistance. This is an option already available to many pupils and will continue to be the case. For pupils attending an educational setting that doesn’t have a bursary fund, we would consider a reduction of the annual contribution amount if the family are on a low income. This currently has the same assessment criteria as that of free school meals.</p> <p>As Public Transport Authority the County Council has recently established an Enhanced Partnership with its local bus companies in response to the Government’s National Bus Strategy. Full details are available on our Travel Devon web pages National Bus Strategy - Devon's Response - Travel Devon . Alongside the Partnership will be a Bus Forum and we will be looking at engagement with a wide cross section of our communities, including young people.</p>
<p>PR, parent</p>	<p>We live in a rural area, with which there are absolutely no public transport links with the school where my daughter attends sixth form. It is the only school we are in the catchment area for, and she catches a DCC provided coach every morning, along with 25-35 other youngsters from the Town (Modbury).</p> <p>The annual fuel cost for us to take her to and from school every day would be somewhere around the £500 mark. An increase to £800 would probably force us to adjust our working arrangements to a point where we could take her and collect her daily. Instead of receiving £800 you will effectively lose £600 but the bus (which is never full) would still have to be provided for the younger kids.</p> <p>Inevitably there will be three or four other families using the same bus in the same situation and lift sharing would be easy to organise. Instead of now gaining £2,400-£3,200 annually you will be losing £1,800-£2,400 instead, whilst we would be making pretty big savings.</p> <p>I suspect most people so affected will eventually reach the same conclusion and organising a work around is very easy to achieve.</p> <p>I appreciate that DCC is in complete financial strife but hitting people like this will just end up reducing your income. Can I suggest you try something else.</p>

Appendix One – responses to consultation

	<p>Reply: Thank you for your response to this consultation. It will be included in a post-consultation report to the Cabinet of the County Council for their consideration.</p>
Councillor Joan Atkins, Teignmouth Town Council	<p>Telephone call to the LA</p> <p>Reply: We spoke yesterday on the phone about Devon’s Home to School Transport Policy consultation and the proposals to increase the charges for concessionary seat users and post-16 passengers from £600 per annum to £800 per annum.</p> <p>The £200 proposed increase reflects the savings target required through the financial sustainability programme for the County Council and takes into account high transport inflation on contractor surrenders which is around 30%. The proposed charges would still be below the majority of our Local Authority neighbour’s 2022-23 rates.</p>

Appendix One – responses to consultation

The following 81 responses were made using the Have Your Say webpage¹

Question 1 – are you responding to the consultation as:

- 2 a child or young person
- 73 a parent or carer
- 2 a teacher/headteacher or other education professional
- 2 other

Question 2 – how old are you?

- 1 under 16 years of age
- 1 16-19 years of age

Question 3 – how old is your child?

- 50 under 16 years of age
- 22 16-19 years of age
- 1 19-25 years of age

Question 4 – are you or a child an existing passenger on Devon County Council home to school transport?

- 59 yes
- 15 no
- 3 not applicable

Question 5 – are you or your child a concessionary seat user on school transport provided by Devon County Council to a primary or secondary school?

- 37 yes
- 19 no
- 3 not applicable

Question 6 – do you or your child pay to use school transport provided by Devon County Council to a sixth form, FE College or other post-16 provision?

- 14 yes
- 6 no
- 2 not applicable

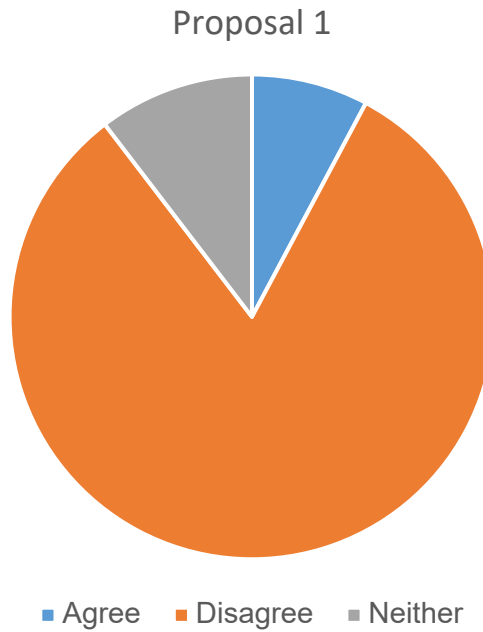
¹ At 23 February

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Question 7 – what was the single most important reason for choosing your school or post-16 provision?

- 19 location
- 2 examination / Ofsted results
- 11 effectiveness of leaders/teachers
- 5 courses offered
- 0 to attend provision due to its religious denomination or cultural/religious provision
- 0 inclusive ethos
- 0 behaviour policy
- 11 disability or special educational needs provision
- 11 other

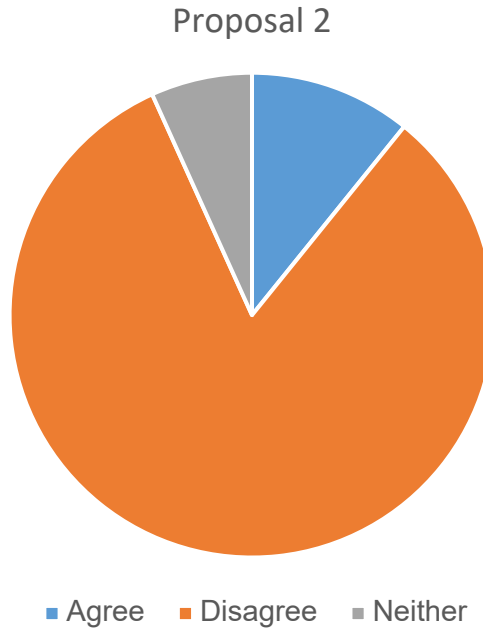
Question 8 - Proposal 1: to increase the contribution for a concessionary seat from £600 per annum to £800 per annum from September 2023. Do you agree or disagree with Proposal 1?



Appendix One – responses to consultation

Question 9 – do you have any comments regarding Proposal 1?
See table below

Question 10 - Proposal 2: to increase the contribution towards the financial costs incurred by Devon County Council in providing transport for post-16 passengers from £600 per annum to £800 per annum from September 2023. Do you agree or disagree with Proposal 2



Question 11 – do you have any comments regarding Proposal 2?
See table below

Question 12 – do you have any further comments on any aspects of the Transport Policy?
See table below

Appendix One – responses to consultation

1) LR, parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) £800 per year just to get my child to school - he will need transport from Sept 2023, an unthinkable amount of money. With the current cost of living crisis, in particular the cost of heating and electricity, combined with stagnant wages, asking parents, who are often only able to work part time, if at all, due to their caring responsibilities to pay such a huge sum each year is unfeasible. For me personally, I would be paying an entire month's wages, just to get my child to their school.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) £800 per year just to get my child to school - he will need transport from Sept 2023, an unthinkable amount of money. With the current cost of living crisis, in particular the cost of heating and electricity, combined with stagnant wages, asking parents, who are often only able to work part time, if at all, due to their caring responsibilities to pay such a huge sum each year is unfeasible. For me personally, I would be paying an entire month's wages, just to get my child to their school or collage placement
2) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) As children have to be in some form of education until they are 18 now, there should not be a charge for transport if attending school or college until the end of the academic year after they turn 18. Especially in areas where it is 20 miles to the nearest town/education establishment. £600 is extortionate enough in my opinion.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) As above
3) Parent	Disagree	[No content]
	Disagree	
4)		[No content]
5) DO, Parent	Disagree	[No content]
	Neither	
6) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) Energy and Cost of Living Crisis is the worst time to force parents and carers to pay more. We have no choice but to pay for the bus and £600 is already a lot of money to find. The bus stops are not in convenient places, I have to drive my daughter to the next village to drop her off and collect her.
	Disagree	Proposal 2)
7) Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) We had to send our daughter to [] due to lack of spaces at []. A £200 increase is absurd giving the cost of living crisis and money problems parents already face
	Disagree	Proposal 2)

Appendix One – responses to consultation

8) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) While I appreciate the need for some increase, an increase of 33% is neither supportable or reasonable and has not been explained or substantiated. Therefore I disagree with the scale of the proposed increase.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) While I appreciate the need for some increase, an increase of 33% is neither supportable or reasonable and has not been explained or substantiated. Therefore I disagree with the scale of the proposed increase.
9) TS, Parent	Agree	Proposal 1) Very much needed. We are refugees who fled the war in Ukraine. Your help with a transport to school will be very much appreciated.
	Agree	Proposal 2) Very much needed. We are refugees who fled the war in Ukraine. Your help with a transport to school will be very much appreciated.
10) Education professional	Agree	Proposal 1) An exemption for SEN pupils
	Agree	Proposal 2) An exemption for SEN pupils
11) RK, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) The service we have been receiving has been absolutely appalling buses turning up up to an hour late on many occasions. Multiple complaints have been made, we are already overpaying for this service as it is terrible since the busses have changed to Taw & Torridge.
	Disagree	Proposal 2)
12) Parent of post-16	Agree	[No content]
	Agree	
13) PB, Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) The current 600 pounds is a large amount of money. The proposed 800 pounds is an even larger amount of money. 25 percent more than £600. Living in a rural community with NO public transport suitable to get by son to college the school bus is the only option. It feels an unreasonable increase and another family stressor in a unprecedented cost of living crisis.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) The current 600 pounds is a large amount of money. The proposed 800 pounds is an even larger amount of money. 25 percent more than £600. Living in a rural community with NO public transport suitable to get by son to college the school bus is the only option. It feels an unreasonable increase and another family stressor in a unprecedented cost of living crisis.
14) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) I could not afford to pay £600 when my faugghter reaches 16 let alone £800. She would not be able to attend post 16 durle to this

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	Disagree	Proposal 2) see above
15) DR, Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) A 33% increase at this time is totally unacceptable. It went up 20% in 2018 already. I will have to earn £1000 just to send my child to school on the bus
	Disagree	Proposal 2) A 33% increase at this time is totally unacceptable. It went up 20% in 2018 already. I will have to earn £1000 just to send my child to school on the bus
16) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) Above cost of living increase /inflation
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Above cost of living increase/inflation
17) Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1)
	Disagree	Proposal 2) It would not be cost effective for us to use this service if the price was increased.
18) Parent	Neither	Proposal 1) if the school have to cover the increased cost i disagree as they will need to find the budget from elsewhere. If tax payer covers the cost from central fund i agree
	Neither	Proposal 2) who will pay for cost increase?
19) FM, Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) The proposed price increase hits families at a time when the cost of living crisis is at its zenith and is not even in line with an inflationary increase (which based on today's inflation rate would amount to £60). This is extremely unfair on rural communities who have no close public transport options and also when the bus already stops for school pupils anyway. This feels like a way of making surplus income rather than a fair charge for a post 16 student. DCC are more than aware of the problems with social mobility in the area and this does not assist in promoting further education opportunities for our young people. These costs are prohibitive to families and were already extremely high. Why the council feels a £200 increase is justifiable is beyond belief!
	Disagree	Proposal 2) The proposed price increase hits families at a time when the cost of living crisis is at its zenith and is not even in line with an inflationary increase (which based on today's inflation rate would amount to £60). This is extremely unfair on rural communities who have no close public transport options and also when the bus already stops for school pupils anyway. This feels like a way of making surplus income rather than a fair charge for a post 16 student. DCC are more than aware of the problems with social mobility in the area and this does not assist in promoting further education opportunities for our young people. These costs are prohibitive to families and were already extremely high. Why the council feels a £200 increase is justifiable is beyond belief!
20) Parent	Agree	[No content]

Appendix One – responses to consultation

	Agree	
21) MR, Education professional	Disagree	Proposal 1) In a cost of living crisis where we are experiencing families unable to afford uniform, food and heating it is remiss of the council to propose an increase in transport costs.
	Disagree	Proposal 2)
22) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) I have to pay weekly as no one can afford this!!!
	-	Proposal 2)
23) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) We already pay £600 a year for a bus that takes my son 3.5 miles to school (and back). £600 is already extortionate and to consider increasing it to £800 is ludicrous! If this price increase goes ahead, we'll have no option but to stop using the Devon Council Council bus.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) To ask that every child pays to use the bus, regardless if they're within the catchment area or not.
24) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) The cost is already prohibitive. Considering that it's a 3.5 mile bus ride it is already ridiculously expensive. Any further increase would mean we would not send our two children on the bus and we would drive adding more unnecessary congestion to the roads. Can you imagine how many more cars could be added to the school run congestion throughout the county if parents aren't able to afford the school bus! The school bus should be free and accessible to every student. The fact we even have to pay £600 is outrageous. and any more is insane!
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Insisting children continue with further education and then not providing the means and putting up barriers for them to easily access education is mad. Considering we live in a rural area with poor transportation options, making it harder to access public transport or putting up further barriers only limits the opportunities for people and reduces economic growth.
25) F, Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) An increase of 33% is too much. Many families, including ours, will find this increase very difficult. We are located in a rural area and our son depends on the bus to get to and from college every weekday.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) An increase of 33% is too much. Many families, including ours, will find this increase very difficult. We are located in a rural area and our son depends on the bus to get to and from college every weekday.
26) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) If cheaper to drive children yourself to school then will do so. Which does not adhere to need to protect environment.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) same as above
27) Parent	Agree	[No content]

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	Agree	
28) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1)
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Young people have to stay in education until they are 18. But they have to travel to college as they aren't six forms in schools anymore. It's unfair to charge families more.
29) MH, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) School transport should be free to all children up to the age of 18. 18 is the age they legally become an adult.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) School transport should be free to all children up to the age of 18. 18 is the age they legally become an adult.
30) LC, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) There is no difference in cost to the council whether the bus runs with an empty seat or a paid concessionary seat. The bus still runs past our house regardless it seems unreasonable to increase prices by £200 during a cost of living crises.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) as above
31) Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) The proposed increase is over 30% and far too much.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) The proposed increase is over 30% and far too much.
32) Councillor Alan Connett, Dawlish	Disagree	Proposal 1) The consultation does not explain how the proposed increase of £200 (to £800) has been arrived at. It states there has been no increase since 2018 - but not what how the £200 was arrived at. The consultation says the charge is a contribution to the cost, implying it does not cover the cost, but similarly does not say what the cost of a seat is. As this is a discretionary offer to which helps fill vacant seats it is a benefit to the council to defray the cost of running the service. On the basis that there is no explanation, I am against the proposal.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Same comments as I gave in response to Question 4. Additionally, it is not clear what, if any, account the County Council takes of the impact the increases will have on families (or the post 16 students themselves) with low incomes. Has there been an equality impact assessment of this proposal? Additionally, this survey provides no ability to respond to the catchment area issue in relation to Matford Brook Academy (not that the text, as written, is easy to understand what it actually intends!
33) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) Where are your proposals regarding how this reflects on SEND transport and your legal obligations
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Where are your proposals regarding how this reflects on SEND transport and your legal obligations
34) GP, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1)

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	Disagree	Proposal 2) Given that children are now required to attend education to the age of 18 it seems unreasonable not to offer transport to the nearest provider. We have already had two children complete post 16 education and the cost of transport was a real problem for us to fund
35) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) Life is expensive as it is
36) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 2)
	Disagree	[No content]
37) Parent	Disagree	[No content]
	Disagree	
38) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) Increasing to 800 would be unlawful as per the Equality Act as it is more than comparable non SEND children pay post 16 via a bus pass, the most which is 750 per annum for a Gold Pass, therefore it is discriminatory.
39) Parent of young person 19-25 years	Disagree	Proposal 2) as above
	Disagree	Proposal 1) Asking cash strapped parents to pay another £200 in a cost of living crisis amounts to removing education for many young people. Unforgivable when Sight and Hearing impaired children cannot access transport INDEPENDENTLY.
40) Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 2) It's irrelevant whether it's pre or post 16, these children and young people need an education and it should be provided.
	Disagree	Proposal 1)
41) Child or young person	Disagree	Proposal 2) Access to high quality post 16 provision across Devon should be a priority for Devon County Council. We send our child to his local secondary school which has a 6th form. To charge for transport for post 16 education for students living in rural locations where public transport access is poor is wrong in my view. Students should be able to access full time post 16 education in their local 6th form via a free bus service. To increase the costs of this service from £600 to £800 puts unnecessary strain on already stretched family budgets. Finances should not stop local children travelling on school transport to access their local school. The LA should not be putting barriers such as cost in the way of accessing the education of students. In fact, Devon should celebrate its local high quality post 16 provision and support families by buffering the increased costs.
	Neither	Proposal 1)

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		Proposal 2) I do not want to have to pay more for my school transport. I want to go to my local secondary school post 16 provision. I live in a rural location and have no choice but to get the school bus to go to school because there is not public transport available. If you increase the costs of the bus, it means it will be really hard for me to continue to study at school. If a student has no choice because they have no access to a public bus, I don't think they should be charged.
42) HG, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) This increase is way above inflation and not fair for children who's parents are already struggling to afford bills. As a local authority isn't not keep the costs the same or a a price parents can afford so you fill the seats and actually get an income to offset the cost of providing transport. Maybe look at the additional bus provision Chulmleigh college provides to out of DCC provision children and compare the costs - £380 per child per year compared to £600!
	Disagree	Proposal 2)
43) HN, Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) This is a 33.3% increase. Given the cost of living crisis and families facing additional costs associated with having a disabled adults at home, then this seems an unreasonable price hike. I very much doubt that the PIP will increase in order to help pay for this additional cost burden. I would like DCC to consider a monthly payment scheme and to also reconsider the discounting it offers as this indirectly discriminates against those that cannot afford to pay.
	Agree	Proposal 2) I cannot comment in this box as I do not know the mechanisms for the funding streams and whether the funds are collected through Council Taxes or through central government pay outs.
44) AM, Parent of post-16	Neither	Proposal 1)
	Disagree	Proposal 2) This is a massive increase - 30%. It is already a very expensive option and this would make it more expensive than a stagecoach bus pass that entitles passengers to unlimited journeys. This penalises those of us who do not have a public transport option to get to school. There is no additional cost for the county to allow the additional seats to be made available to sixth form students. This charge means we are being asked to subsidise the other students. It is such a large increase that it will be more cost effective for us to drive our child to school. This means that the bus service will receive less money overall.
45) JS, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) We are 50 yards out of catchment for My daughter secondary school - even though her school Bus drives past our front door (we live on the main road on the []. I take my daughter to the nearest stop but don't agree that we should be penalised an additional £200 a year when my daughter is about to star her GCSEs in September. We choose the school as we believed it was in catchment at the time and later discovered it wasn't. We chose the school not only on the Learning and pastrol side as my daughter suffers with anxiety, she has autism and has dyslexia but the size of the school was also important. she would have found a larger school very

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	Disagree	difficult, but this doesn't seem to matter! You just want our money - as if it's isn't hard enough at the moment but now you want £200 more a year!!! It's very wrong!!!! Proposal 2)
46) SK, Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1)
	Disagree	Proposal 2) The current charges are already a significant charge for a seat on a bus which is running anyway, and as DCC have a responsibility to encourage public transport use, and establishing this in young people is surely better than them being driven in. Please do not make the school transport unaffordable.
47) MK, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) At £600 it seems too high for using the same transport that is going anyway!
	Disagree	Proposal 2) At £600 it seems too high for using the same transport that is going anyway!
48) Child or young person	Disagree	Proposal 1)
	Disagree	Proposal 2) I would like to stay at sixth form at my current school so need affordable transport that is environmentally friendly and the cost is already very high.
49) SD, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) it is a ridiculous question. I do not know the financial details and costs needed by the transport companies therefore i do not see how you expect me to answer this question which really is not clear.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) I do not currently have children if this age and am unaware of the costs and needs for post 16 students
50) Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) With the cost of living rising and families already struggling just to feed our families this is not the time to increase transport costs as I want my child to be able to go to college to learn especially as he has special needs
	Disagree	Proposal 2) The price DCC have proposed for transport is madness !! can't afford that price with the cost of living and energy please don't increase the prices
51) CY, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) son lives with me, which is in another school catchment area. He lives with me because of personal issues which means he currently will not live with his mother. At this stage of his education, it would be damaging to his education and wellbeing to have him move schools. I actually find the current charge of £600 to be too high. In the autumn, his sister starts at secondary school. Under current costs, I would be paying £1,200pa. on buses. With your increase this goes up to £1,600 pa. Neither is affordable and i will end up driving. This shortens my work day but I would save about £800-£1,000 in the process. Your current system is not helping me to be honest. Your increased charges - and I appreciate why you need to do it - penalise me for reasons out of my control.
52) PM, Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) This is a ridiculous situation & proposal. 16-18 years HAVE to be in full time education and the DCC have to provide transport to schools for under 16s. The cost of providing this service for 16-18s is zero. DCC

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	Disagree	<p>should support all 16-18s to continue their education; this should be frictionless. We are subsidising DCC. Not acceptable.</p> <p>Proposal 2) This is a ridiculous situation & proposal. 16-18 years HAVE to be in full time education and the DCC have to provide transport to schools for under 16s. The cost of providing this service for 16-18s is zero. DCC should support all 16-18s to continue their education; this should be frictionless. We are subsidising DCC. Not acceptable.</p>
53) JC, Parent	Neither	Proposal 1)
	Neither	<p>Proposal 2) To be honest I don't really understand what this is all about. All I know is that my children travel for free on the [] and this bus is dreadfully - sometimes dangerously overcrowded. I have complained about this before but no one takes responsibility. Stagecoach recieve funding for those that meet the requirements for free travel and provide the required sizes buses to accomodate this to meet their contractual needs. The problem is, is that I know of at least 50 fee paying passengers also using this bus. This means that Stagecoach are profiting from charging for these seats but they are not providing an extra bus to accomodate these children. I would very much like to know how this is allowed when children are forced to sit three to a seat or having to stand. Some children who have the free transport have not even been able to get on the bus meaning Stagecoach are not meeting their contractual obligations. Children are sometimes being left at bus stops (towards the end of the route). I would welcome someone to contact me to discuss. My number is []</p>
54) Parent	Disagree	<p>Proposal 1) I feel the cost for transport at £600 is far to high and that's why even though only a mile out of catchment I have continued to drive my children to school even though the bus collects a mile from my house</p>
	Neither	Proposal 2)
55) LO, Parent	Disagree	<p>Proposal 1) I drive my daughter 10 miles to get on the transport to pay even more will cause me hardship it is alot to pay already.</p>
	Disagree	Proposal 2)
56) JB, Parent of post-16	Disagree	<p>Proposal 1) I was shocked to discover last year that I would be expected to find £600 a year to pay for school transport as my daughter had turned 16. She has profound and complex disabilities and attends a special needs school in Plymouth where the vast majority of pupils will receive free transport until they leave aged 19. I think it is disgusting that there is no post 16 transport provision, especially for disabled children who often have further to travel from home for a suitable educational setting and have no other option than the school transport that is provided by DCC.</p>
	Disagree	

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		Proposal 2) I was shocked to discover last year that I would be expected to find £600 a year to pay for school transport as my daughter had turned 16. She has profound and complex disabilities and attends a special needs school in Plymouth where the vast majority of pupils will receive free transport until they leave aged 19. I think it is disgusting that there is no post 16 transport provision, especially for disabled children who often have further to travel from home for a suitable educational setting and have no other option than the school transport that is provided by DCC.
57) PS, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) Children in London and Manchester have free use of public transport. You all need to take a look in the mirror.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Children in London and Manchester have free use of public transport. You all need to take a look in the mirror.
58) NH Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) it is too expensive
	Disagree	Proposal 2) it is too expensive
59)	-	[No content]
60) EW, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1)
	Agree	Proposal 2) Other comments) Children post 16 are legally required to be in school college or work. While you may not be legally required to provide transport how exactly do you think poor children from rural backgrounds are going to get to educational provisions without school transport?
61) AT, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) I understand you have to raise the amount paid but this is a massive increase in 1 go
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Same as before increasing it yes but not so much Other comments) I do not agree that you we should be paying anything at all it doesn't cost you any more to take my son to [x] than to [y] I have to transport my son to the bus stop you're bus doesn't come and pick him up so why are you charging us at all
62) Councillor Jonathan Hawkins	Disagree	Proposal 1) many families are struggling at the moment and any increase would be a burden to the finances of many families
	Disagree	Proposal 2) as above

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63) MS. Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) I feel that increasing the cost by over 33% in one hit is disgraceful and financially unmanageable. for many. In a shared Taxi of 3 people that is £600 increase.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Same comment as above applies. I don't see much difference in either proposal, which begs the question as to why you've bothered putting 2 proposals in to this as the are almost identical!
64) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) I feel that £600 is already a large enough sun of money to pay. To increase it to £800 would make the public bus option (which is unreliable and gets the children to school late!) the cheaper option.
	Disagree	Proposal 2)
65) TR, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) The increase is far greater than inflation (meanwhile our household income has not increased in line with inflation). The proposed contribution increase will add further financial strain to our household.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) The increase is far greater than inflation (meanwhile our household income has not increased in line with inflation). The proposed contribution increase will add further financial strain to our household.
66) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) No one can afford this. Plus there isn't even a daily bus where we live
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Unaffordable for parents
		Other comments) Transport should be offered to rural areas that do not have a bus running daily
67) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) Whilst it is recognized that funding is at an all time low measures should be taken to look at the provision of transport as a whole rather than just passing on costs.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) Whilst it is recognized that funding is at an all time low measures should be taken to look at the provision of transport as a whole rather than just passing on costs.
		Other comments) More effort should be made to change behaviour and travel habits of those that can rather than just using taxis.
68) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) Too expensive for families and no public transport links from [] to ashburton.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) as above
		Other comments) This will affect south Dartmoor and it's A level students as they will be unable to get to ashburton
69) CG, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) This is a massive percentage increase which would seriously impact on our family's financial situation. In simple facts, we would not be able to afford to pay this increased amount and would therefore have to move our child to a different school which would potentially have a huge negative impact on his education and mental health.

	Disagree	<p>In September 2024 our second child will hopefully move on to Teign School and require a place on the bus. We will not be able to afford £1600 per year which is a massive problem for us. I find it very unfair and illogical to even be charged for a place on the bus in the first place so to increase the fee even further and by such a huge amount I feel would be massively unfair.</p> <p>Proposal 2) As above, when our children get this stage in a few years time we will again be disadvantaged due to the place we live. We live and work on a rented farm so are unable to choose to live elsewhere. This is unfair.</p> <p>Other comments) I find the fact that we have to pay for a place on the bus very unfair. There is space on the bus and as our catchment school, [], doesn't have a dedicated bus, so if we took a place at this school it would cost Devon County Council a lot of money to purchase a service bus pass and/or pay a taxi to get our children to school. By choosing to attend [] and taking a spare place on the existing bus we are actually saving you money and being charged £600 , soon to be £800, for the privilege. Does this not seem unfair to you? If we lived a mile down the (rural) road we would be entitled to free transport to both schools. By living and working rurally we are disadvantaged in our choice of school. There is only transport, free or paid public transport, to one school, which we felt was unsuitable for our child for a variety of reasons. It seems ludicrous that we cannot have a place on a bus that is already running rather than costing the council money to arrange transport which i was told was a bus pass for the morning and a taxi for the afternoon. I also find the policy of not awarding the concessionary place on the bus until after October halfterm ludicrous. I spent 7 weeks driving my son to and from [] twice a day as there is no public transport for this route. This incurred considerable cost in time and fuel as well as the negative affect on the environment caused by another vehicle on the road. And this was totally needless as when i finally got someone from the transport office to engage with me I was told 'there is plenty of room on the bus'. This is definitely something that shouldn't be blanket policy but looked at on a case by case basis. Not only that but I had real trouble even securing the concessionary place because of poor communication from Devon County Council. Despite filling in the form in June 2022 and making many phone calls and sending several emails I was unable to get any response. Eventually someone answered the phone to me during the October halfterm and told me that I wasn't even on the list and that my application had been 'lost'. I then had to make payment, complete forms and send photos instantly in order to receive the place on the bus in time for the beginning of term the following week.</p>
70) Parent of post-16	Disagree	<p>Proposal 1) This fee is far too high, when the is run already, 6th form students should not be subsidising the transport for younger children. My child can use the public service bus to get to and from school at much lower cost than this</p>
	Disagree	<p>Proposal 2) This is the same as proposal 1. Post 16 students should get free transport to school on a service that is already running</p>

Appendix One – responses to consultation

		Other comments) There should be more concessionary passes for post 16 students to travel to school and college
71) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1)
	Disagree	Proposal 2) So you're saying that children have to attend school or college post 16 but we have to pay to get there? That discriminates against children who can't afford to get to school and will further exacerbate differences in school attainment based on social economic class. other comments) It should be free within catchment till children leave school
72) Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) The cost of living is already squeezing those who need concessionary seats. The price rise will put transport out of reach for many.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) First off, I think transport for education should be offered free to all students. Secondly, we are already struggling to pay for transport for our twins, who want to continue their education through to foundation. I believe there are many others in our predicament, whose children want and need an education but who are finding it difficult to get them to the school. Other comments) The government needs to step up and provide transportation for all students, regardless of ability to pay. Education is crucial to forming an intelligent and coherent society, and putting financial barriers in front of those less able to afford transport to school is effectively locking them out of their role in that society.
73) GV-H, Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) Concessionary seat pricing is already extortionate and a rise to £800 is quite simply malice.
	Disagree	Proposal 2) In a climate of intense and growing financial pressure it seems not just baffling but frankly malicious that parents of state school children, who are already squeezed by huge cost-of-living increases, should be made to pay MORE than the already extortionate charges for school transport. I frankly do not understand how you do not see that this at best disincentivises people from choosing to remain in education past 16, and at worst actually blocks that option entirely. Other comments) School transport should be free for the entire course of a student's state school career. It is not good enough to simply parrot the trope that local authorities are underfunded. It is not the responsibility of parents to secure your funding over and above the taxes we already pay. It is not the responsibility of parents to solve your political problems. The system is broken for us. We are the end users and as such are being exploited by your failures as OUR representatives. You should be our advocates, and instead you are milking us dry.

Appendix One – responses to consultation

74) AK, Parent of post-16	Neither Disagree	<p>Proposal 1)</p> <p>Proposal 2) We are happy to pay for the transport but feel that the increase that is proposed of 33.33% is putting an unreasonable increase on the charge for my son who has disabilities to attend college. His disabilities mean that he is unable to make the journey independently. We appreciate that costs have risen and would find it much more acceptable of a smaller percentage rise of between 10% and 20%. We pay our council tax. This has not been thought about properly. This is a tax on our son's disability. our son is not able to voice his opinion on this. We will have to sacrifice something else we pay for him to do with this increase, We expect everything to increase with the rises in the cost of living but 33.33% increase is too much. Our income has not increased by 33.33% and I work 3 part-time jobs, on lesser monies to be able to care for my disabled son.</p> <p>Other comments) This service for post 16 for those with disabilities who could not travel independently is invaluable as my son would not be able to attend college without it. This service has helped increase my son's confidence of travelling without mum and dad especially as one of his disabilities is that he is registered blind.</p>
75) Parent	Disagree Disagree	<p>Proposal 1) Concessionary seats would be empty on a bus hired by DCC to transport schools - this just seems to be profiting from parents who could not send their children to their catchment school.</p> <p>Proposal 2) Too expensive</p> <p>Other comments) We have to rely on relatives to pay transport for my children as we are on tax credits. There could be a big discount for second or third child or access to funds to help with the cost for Pupil Premium children.</p>
76) Parent	Disagree Disagree	<p>Proposal 1) Too expensive for parents esp if more than one child. How can DCC justify such an increase when inflation is about 10% = £660 but a 33% increase for seats that would otherwise be empty - profiteering.</p> <p>Proposal 2) At a time when students have additional costs eg learning to drive, equipment for vocational courses, it is difficult to see how parents or students can take this kind of increase.</p> <p>Other comments) How can DCC justify such a big increase?</p>
77) Parent	Agree -	[No content]
78) Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) The proposed increase is completely unacceptable. It represents more than a 30% increase from the current amount. This is around double the high level of inflation which is already having such a detrimental effect

Appendix One – responses to consultation

	Disagree	<p>on families' finances. As such. the proposed rise is likely to add to the hardship families with disabled children are already enduring and could lead to such children failing to attend school. It is a discriminatory proposal.</p> <p>Proposal 2) As above. The proposed increase is completely unacceptable. It represents more than a 30% increase from the current amount. This is around double the high level of inflation which is already having such a detrimental effect on families' finances. As such. the proposed rise is likely to add to the hardship families with disabled children are already enduring and could lead to such children failing to attend their place of education. It is a discriminatory proposal.</p> <p>Other comments) The offer of transport to children and young people attending special schools or educational provision or with an EHCP should be automatic regardless of distance. The safety of a child or young person travelling to school is not mitigated by living within an arbitrary distance from the place of educational provision.</p>
79) JP, Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1)
	Agree	Proposal 2) 16-18 year olds have other concessions on buses and also don't use the bus as much and are more independent and have less of a need than younger students.
80) Parent	Disagree	Proposal 1) It is a huge increase which adversely disadvantages those on low to middle incomes who are already limited in their choices of schools based purely on financial considerations. I live in Seaton - all three local secondary schools are approximately 7 miles from my location and I felt that choice of school was
	Disagree	<p>Proposal 2) How are families going to fund this difference, especially those on lower and middle incomes. This will directly affect the availability and access to education for many, many families. Living in east devon, when many further education options have been reduced already, how will families afford to keep their children in further education?</p> <p>Other comments) I think that there are major inconsistencies between the provision available to those living in the bigger towns and cities compared to those living in more rural areas which is not reflected in the policies effectively</p>
81) Parent of post-16	Disagree	Proposal 1) This should be income-based and not a blanket increase.
	-	Proposal 2) As a parent of a child with significant physical and educational additional needs, it is already difficult to find the money to pay the existing charge. As I have two other children and and also work part-time, it is impossible for me to transport my child to College, which is a considerable distance away (it is the only suitable provision in Devon). For parents on lower incomes, this represents yet another increased cost in a very difficult existing financial environment.

Appendix One – responses to consultation

		Other comments) If we have 0-25 provision for children and young people with additional needs, this should extend to transport as well. Going from secondary school to College has not made my child any more capable of independent travel.
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Impact Assessment



Assessment of: Education Transport

Service: Education and Learning

Head of Service: Rachel Shaw and Matthew Shanks

Version / date of sign off by Head of Service: 27 February 2023

Assessment carried out by (job title): Andrew Brent (Senior Policy Officer)

1. Description of project / service / activity / policy under review

Devon's Education Transport policies describe how the Local Authority (LA) helps children and young people to attend school by providing support to get between home and school. It supports children and young people where there is an entitlement to free transport because there is a legal duty on the LA and where the LA chooses to provide support because it believes it is a worthwhile and affordable thing to do.

The policy explains the circumstances when a child or young person is entitled to transport and when support is available through access to an empty seat on a vehicle even though there is no entitlement to transport. The policy also explains the circumstances when support is free and when it a contribution towards the LA's costs is chargeable.

Education Transport support is provided in two stages: (a) processing applications for transport and assessing entitlement, and (b) operating a transport network across the county and to appropriate establishments in other LA areas.

The policy is intended to facilitate wherever possible preferences by parents, carers, and young people for education at specific schools and colleges, within the limits of clear, published criteria. It seeks to do under the terms of relevant legislation and within the budgets set by Elected Members of the County Council.

Policy is set out in two documents: the Education Transport Policy and the Post-16 Education Transport Policy.

2. Reason for change / review

Policy is reviewed periodically.

The Policy was reviewed between December 2022 to January 2023 and it is proposed that the level of contribution to the costs of the LA be increased for two groups of service users: children using concessionary seats (spare seats on coaches, minibuses and taxis that have been commissioned by the LA to provide transport for one or more entitled child) and young people with support from the LA to continue their education at pos-16 level.

3. Aims / objectives, limitations and options going forwards (summary)

No changes were proposed to the entitlement to free transport that the LA is required by law to provide.

No changes were proposed to the discretionary entitlement to free transport that the LA has chosen to provide. This includes free transport for children on the grounds that they attend a catchment school recognised by the LA for transport purposes and that school is further than a walking distance of 2 or 3 miles, according to their age.

Minor additions were proposed in response to the introduction of a catchment area for Matford Brook Academy in September 2024. This catchment area overlaps existing catchment areas and prompts a decision from the LA whether to recognise it for transport purposes or to continue recognising the existing school catchments for transport purposes.

The principal proposal was to increase the contribution level from £600.00 to £800.00 per academic year. This was proposed in recognition of significant increases in the costs of providing transport and as a part of the LA's financial sustainability programme.

4. People affected, diversity profile and analysis of needs

[Community, Staff and Service profiles are available [online for you to refer to](#). Delete this note and insert text here]

5. Stakeholders, their interest and potential impacts

The stakeholders are:

- Parents and carers, children and young people: service users of school transport in Devon.
- Elected Members – with responsibility for LA actions and their impact on constituents;
- Schools and colleges – interested in children and young people being able to access them;
- Local diocese officers (Exeter, Truro, Salisbury, and Plymouth) – interested in children and young people being able to access particular schools on faith grounds;
- Local authority officers – clear criteria and processes to enable applications to be submitted, processed and resolved;
- Local authority officers – clear criteria and processes to commission transport services efficiently;
- School Organisation, Capital and Admissions Group – monitoring the fairness and lawfulness of arrangements which impact on school admissions preferences of parents, carers and young people;
- Devon Learning and Development Partnership – with regard to the impact on the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller and wider BME communities;
- Trade Union representatives – interested in the impact on access to schools and colleges and on transport operators and providers.

There is a limited anticipated impact of the revised Policy with regard to Matford Brook Academy's new catchment area for any stakeholders as there is no negative change proposed to the entitlement to transport support. Children and young people living in the catchment area of other schools will continue to their entitlement on catchment school grounds, over the walking distances of 2 and 3 miles. A new entitlement will be recognised on nearest school grounds to Matford Brook Academy, over the walking distances of 2 and 3 miles, where this is the position. All children living in the catchment for Matford Brook Academy will be in the catchment area for another school. If they live closer to another catchment school than to Matford Brook Academy, they will not be entitled to transport to Matford Brook Academy. The entitlement to the other school will remain. This means there is a potential negative impact on parental preference for Matford Brook Academy.

There is a potential impact on parental preference for schools and colleges of an increase in the contribution level. Some parents may decide that they cannot afford the increased rate or choose not to pay it. This would be a limiting factor in parental preference for schools further from home, to which there is no statutory or discretionary entitlement to LA transport. This, in turn, would be a negative impact on admissions rates and numbers on roll at some schools – offset where other children seek places there rather than other schools. These potential impacts may be mitigated by the LA's arrangements for appeal to set aside Policy and provide support.

For young people, an increased contribution level may deter engagement in post-16 education – either at their preferred college or at any college. LA transport support for post-16 young people should be seen as a safety net where the young person and their family are unable to make their own arrangements, including through access to a college bursary fund. Requests for support are most likely where the cost of transport is higher, such as in more rural areas, or where individual travel arrangements are required on special education or medical grounds. These potential impacts may be mitigated by the LA's arrangements for appeal to set aside Policy and provide support.

6. Additional research used to inform this assessment

The LA discussed the potential changes to policy with an Equality Reference Group as part of a public consultation. This group included representatives from Age UK, Young Devon, Living Options Devon, Intercom Trust, Devon Faith and Belief Forum, Fawcett Devon, and the Plymouth and Devon Racial Equality Council. The public consultation received a number of responses from parents of potentially affected children and young people. The majority of responses were against the proposed increase in the contribution level, typically commenting that it would cause hardship, could not be afforded and would lead to a reduction in education engagement at post-16.

The contribution levels charged by the LA's neighbours were noted. Devon's charge is lower than some and higher than other LA charges. All LAs are experiencing upward pressure on budgets and considering increases to mitigate those pressures.

7. Description of consultation process and outcomes

See section 6. The public consultation augmented the meeting with the Equality Reference Group. Public consultation prompted over 90 responses. All responses have been acknowledged and substantive replies have been sent where appropriate (to reply to specific questions).

8. Equality analysis

Giving Due Regard to Equality and Human Rights

The local authority must consider how people will be affected by the service, policy or practice. In so doing we must give due regard to the need to: eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Where relevant, we must take into account the protected characteristics of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership, sexual orientation, race, and religion and belief. This means considering how people with different needs get the different services they require and are not disadvantaged, and facilities are available to them on an equal basis in order to meet their needs; advancing equality of opportunity by recognising the disadvantages to which protected groups are subject and considering how they can be overcome.

We also need to ensure that human rights are protected. In particular, that people have:

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- A reasonable level of choice in where and how they live their life and interact with others (this is an aspect of the human right to 'private and family life').
 - An appropriate level of care which results in dignity and respect (the protection to a private and family life, protection from torture and the freedom of thought, belief and religion within the Human Rights Act and elimination of discrimination and the promotion of good relations under the Equality Act 2010).
 - A right to life (ensuring that nothing we do results in unlawful or unnecessary/avoidable death).
 - The Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation does not prevent the Council from taking difficult decisions which result in service reductions or closures for example, it does however require the Council to ensure that such decisions are:
 - Informed and properly considered with a rigorous, conscious approach and open mind, taking due regard of the effects on the protected characteristics and the general duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations.
 - Proportionate (negative impacts are proportionate to the aims of the policy decision)
 - Fair
 - Necessary
 - Reasonable, and
 - Those affected have been adequately consulted.

Characteristics	Potential or actual issues for this group. [Please refer to the Diversity Guide and See RED]	How will the project / service / policy / activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. advance equality (meet needs / ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'). foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? <p>In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?</p> <p>Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?</p>
All residents (include generic equality provisions)		

<p>Age</p>	<p>There is no anticipated impact of the Policy according to the age of an applicant parent or carer.</p> <p>Vehicles with older passengers may be unsuitable for very young children.</p> <p>While most applicants are aged below 50, older parents and carers may feel isolated by use of language and assumptions regarding the relationship with the child.</p> <p>The needs of service users of working age may be ignored if transport meetings and open days are at an inconvenient time.</p> <p>Access to education transport is limited to people within a set age range. Devon does not offer education transport to maintained schools or colleges to adults without special needs within this Policy.</p>	<p>The LA avoids mixing the youngest and oldest passengers on vehicles.</p>
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<p>Disability (incl. sensory, mobility, mental health, learning disability, neurodiversity, long term ill health) and carers of disabled people</p>	<p>Service users and applicants may experience additional challenges to engage in the application process or to use education transport provision.</p> <p>Disability may have a consequence that a person has a lower income which could make an increased contribution more challenging to afford.</p> <p>Post-16 contribution charges are more likely to be required for young people with additional needs, where the costs of transport arrangements are higher. The impact this group of young people and families is likely to be greater.</p>	<p>Wherever additional need is identified, support/reasonable adjustment is made available for parents and carers to engage.</p> <p>Transport provision is adjusted where appropriate to meet the needs of children and young people who have additional needs. This may be through the use of a dedicated or specialised vehicle, with or without an escort to promote safety and enable the passenger to arrive at school without stress or distress, able to engage in education.</p> <p>Transport is reviewed regularly to ensure it remains appropriate and suitable for each child with additional needs.</p> <p>The LA recognises that all post-16 young people should be able to access funding from their college's bursary.</p>
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<p>Culture and ethnicity: nationality/national origin, ethnic origin/race, skin colour, religion and belief</p>	<p>Data is not collected to differentiate applicants or service users under the Policy although except where it is necessary for an application for free transport on the grounds that a child attends a school on the grounds of faith. For example, there is an entitlement to free transport to the closest secondary school attended on these grounds where it is between 2 and 15 miles from home.</p> <p>No questions are asked about nationality, national origin, ethnic origin, skin colour or religion or belief other than as described above.</p> <p>Parents and carers may not feel that the service is operated by or for their community representatives. Cultural norms for some communities may combine with other issues to make access to transport services more difficult.</p>	<p>Where necessary, information can be translated into other languages to enable engagement in the process.</p> <p>For service users themselves, children and young people are entitled or not entitled without distinction unless transport support is sought to attend a school on the grounds of religion. Where a child or young person experiences disadvantage or is unable to use the transport that is provided for reasons linked to these characteristics, there is an appeal process which may make alternative arrangements.</p> <p>A Code of Conduct is in place for passengers and any passenger who discriminates against another passenger on the grounds nationality, national origin, ethnic origin, skin colour or religion or belief is liable to sanction under that Code.</p> <p>Children who feel obliged to transfer schools away from any form of discrimination may be eligible for additional consideration for admission under Fai Access arrangements and to transport support where it is accepted that the closer, original school is no longer suitable.</p>
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Sex, gender and gender identity (including men, women, non-binary and transgender people), and pregnancy and maternity (including women's right to breastfeed)

Data is not collected to differentiate applicants or service users under the Policy although applicants are invited to tell the LA what title they want to be used. Service users themselves will be known to the LA and to the transport provider by their pass which has their name and photograph. This does not explicitly identify sex, gender, or gender identity. Decisions on entitlement are not influenced by these characteristics.

Parents and carers who do not live with their child may feel disenfranchised from the application process. This is more likely to be a male parent. The information process does not take into account whether a child lives with one or both parents. Literature is only sent to a child's registered address unless there is a specific request for it to be sent to an additional address. For new Reception children, literature is sent out where officers proactively assess there is an entitlement to transport; this does not take account of the

Most applications are submitted using online literature and is therefore considered to be accessible to all people, without distinction according to sex, gender or gender identity.

For service users themselves, children and young people are entitled or not entitled without distinction. Where a child or young person experiences disadvantage or is unable to use the transport that is provided for reasons linked to sex, gender or gender identity, there is an appeal process which may make alternative arrangements.

A Code of Conduct is in place for passengers and any passenger who discriminates against another passenger on the grounds of sex, gender or gender identity is liable to sanction under that Code.

Children who feel obliged to transfer schools away from any form of discrimination may be eligible for additional consideration for admission under Fai Access arrangements and to transport support where it is accepted that the closer, original school is no longer suitable.

<p>Characteristics</p>	<p>Potential or actual issues for this group.</p> <p>[Please refer to the Diversity Guide and See RED]</p>	<p>How will the project / service / policy / activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. • advance equality (meet needs / ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'). • foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? <p>In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?</p> <p>Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?</p>
	<p>home circumstances.</p> <p>Applying for transport support is made without reference to pregnancy, maternity or feeding arrangements of an applicant. No provision is specifically made to provide transport support in these circumstances.</p>	

<p>Characteristics</p>	<p>Potential or actual issues for this group.</p> <p>[Please refer to the Diversity Guide and See RED]</p>	<p>How will the project / service / policy / activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • eliminate or reduce the potential for direct or indirect discrimination, harassment or disadvantage, where necessary. • advance equality (meet needs / ensure access, encourage participation, make adjustments for disabled people, 'close gaps'). • foster good relations between groups (tackled prejudice and promoted understanding), if relevant? <p>In what way do you consider any negative consequences to be reasonable and proportionate in order to achieve a legitimate aim?</p> <p>Are you complying with the DCC Equality Policy?</p>
<p>Sexual orientation and marriage/civil partnership</p>	<p>Parents and carers may feel isolated by use of language and assumptions (e.g. assumptions made about parents as heterosexual couples).</p>	<p>Language in literature is reviewed to avoid isolation and discrimination.</p>
<p>Other relevant socio-economic factors such as family size/single people/lone parents, income/deprivation, housing, education and skills, literacy, sub-cultures, 'digital exclusion', access to transport options, rural/urban</p>	<p>Parents and carers may feel isolated by use of language and assumptions, a sense that applications must be made online or can only be made in a certain way.</p>	<p>Language in literature is reviewed to avoid isolation and discrimination.</p> <p>The Policy is reviewed to challenge whether the presentation of information is socially divisive – do those people without internet access have reasonable options to access information? Are groups such as ex-offenders or unemployed people disadvantaged by the practices of the service? Is there a fair distribution of resources across areas of Devon?</p> <p>Do economic considerations prevent access to education? Does the Policy deny access to transport where it would be unreasonable to do so according to an individual's circumstances?</p>

9. Human rights considerations:

The Policy supports freedom of thought, belief and religion and respects the right to privacy and family life. No information is requested of parents, carers, or young people not required to administer the Policy and provide transport support.

10. Supporting independence, wellbeing and resilience. Give consideration to the groups listed above and how they may have different needs:

In what way can you support and create opportunities for people and communities (of place and interest) to be independent, empowered and resourceful?

Transport support, by default, provides access to vehicles for children without their parents and carers. Passengers are required to get to vehicles themselves, accompanied as the parent feels necessary. This promotes independence for children and young people, increasingly as parents decide that it is appropriate for their children to make their own way to vehicles – or to school.

Children are responsible for and required to carry their own travel pass unless their age or additional need means that would be inappropriate. This promotes independence and resourcefulness.

For children and young people with additional needs, arrangements are in place through the Policy for Independent travel Training. This supports access to school and college without additional, escorted, or specialised transport which promotes independence in other areas of life, not just in getting to and from school.

In what way can you help people to be safe, protected from harm, and with good health and wellbeing?

The Policy provides for transport providers to be suitably assessed as appropriate to work closely with children and young people. All drivers and escorts are DSB checked.

The Policy limits the number of passengers on vehicles contracted by the LA for safety reasons. This avoids overcrowding of vehicles and minimises the risk that a child who has a seat on the vehicle is left unattended at a pick up point. For public service vehicles, the LA is assured that vehicles will

not be overcrowded and that drivers are trained on processes where a child would be left unattended. Transport providers must use vehicles that are inspected regularly and provide a safe and comfortable environment.

The Policy does not provide for all pupils to be entitled to free transport. A minimum walking distance is in place, based on the statutory walking distances for children. This ensures that where children could walk to school, they do walk to school unless parents exercise their prerogative to make other arrangements.

Safety is promoted with in the Policy through route safety assessments. They assess routes where required to ensure that routes that are not suitable for children to walk, accompanied by an adult, as necessary, are identified and transport provided if there is no alternative route below the walking distance.

Passenger escorts are in place where a need is identified to promote the health, safety, and well-being of passengers and drivers.

In what way can you help people to be connected, and involved in community activities?

Information about the Policy and processes involved in applying for and using education transport is available online and in hard copy. Translation and access for people with disability is available on request. Meetings and consultations are held regularly to promote engagement from members of the community and stakeholders.

11. Environmental analysis

An impact assessment should give due regard to the following activities in order to ensure we meet a range of environmental legal duties. The policy or practice does not require the identification of environmental impacts using this Impact Assessment process because it is subject to (please mark X in the relevant box below and proceed to the 4c, otherwise complete the environmental analysis table):

Devon County Council's Environmental Review Process	
Planning Permission	
Environmental Impact Assessment	
Strategic Environmental Assessment	

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost:		
Conserve and enhance wildlife:		Education Transport reduces the number of private cars on the road to get children and young people to and from school. This reduces the impact on wildlife around the more rural parts of the county.
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of Devon's landscape:		Education Transport reduces the number of private cars on the road to get children and young people to and from school. This reduces the impact on the network of country roads which are part of Devon's cultural image and safeguards their characteristics.
Conserve and enhance Devon's cultural and historic heritage:		Education Transport reduces the number of private cars on the road to get children and young people to and from school. This frees up roads, including the network of country roads which are part of Devon's cultural image.
Minimise greenhouse gas emissions:	Any vehicle used for travel to and from school instead of a child walking or cycling to school increases greenhouse gas emission.	Education Transport provision reduces the number of vehicles used to get children from home to school, accepting that many children and young people live further from school than they are legally expected to walk. By enabling passengers to travel together, the number of private cars there would be on the road is reduced.

Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise):		
Contribute to reducing water consumption:		
Ensure resilience to the future effects of climate change (warmer, wetter winters; drier, hotter summers; more intense storms; and rising sea level):		
Other (please state below):		

	Describe any actual or potential negative consequences. (Consider how to mitigate against these).	Describe any actual or potential neutral or positive outcomes. (Consider how to improve as far as possible).
Impact on knowledge and skills:		
Impact on employment levels:	<p>It is not anticipated that an increase in the contribution level would lead to fewer accessing the LA's concessionary seat transport. As it is only available where there is a spare seat.</p> <p>An increased contribution to costs for post-16 transport potentially would lead to some young people not travelling on it and either making other arrangements or not travelling to that school or college. This, in turn, would mean fewer and smaller vehicles being commissioned. Other arrangements could include more private cars on the road.</p>	The Policy brings employment to many small businesses: taxi, coach, and mini-bus operators. It also adds business to larger bus and train operators.
Impact on local business:	As above	As above

13. Describe and linkages or conflicts between social, environmental and economic impacts (Combined Impacts):

Higher costs for any reason will have a negative impact on those directly affected. The lower the disposable income, the greater that impact. The indirect consequence is that there will be a wider economic impact on communities and businesses across Devon. Less usage of organised

transport could lead to more use of private vehicles, ; more cars on the road and greater strain on those families who feel obliged to change their work patterns, cut their employed hours and use their own vehicles.

14. How will the economic, social and environmental well-being of the relevant area be improved through what is being proposed? And how, in conducting the process of procurement, might that improvement be secured?

The impact on the numbers of transport providers as a consequence of any increase in the contribution rate is anticipated to be small. Numbers of post-16 passengers who pay the contribution is low across the county. Any reduction in their numbers would be partial and the numbers of vehicles no longer being required is also anticipated to be small.

Any increase in contributions charged would have a negative financial impact on affected families, reducing their resources and impacting to a greater extent on those with the lowest disposable incomes. There is no expectation that there would be a positive impact on the communities across Devon.

15. How will impacts and actions be monitored?

The LA records the numbers on children receiving transport support under the Policy. It will also monitor the availability of transport providers where demand for vehicles rises and falls as the Policy operates, including any increase in the contribution rate.