

Fairness and Equalities Impact Assessment (FEIA)

Version 3.6 May 2017

The purpose of this assessment is to provide balanced information to support decision making and to promote better ways of working in line with equalities (Equalities Act 2010), Welsh language promotion (The Welsh Language (Wales) Measure 2011), sustainable development (Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015), and the four parameters of debate about fairness identified by the Newport Fairness Commission (NFC Full Report to Council 2013).

Completed by: Deborah Weston **Role:** Service Manager

Head of Service: Sarah Morgan **Date:** 30/04/2020

I confirm that the above Head of Service has agreed the content of this assessment

Yes / No

When you complete this FEIA, it is your responsibility to submit it to
impact.assessment@newport.gov.uk

1. Name and description of the policy / proposal being assessed. Outline the policy's purpose.

Post-16 Home to School Transport

A decision by a previous Cabinet Member for Education & Young People in June 2013 approved implementation of an amended charging mechanism for Post-16 Transport Costs on contracted services on a phased approach that would achieve full removal of the existing subsidy by September 2017.

This decision was implemented in September 2014 when the parental contribution in respect of this provision was increased from £45 per annum to £347 per annum in line with the same costs charged to students using the local bus network. Further increases were due in September 2015, September 2016 and September 2017 to achieve full removal of the subsidy.

However, in June 2015, a decision was made to suspend the proposed September 2015 increase and instead amend the sharing mechanism to align the additional top-up fee with the cost of a season ticket on the local bus network, setting the fee at £370 per academic year. The same decision, to suspend planned increases, has since been agreed for each year since 2015. As a result, the level of charges remain unchanged since this date and there has been no further reduction in the subsidy.

This proposal seeks to agree that the current level of charges are maintained for the 2020/21 academic year.

2. Outline how you have/ will involve stakeholders who will be affected by the policy/proposal

The provision of Post-16 Home to School Transport is not a statutory responsibility, and Local Authorities have discretion to consider whether to make such provision, and if so, to what value. This Council's current discretionary policy provides an annual travel grant of £150 to those students who meet the eligibility criteria for this assistance, with parental contributions required to meet the remainder of the annual travel costs.

The Council's budget savings proposals for the 2020/21 financial year included removal of this Post-16 travel grant. This proposal generated significant feedback from stakeholders that was considered in determining not to implement the proposed change. Parents and the wider school community are aware therefore that the current policy remains unchanged.

Given that the proposal suggests that current contribution levels will be maintained, further stakeholder engagement has not been sought at this time. The final decision will be shared with service users by the Head of City Services.

3. What information/evidence do you have on stakeholders? e.g. views, needs, service usage etc. Please include all the evidence you consider relevant.

Whilst it is reasonable to assume that the majority of currently eligible Year 12 pupils will continue into Year 13, it is difficult to predict transition from Year 11 to Year 12 with any certainty. However those new Year 12 students who will be eligible for the Post-16 Travel Grant will be from within the group of pupils who are currently eligible for free statutory home to school transport (up to Year 11). These pupils and their families are therefore likely aware of the current Post-16 arrangements.

4. Equalities and Welsh language impact

Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: 1. Promote equal opportunity 2. Promote community cohesion 3. Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
Age	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	This decision will specifically affect post-16 learners, so pupils aged between 16 and 18 years. Under these arrangements, the travel grant will continue to be paid at £150 per annum to all eligible pupils, and those who travel to school via a contracted service will face no increase in current parental contribution costs.
Disability	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Post-16 Travel Grant will continue to be paid at £150 per annum for all eligible pupils including those with a disability, and those who travel to school via a contracted service will face no increase in current parental contribution costs.
Gender reassignment/ transgender	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is no evidence to suggest this proposal will have a disproportionate impact against this protected characteristic.

Protected characteristic	Impact:			Provide further details about the nature of the impact in the section below. Does it: 1. Promote equal opportunity 2. Promote community cohesion 3. Help eliminate unlawful discrimination/ harassment/ victimisation?
	Positive	Negative	Neither	
Marriage or civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is no evidence to suggest this proposal will have a disproportionate impact against this protected characteristic.
Pregnancy or maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is no evidence to suggest this proposal will have a disproportionate impact against this protected characteristic.
Race	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Post-16 Travel Grant will continue to be paid at £150 per annum for all eligible pupils regardless of race, and those who travel to school via a contracted service will face no increase in current parental contribution costs.
Religion or Belief or non-belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Post-16 Travel Grant will continue to be paid at £150 per annum for all eligible pupils, and those who travel to school via a contracted service will face no increase in current parental contribution costs. The use of contracted services particularly applies to pupils attending the faith-based St Joseph's RC High School, and therefore they will benefit positively from this decision.
Sex / Gender Identity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Post-16 Travel Grant will continue to be paid at £150 per annum for all eligible pupils regardless of sex or gender identity, and those who travel to school via a contracted service will face no increase in current parental contribution costs.
Sexual Orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	There is no evidence to suggest this proposal will have a disproportionate impact against this protected characteristic.
Welsh Language	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The Post-16 Travel Grant will continue to be paid at £150 per annum for all eligible pupils, and those who travel to school via a contracted service will face no increase in current parental contribution costs. The use of contracted services particularly applies to pupils accessing Welsh-medium education, as at present post-16 studies are only available in schools outside of Newport. Retaining the current level of costs therefore supports these families and ensures parity with pupils attending English-medium schools.

5 How has your proposal embedded and prioritised the sustainable development principle in its development?

Sustainable Development Principle	Does your proposal demonstrate you have met this principle? Describe how.
 <p>Long Term</p> <p>Balancing short term need with long term needs</p>	<p>The provision of post-16 transport is not a statutory function but the Council maintains this discretionary award to support pupils in undertaking post-16 education courses. Any changes to this service could have a short-term effect and a long-term impact on the sustainability of post-16 education across the city. Continuing to provide a partially subsidised transport function for post-16 students enables young people to gain access to appropriate education and skills to support their long term future.</p>
 <p>Collaboration</p> <p>Working together to deliver objectives</p>	<p>Collaboration is undertaken with the local bus network where possible. Where this is not possible, tenders are offered under a framework agreement to local suppliers.</p>
 <p>Involvement</p> <p>Involving those with an interest and seeking their views</p>	<p>The Council's budget savings proposals for the 2020/21 financial year included removal of this Post-16 travel grant. This proposal generated significant feedback from stakeholders that was considered in determining not to implement the proposed change.</p>
 <p>Prevention</p> <p>Putting resources into preventing problems occurring or getting worse</p>	<p>Providing partially subsidised transport to ensure students can access appropriate education and gain skills which will mean they have better life chances</p>
 <p>Integration</p> <p>Considering impact on all wellbeing goals together and on other bodies</p>	<p>This proposal supports the "A more equal Wales", "A globally responsible Wales" and "A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language" Well-being Goals and has no adverse effect on any of the other Well-being Goals. In addition this proposal supports the Newport City Council Well-being Objective "To improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities".</p>

6 Will the proposal/policy have a disproportionate impact on a specific geographical area of Newport?

This is a City-wide proposal but specifically affects families of Newport-resident children who live in the catchment areas for Bassaleg School, Caerleon Comprehensive School, St Joseph's RC High School and Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw in Torfaen.

7 How does the proposal/policy relate to the parameters of debate about Fairness identified by the Newport Fairness Commission

Parameter 1: Equal treatment while recognising difference

Four secondary schools are primarily served by contracted services, and the various contracts have different costs associated with this. This means that the cost of transport to each school is different. It is not however either fair or feasible to levy varying parental contributions dependent on which of these schools a child attends, and thus this proposal suggests that a standard contribution for contracted provision is agreed. Implementing different charging mechanisms for each school would fully remove the Council's subsidy to this service, but would be negatively viewed by service users and difficult to administer.

Parameter 2: Mutual obligations between citizens and local government

The provision of Post-16 Home to School Transport is not a statutory responsibility, and Local Authorities have discretion to consider whether to make such provision, and if so, to what value. This Council's current discretionary policy provides an annual travel grant of £150 to those students who meet the eligibility criteria for this assistance. Parental contributions are required to meet the remainder of the annual travel costs.

Parameter 3: Interdependency and reciprocity within community relations

The provision of post-16 transport is not a statutory function but the Council maintains this discretionary award to support pupils in undertaking post-16 education courses. Any changes to this service could have a short-term effect and a long-term impact on the sustainability of post-16 education across the city. Continuing to provide a partially subsidised transport function for post-16 students enables young people to gain access to appropriate education and skills to support their long term future.

Parameter 4: Transparency and accountability in decision-making

The Council's budget savings proposals for the 2020/21 financial year included removal of this Post-16 travel grant. There was significant stakeholder feedback, and following consideration this was not taken forward for implementation. This proposal suggests that parental contributions are maintained at the same level as has been in place since 2015. This decision will be now referred to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills and taken through the Council's agreed democratic process.

8 Taking this assessment as a whole, what could be done to mitigate any negative impacts of your policy and better contribute to positive impacts?

The provision of Post-16 Home to School Transport is not a statutory responsibility, and Local Authorities have discretion to consider whether to make such provision, and if so, to what value. This Council's current discretionary policy provides an annual travel grant of £150 to those students who meet the eligibility criteria for this assistance, with parental contributions required to meet the remainder of the annual travel costs.

The Council's budget savings proposals for the 2020/21 financial year included removal of this Post-16 travel grant. This proposal generated significant feedback from stakeholders that was considered in determining not to implement the proposed change. Parents and the wider school community are aware therefore that the current policy remains unchanged.

The proposal suggests maintaining current and equal parental contribution levels. Whilst this will result in the current level of subsidy being maintained, a reduction has not been built into the MTFP and therefore this action would not result in additional pressures on the Council budget. Any further increase to the current level of parental contributions will result in additional disparity between students using the local bus network and contracted services, and possibly profit, and thus lead to complaints and negative publicity for the Council.

9 Monitoring, evaluating and reviewing

Monitoring and review of this provision will be undertaken jointly by the Head of City Services and the Chief Education Officer. This proposal will be re-visited again for the start of the 2021/22 academic year.

10 Involvement

The Council's budget savings proposals for the 2020/21 financial year included removal of this Post-16 travel grant. This proposal generated significant feedback from stakeholders that was considered in determining not to implement the proposed change. Parents and the wider school community are aware therefore that the current policy remains unchanged.

Whilst it is reasonable to assume that the majority of currently eligible Year 12 pupils will continue into Year 13, it is difficult to predict transition from Year 11 to Year 12 with any certainty. However those new Year 12 students who will be eligible for the Post-16 Travel Grant will be from within the group of pupils who are currently eligible for free statutory home to school transport (up to Year 11). These pupils and their families are therefore likely aware of the current Post-16 arrangements.

This proposal will be subject of a formal decision report taken through the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills via the Council's agreed democratic process. Once the decision is effective, service users will be advised accordingly by the Head of City Services.

11 Summary of Impact (for inclusion in any report)

Equality Act 2010

There is no discrimination or breach of equalities duties. All communities and protected characteristics would have an equal outcome, and parental contributions will be maintained at their current level.

Welsh Language

The use of contracted services particularly applies to pupils accessing Welsh-medium education, as at present post-16 studies are only available in schools outside of Newport. Retaining the current level of costs therefore supports these families and ensures parity with pupils attending English-medium schools.

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

- Long term: the importance of balancing short- term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long – term needs. **The provision of post-16 transport is not a statutory function but the Council maintains this discretionary award to support pupils in undertaking post-16 education courses. Any changes to this service could have a short-term effect and a long-term impact on the sustainability of post-16 education across the city. Continuing to provide a partially subsidise transport function for post-16 students enables young people to gain access to appropriate education and skills to support their long term future.**
- Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help us meet our objectives. **Providing partially subsidised transport to ensure students can access appropriate education and gain skills which will mean they have better life chances**
- Integration: Consider how the proposals will impact on our wellbeing objectives, our wellbeing goals, other objectives or those of other public bodies. **This proposal supports the “A more equal Wales”, “A globally responsible Wales” and “A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language” Well-being Goals and has no adverse effect on any of the other Well-being Goals. In addition this proposal supports the Newport City Council Well-being Objective “To improve skills, educational outcomes and employment opportunities”**
- Collaboration: have you considered how acting in collaboration with any other person or any other part of our organisation could help meet our wellbeing objectives. **Collaboration is undertaken with the local bus network where possible. Where this is not possible, tenders are offered under a framework agreement to local suppliers.**
- Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the wellbeing goals, and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the City we serve. **The Council’s budget savings proposals for the 2020/21 financial year included removal of this Post-16 travel grant. This proposal generated significant feedback from stakeholders that was considered in determining not to implement the proposed change.**