

	<h2>Cabinet</h2>
Title	Draft SEND Travel Assistance Policies
Date of meeting	14 May 2024
Report of	Councillor Pauline Coakley Webb – Cabinet Member for Family Friendly Barnet
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Appendices	<p>Appendix 1. Draft Compulsory (5-16) SEND Travel Assistance Policy</p> <p>Appendix 2: Draft 6th Form SEND Travel Assistance Policy*.</p> <p>Appendix 3: Draft Young Adult (19-25) SEND Travel Assistance Policy.</p> <p>Appendix 4: SEN Transport EqIA</p> <p><i>*Please note the Policy will be amended, following Cabinet approval of one of the options, to reflect that decision.</i></p>
Lead Officer	Chris Munday – Executive Director for Children and Families Chris.Munday@Barnet.gov.uk
Officer Contact Details	<p>Karen Flanagan</p> <p>Director SEND and Inclusion Barnet/BELS</p> <p>karen.flanagan@barnet.gov.uk</p>
Summary	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The council is updating its existing SEND Travel Assistance policy. • This report summarises the key changes we are proposing to make to the existing policy which are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To move from one overarching Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Travel Assistance Policy which includes the Council’s arrangements for travel assistance for compulsory aged (5-16), 6th form (16-19 or beyond if they have already started their course) and young adult (19-25) learners to three distinct and separate policies – one for each age group. We believe this makes it easier for parent/carers to access the information they require. 	

- The key drivers for the changes are to ensure:
 - the compulsory aged element is compliant with the DfEs recently updated [‘travel to school’](#) guidance for compulsory aged pupils.
 - To have three distinct and separate policies, one for each age group. This will promote clarity and ‘readability’ for families and young people and reduce the amount of scrolling to get to the relevant section as is the case currently. There are also differing statutory timescales for the annual publication of the 6th form policy and young adult (19-25) policy (31 May each year) compared to the compulsory aged policy policies (19 September).
- For compulsory aged and young adult learners there will be additional options for travel assistance with a greater emphasis on greener travel options, independence and preparing for adulthood.
- The policy with the most significant proposed changes is that relating to sixth form age learners. The LA's duty to make a transport policy statement setting out the arrangements it considers necessary to facilitate this cohort to access education. There is no automatic right to transport for these learners.
- The draft proposals outlined below make clear there are no blanket policies and the Council will continue to consider individual circumstances.

Please note the travel assistance policy for pupils with no SEND does not form part of this remit.

Recommendations

1. That Cabinet:
 - 1.1 Note and comment on the contents of the report in relation to Barnet’s proposed SEND Travel Assistance Policies, including advising on any proposed amendments, additions or deletions.
 - 1.2 Approve the draft statutory aged and young adult (19-25) draft policies as a basis for consultation and authorise the Executive Director for Children’s Services to approve the final policies taking account of consultation responses.
 - 1.3 Approve option A for its 6th form SEND policy as a basis for consultation and authorise the Executive Director for Children’s Services to approve the final policies taking account of consultation responses.

1. Reasons for the Recommendations

1.1 Context and Background.

- 1.1.1 The council is required to update (if required) and publish its SEND Travel Assistance policies by 31 May each year for 6th form and young adult learners and by the 19 September for compulsory aged.
- 1.1.2 Following changes to the DfE’s [‘travel to school’](#) guidance for compulsory aged pupils, the Council must as a minimum, update this aspect of its existing policy.
- 1.1.3 There have been no significant changes to the SEND Travel Assistance Policy since 2015. Since that time:
 - the numbers of children with an EHCP have increased from 1,731 (Jan 2015) to 3,849 (Jan 2024), an increase of 122.35%.
 - As is reflected nationally, the costs of providing travel assistance has increased significantly “*across all local authorities, the largest increases in home to school transport spend per head of population relate to*

SEN transport, with costs relating to pre-16 and post-16 transport rising by 51% and 96% respectively since the introduction of the SEND reforms". ISOS and CNN research – from home to the classroom; making travel to school services sustainable.

- There is also a far greater need to consider the environment as articulated in the BarNET ZERO campaign.
- There is also a far greater focus on independence as part of Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) and developing systems that take into account how to promote this *"Being supported towards greater independence and employability can be life-transforming for children and young people with SEN"* ([SEND Code of Practice](#)).
- Whilst the Council has a history of managing its SEND travel assistance budget well, which means expenditure is currently below both the statistical neighbours¹ and England averages across all age groups, like all Councils we face extremely challenging financial circumstances and the increasing year on year costs are not sustainable.

1.1.4 We have therefore taken the opportunity to review in depth the existing SEND Travel Assistance Policy and propose the changes outlined in this report.

1.2 Demand.

1.2.1 In total the Council makes arrangements for circa 1,190 children and young people with SEND, 940 have council supported travel assistance (24.42% of all children with an EHCP). We also provide Personal Transport Allowances (PTAs) for 250 children (6.49% of all those with an EHCP).

Please note that funding for PTAs is from the High Needs Block (HNB), whereas funding for Council supported travel assistance arrangements such as taxis or minibuses are funded via the General Fund. Increases in the number of PTAs, will lead to higher costs for the HNB. Even when this is taken into consideration, the proposals will still lead to overall savings.

1.2.2 As of January 2024, the Council maintained 3,849 EHC Plans an increase of 11% since January 2023.

1.2.3 There was a 34% increase in travel assistance being provided between 2020 and 2023, compared to a 21% increase in EHCPs over the same period. Much of this travel assistance was provided through individual taxis.

1.2.4 Naturally, as the number of children and young people with SEND increase, so does the number of children and young people who are potentially eligible for home school travel assistance.

1.2.5 The recent changes in home school travel guidance for pupils of statutory school age broadened eligibility, and we are still seeing the impact of the pandemic. Both of these have led to increased demand for home school travel assistance.

1.2.6 In addition, the cost-of-living crisis has meant some parents have sought support for home school travel assistance from the Council instead of making their own arrangements.

1.2.7 Total annual costs of SEND travel assistance significantly increased from £4.6m in 2020/21 to £5.2m (12.97%), then £6.3m in 2022/23 an even bigger increase of 19.3%. Whilst costs are not increasing as steeply, they continue to grow year on year and are not sustainable. Costs for 2023-2024 were £6.6m and this is expected to increase further in 2024 – 2025.

1.2.8 The increase in cost is larger than the increase in the cohort as a result of increased operational and contractual costs.

1.3 Actions taken to manage costs.

¹ Statistical Neighbours for Barnet are Merton, Kingston-upon-Thames, Reading, Sutton Hillingdon, Redbridge, Hounslow, Milton Keynes, Ealing and Bromley.

- 1.3.1** Use of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) to ensure the most competitive prices from providers.
- 1.3.2** Used the DPS to ensure the most competitive price for emerging new routes.
- 1.3.3** Implemented efficiency measures, which consist of:
 - Use of route optimisation such as use of vehicles at to the optimal size. Maximising occupancy levels, route sharing with other schools.
 - Combination / mixing of students and swapping of supplier routes.
 - Strategically targeting out of borough passengers and bringing them back in Borough where appropriate.
 - Removing passenger assistants from routes where they are not needed (also acts as step towards independence).
 - Placing students with other Local Authorities for transportation where this makes operational and financial sense.
 - Introduction of some designated 'cluster' pick up points.
 - Encouraging take up of Personal Transport Allowances*.

** The Personal Transport Allowance is not prescriptive and is intended to allow greater choice and flexibility to support young people to get to and from school. There are several ways that Personal Transport Allowance could be used, including but not limited to, a contribution towards:*

- *fuel and / or the cost of running a family vehicle that is used to transport a student to and from school.*
- *the cost of leasing a family vehicle to enable the parents to take their child to school themselves.*
- *the cost of booking or sharing a taxi with other students.*
- *another person to:*
 - *take or transport the student.*
 - *take a sibling to school to free a parent / guardian up to transport the student.*
- *childcare or towards the cost of breakfast or after school clubs for siblings, allowing the parent / guardian to transport the student.*
- *the cost of travel passes for other children in the home so that they can travel to and from school, allowing the parent / guardian to transport the student.*
- *a travel pass for the student.*
- *join up transport options with other parents (e.g. car share), thereby encouraging a sense of community.*

1.3.4 In order to simplify Personal Transport Allowance (PTA) rates we will introduce a banding system.

Table 1: New Banded Annual rates for PTAs.

Distance (one way)	Annual Amount (Annual)
Less than 5 miles	£1500
5-10 miles	£2500
Over 10 miles	£3500

1.4 Drivers for change

- 1.4.1 As well as the need to ensure financial sustainability and that we target limited resources to those most in need, we are also far more focussed on the environment and the need to promote independence for our children and young people with SEND.
- 1.4.2 We want to embed and support independence, or steps towards independence, throughout our policies for SEND Travel Assistance. For example, the use of designated pick up points instead of home to school pick up points replicates what is needed to access public transport pick up points and may also reduce journey times and as well as reduce congestion.
- 1.4.3 The ability to travel independently increases the opportunities for young people to secure paid or supported employment as well as voluntary work or community participation.
- 1.4.4 Barnet has higher levels of adults with a learning disability² (LD) who are in are in paid employment than the London and National averages. In order to maintain and build on this, it is important to put structures and process in place that continue to promote travel independence.

Table 2: Barnet Adults with LD in Paid Employment.

	Barnet	London	England
Percentage of adults receiving long term support for learning disabilities who are in paid employment	8.2%	5.3%	4.8%
Percentage of adults receiving long term support for learning disabilities who are living at home or with family	84.9%	79.0%	80.5%

[Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework](#)

1.5 Proposals.

Compulsory school aged (5-16) SEND Travel Assistance Policy and young adult (19-25) SEND Travel Assistance Policy (19 -25)

- 1.5.1 The proposed changes for compulsory and young adult Learners are to encourage far greater use of
- greener options via
 - Independent travel training
 - Cycling allowance
 - Walking allowance
 - Funding parents travel cards to use on public buses.
 - Personal Transport Allowance.
 - Increasing designated pick-up & drop-off points instead of door-to-door service.

6th Form learners (those aged 16-19 (and beyond if they are continuing a course started before 19)

- 1.5.2 As outlined above there is no automatic right to travel assistance for 6th form learners. Barnet Council currently provides discretionary support to eligible 6th form learners at a current cost of circa £877,500 per year.
- 1.5.3 Three options were considered in relation to this cohort, however only two of those are being put forward for consideration. More details about Option C which was discarded, can be found in section 2.

Option A:

²The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) advises that a learning disability is defined by three core criteria - Lower intellectual ability (usually an IQ of less than 70), Significant impairment of social or adaptive functioning and onset in childhood.

- Provide discretionary travel assistance in the form of two choices where they are unable to access free public transport, recognising there will be exceptions for which the Council will make travel arrangements:
 1. A Personal Transport Allowance (PTA) see banded rates in table 1 above, or,
 2. Independent Travel Training (ITT).
 Plus, Council arranged travel assistance in exceptional cases, with parental contribution³ towards costs of 10% (£650), with a reduction to a 5% (£325) parental contribution for low-income families.

Please note:

Statutory Guidance for post-16 (para 37) says ‘Local authorities should be aware of the adult transport duty in carrying out their responsibilities for this group, and it is [sic] would be good practice not to charge a contribution for a young person assessed under the sixth form age duty if it is likely that they will be eligible for free transport under the adult duty transport duty.

This is not a statutory duty and given the financial challenges the Council is facing, the relatively low parental contribution, and the benefits of independence this is deemed appropriate.

Option B:

- No change – continue with current discretionary Sixth form travel assistance arrangements at a current cost of **£877,500** per year excluding PTAs.

1.6 Current costs of 6th form Travel Assistance.

Table 3. Current Travel Assistance costs 2023/2024

Age group	Type of travel assistance	No. of Passengers	Annual Costs	Per head Costs
16-18	Council Travel Assistance (General Fund)	135	£877,500	£6500 (average)
16-18	Personal Transport Allowance using the existing calculator (HNB)	28	£98,000	Varied dependent on individual circumstances
Total		163	£975,500	

1.7 Education establishments attended by current 6th form learners.

1.7.1 The council currently provides discretionary SEND travel assistance for 135 6th form learners who are placed in a range of special schools as outlined in table 4 below.

Table 4. Sixth form Establishments attended by 16-18 students with council arranged discretionary Travel Assistance.

Establishment	Number of Passengers	Potential Saving of Saloon Cars / MPV (7-seater)	Potential Saving of Minibus / Wheelchair accessible vehicles
Mapledown school	33	0	6
Oak Lodge School	69	0	8

³ In order to streamline the process the contribution from parents is calculated by dividing the total costs of the service (£877,500) by the number of transport users (135) to get an average cost. Based on this year’s costs (Table 3) that would equate to £6,500 average costs per head = £650 (10%) or £325 (5%) parental contribution.

Kisharon School	10	0	1
Barnet & Southgate	12	2	0
Hendon School	6	0	1
Village School	5	0	1
Total	135	0	1

1.7.2 Whilst the cohort of 6th form learners receiving council arranged is relatively small overall, it is important that we consider carefully the potential impact as well as implementation of any changes.

1.7.3 The two recommended options (A and B) are outlined below including risks, benefit and costs of each.

Option A – Range of travel assistance options reduced for 6th form students to encourage independence where they are unable to access free public transport.

1.7.4 In cases where the learner is unable to access free public transport there would be two modes of travel assistance plus council arranged travel assistance in exceptional circumstances.

1.7.5 The two primary modes would be a PTA or ITT, however for 6th formers with exceptional circumstances, there would be an added option of council arranged travel assistance with a 10% or 5% parental contribution⁴. As with the current arrangements the type of travel assistance provided (i.e. PTA or ITT) would be determined by the travel assistance panel.

1.7.6 Costs and potential savings

- Currently there are 135 6th form pupils being supported through council arranged discretionary travel assistance at a total cost of £877,500 per year. Table 5 below predicts the annual costs for this cohort should option A be implemented.
- The average cost of individual council supported travel assistance per user is £6,500 (£877,500 / 135 = £6,500).
- The average costs of a PTA will be £2,500.
- There is a staffing cost for ITT which has already been accounted in other budgets, so for simplification we have not included any direct staffing costs for ITT.

Table 5. Estimated annual costs of Option A for 135 learners.

Age group	Type of travel assistance	No. of Passengers	Annual Costs	% of existing numbers
16-18	Discretionary Council arranged travel assistance (GF)	34 @£6,500	£221,000	25%
16- 18	PTA (HNB)	87 @£2,500	£217,500**	64%

⁴ Parental contribution is calculated as either 10% (£650) or 5% (£325) of £6,500.

To calculate an average cost we have simply calculated the average of these two costs (£650 + £325 / 2 = £487.50).

Total contributions from parents would be 34 x £487.50 = £16,575

16-18	ITT	14	£0	10%
Total annual costs £438,500*				

**If parental contributions were included this would reduce overall annual costs by £16,575. Thus, the annual cost of delivering Option A would be £421,925.*

**Please note PTA costs are funded through the HNB.

Savings (all figures in £m are rounded)

Actual Savings overall.

- Option A would realise an overall direct saving of **£439,000** per annum compared to existing costs.
- Over 5 years the estimated costs of 6th form travel assistance using Option A would be £2.2m (rounded) That is half the cost of existing arrangements (option B) which are £4.4m (rounded).

Cost Avoidance

- In terms of cost avoidance, reducing dependency on council arranged travel assistance would mean 34 learners being supported at an annual cost of £221,000 compared to the existing cost of supporting 135 learners at £877,500.
- If option A is implemented this would realise a cost avoidance saving of £656,500 per annum or £3.3m (rounded) over 5 years to the General fund.
- It should be noted however, that the cost to the HNB would increase by £217,500 to reflect the increase in PTAs. When this is taken into account the actual cost savings overall remains at £439,000 per annum as outlined above.
- The above savings have been calculated on existing costs so do not take into consideration of growth for demand and inflation.

Table 6. Risks and Benefits option A.

Risks	Benefits
Potential increase in road traffic congestion (increase of vehicles on the roads if students/carers use their own vehicles or pay for taxis)	54% Reduction in discretionary travel assistance costs
Increase in complaints (including to the Ombudsman) and potential claims for Judicial Review (though the latter is less likely to succeed)	Promotes choice and independence for young adults
Increased pressure and responsibilities on families to manage travel assistance arrangements	Increases the chances for young adults to use public transport
	Benefits for young people and their families of increased personalisation
	Reduces dependency on council travel assistance

Table 7. Risks and Benefits table for option B.

Risks	Benefits
Continue overspend and growth in SEND travel assistance costs	Decrease in complaints (including to the Ombudsman)
Reduced opportunities for independence for young adults	Decreases change, pressure and responsibilities on families to manage transport arrangements
May impact statutory duties as discretionary demand will increase thus putting more pressure on resources	
Increase in dependency on Council Travel Assistance	
Reduces opportunity through change	

1.8 Recommended option.

- 1.8.1 The underpinning driver for these changes is to embed independence as well as make savings. To this end, the recommendation is the implementation of Option A.
- 1.8.2 It should be noted that with the continuation of a PTA this will still result in savings to the council overall but, will increase the costs to the High Needs Block as this is the funding source for PTAs.
- 1.8.3 The council's general fund is the source of funding for all other council arranged Travel Assistance.

1.9 Implementation of changes.

- 1.9.1 We want to ensure that changes are implemented in a way that allows time to communicate beyond that of the formal consultation process, so families and young people are prepared.
- 1.9.2 Given the 6th form and adult learner policies are required to be updated by 31 May each year in readiness for the following academic year, it is suggested that we publish the 6th form and young adult policy at the same time as the compulsory aged policy during August 2024.
- 1.9.3 The compulsory policy would be live from date of publication in August 2024 in readiness for the new academic term.
- 1.9.4 The 6th form and young adult's policies would be live from September 2025. This will allow time for families and young people to prepare for the changes and this approach would not stop them taking up a PTA or ITT if they chose to do so (a soft launch).

2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

Option C: End all travel assistance for sixth form students aged 16-18. The current costs are of our 6th form SEND travel assistance is £877,500 per annum.

This option was not taken forward as it could be deemed to be an unlawful blanket policy and the Council would still be required to consider individual circumstances to be legally compliant, which is already part of Option A above.

3. Post Decision Implementation

3.1 Following the Cabinet decision, we will ensure the Policies are updated to reflect any comments and changes made. We will then go out to formal consultation for 6 weeks via the councils [Engage Barnet](#) website.

3.2 We will seek support from the engage team with regards consultation questions.

3.3 Following analysis of feedback we will then publish the final policies on the [Local Offer](#) webpages as well as the consultation analysis on the council's Engage Barnet webpages.

3.4 If agreed, all three policies will be published during August 2024.

4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

4.1 The promotion of independence and better outcomes for all our children and young people underpins the work of the council in a number of ways:

[Barnet Children and Young peoples Plan](#)

Action plan:

- "Supporting independent mobility of children and young people across the borough by improving wayfinding and access to walking and cycling routes in our town centres".

[The Barnet Plan 2021- 2025](#)

- "Adopting preventative measures to help people remain healthy, happy and independent in all aspects of life".

Priority 4 of the draft SEND and AP Strategy:

"We will continue to improve the educational progress, outcomes and experiences of our children with SEND and in AP, across all phases and types of institution from early years to post-16, including transitions and progress into independent living, apprenticeships, supported internships, higher education, training or employment".

We will do this by:

"ensuring independence is embedded throughout everything we do across education, care, health, council provided transport to places of education and employment".

"I would also like to achieve a transition into the workplace and travelling independently. I would like to learn more about independently using my money and using a bank account".

Risk Management

4.2 The changes will need to be monitored carefully to assess impact; any changes can be made annually when the Council publishes its Travel Assistance policies.

Insight

4.3 Careful monitoring of data to assess impact.

Social Value

N/A

5. Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

- Total annual costs of all SEND Travel Assistance significantly increased from £4.6m in 2020/21 to £5.2m (12.97%), then £6.3m in 2022/23 an even bigger increase of 19.3%. Whilst costs are not increasing as steeply, they continue to grow year on year and are not sustainable. Costs for 2023-2024 were £6.6m and this is expected to increase further in 2024 – 2025.
- The increase in cost is larger than the increase in the cohort as a result of increased operational and contractual costs.
- As is outlined in section 1 above, Option A would realise a direct saving of **£439,000** per annum compared to existing costs. This would contribute towards the £800k of savings to deliver on SEND Transport in MTFs.
- Over 5 years the estimated costs of 6th form travel assistance using Option A would be £2.2m (rounded), half that of Option B with costs of £4.4m (rounded).
- In terms of cost avoidance, reducing dependency on council arranged travel assistance would mean 34 learners being supported at an annual cost of £221,000 compared to the existing cost of supporting 135 learners at £877,500.
- If option A is implemented this would realise a cost avoidance saving of £656,500 per annum or £3.3m (rounded) over 5 years to the General fund.
- It should be noted however, that the cost to the HNB would increase by £217,500 to reflect the increase in PTAs. When this is taken into account the actual cost savings overall remains at £439,000 per annum as outlined above.
- ***The above savings have been calculated on existing costs so do not take into consideration of growth for demand and inflation.***
- We rightly have an exceptionality clause; we will need to monitor reasons for exceptions as well as the staff capacity to consider these requests. We need to keep any changes under review so we can identify ways in which to improve processes for families as well as ameliorate impact on staff capacity. For example, we may want to consider cohort exceptionality – such as all learners with Learning Disability that use a wheelchair and require oxygen.

- It should be noted existing staffing costs for the Transport Brokerage and Contract Management service, including the independent Travel Training team are likely to increase alongside the growth in demand over time.
- It is likely there will initially be higher levels of SEND Transport Appeals so additional staff capacity may be needed at the time of implementation (September 2025).

6. Legal Implications and Constitution References

6.1 Under the Council's Constitution, Part 2D the terms of reference states that Cabinet is responsible for the following functions:

- Recommending major new policies (and amendments to existing policies) to the Council for approval as part of the Council's Policy Framework and implementing those approved by Council;
- Approving policies that are not part of the policy framework;
- All key decisions.

Relevant law:

6.2 The relevant law is slightly different for each cohort: children of compulsory school age, learners of sixth form age and young adult learners but can be summarised as follows:

Children of compulsory school age

6.3 Local authorities must make suitable home to school travel arrangements as they consider necessary for eligible children of compulsory school age to attend their qualifying school. The travel arrangements must be free of charge. The relevant qualifying school is the nearest school with places available that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child, and any special educational needs the child may have. Eligible children include:

- children living outside 'statutory walking distance' from the school (two miles for children under eight, three miles for children aged eight and above);
- children living within walking distance of the school but who cannot reasonably be expected to walk to school because of their special educational needs, disability or mobility problem;
- children living within walking distance of the school but who cannot walk to school because the route is unsafe; and
- children entitled on low-income grounds. (Education Act 1996, 508B(1) and Schedule 35B)

6.4 Section 508C Education Act 1996 provides councils with discretionary powers to go beyond their statutory duties and provide transport to children who are not entitled to fee transport under s.508B / Schedule 35.

6.5 A child with special educational needs may have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan. This sets out the child's needs and what arrangements should be made to meet them. The EHC plan is set out in sections.

6.6 When a first or amended draft EHC plan is issued the child's parents, or the young person, have the right to express a preference that the Council name a particular school. (Children and Families Act 2014, s.38(2))

Learners of Sixth Form age

6.7 The law on education transport is set out in the Education Act 1996. The Government also issued statutory guidance in January 2019 entitled 'Post-16 transport and travel support to education and training' which details a council's duties to young adult learners and pupils of sixth form age. The Act does not impose a duty for councils to arrange transport for pupils once they reach sixth form age. Councils have discretion to decide what transport arrangements are necessary to help young people access education.

6.8 Councils must publish a statement setting out the transport arrangements they consider necessary to help students of sixth form age to attend education or training. The statement must set out the arrangements the council proposes to make for young people with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities

6.9 In considering what arrangements it is necessary to make for sixth form pupils, the council must have regard to:

- the needs of those for whom it would not be reasonably practicable to attend an education establishment if no arrangements were made;
- the distances, and journey times, between the homes of people of sixth form age in their area and education establishments suitable to their needs.
- the transport needs for sixth form pupils with special educational needs or disability. There is no automatic entitlement to transport to an institution named in an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Young Adult learners

6.10 Section 508F Education Act 1996 provides that local authorities must make arrangements for the provision of transport and otherwise as they consider necessary for two purposes:

- The first purpose is to facilitate the attendance of young adults receiving education at institutions maintained or assisted by the authority and providing further or higher education (or both) or within the further education sector;
- The second purpose is to facilitate the attendance of relevant young adults receiving education or training at institutions outside both the further and higher education sectors, but only in cases where the local authority have secured for the adults in question the provision of education or training at the institution in question and the provision of boarding accommodation under s.514A.

6.11 Any transport provided under this section must be provided free of charge.

6.12 Relevant sections within the [1996 Education Act](#) (as amended) are referenced in this document.

6.13 Pursuant to the Children and Families Act 2014, local authorities have duties to co-operate with other departments and relevant organisations and to publish a local offer setting out information regarding, amongst other things, arrangements for home to school transport.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Following the Cabinet decision, we will ensure the Policies are updated to reflect any comments and changes made. We will then go out to formal consultation for 6 weeks via the councils [Engage Barnet](#) website.
- 7.2 We will seek support from the engage team with regards consultation questions.
- 7.3 Following analysis of feedback we will then publish the final policies on the Local Offer webpages as well as the consultation analysis on the council's Engage Barnet webpages.
- 7.4 If agreed, all three policies will be published during August 2024.

8. Equalities and Diversity

- 8.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public-Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
 - advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
 - foster good relations between people from different groups.
- 8.2 The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day business and keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.
- 8.3 Analysis of data enables the Council to monitor both the quality of services as well as sufficiency for children and young people who have Special Educational Needs and or Disability as well as other protected characteristics.
- 8.4 The strategy sets out the steps we will take to advance the equality of opportunity for our children and young people with SEND or who are educated in Alternative Provision for whom we are responsible within and outside of our Borough.
- 8.5 Please see EQIA attached.

9. Background Papers

- 9.1 None.