

	<p>ACTION TAKEN UNDER DELEGATED POWERS BY OFFICER 5 October 2015</p>
Title	Independent Travel Training Provider
Report of	Assistant Director Inclusion and Skills
Wards	All
Status	PUBLIC.
Enclosures	None
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Summary

This report seeks approval to procure and put out to tender a two year contract (with an option to extend for a further year), for the provision of an independent travel training service. The total contract value of this service is anticipated to be £100,000.00

Decisions

- 1. To procure and put out to tender a two year contract (with an option to extend for a further year), worth £100,000 for the provision of an independent travel training service.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The role of the independent travel training provider is to provide travel trainers who will work in partnership the child/children and young person/people (hereinafter referred to as CYP) of families with special needs aged up to 25. The travel trainers will facilitate CYP to become independent in accessing public transport or support them in accessing other means of sustainable

transport to and from school or college, thereby reducing the demands on Barnet's Passenger Transport Service

2. REASONS FOR DECISIONS

- 2.1 The Authority seeks a partner to deliver independent travel training to individual CYP identified by the SEN team, parents, carers, schools, colleges and other relevant partners. The partner will be required to work from an identified base and deliver training to eligible CYP attending schools, colleges and other establishments across the borough and in some cases to CYP in out of borough educational placements.
- 2.2 The key objectives of this service are to ensure that:
- all travel training referrals passed on by the Authority to the provider are dealt with promptly and efficiently;
 - risk to the CYP is minimised; and
 - Barnet families experience excellent customer service.
- 2.3 Currently we intend to make 60 referrals in the first year of the contract and a similar number in Year 2. Over 70% of referrals need to result in service users ceasing to use Barnet Passenger Transport Services and successfully becoming independent travellers who are able to travel on their home to school/college route with-out supervision within 6 weeks of embarking on the independent travel training programme. This would also include being able to deal with challenges such as transport delays and route changes that are an inevitable part of the experience of travelling in London.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 3.1 The Authority has considered requesting schools to undertake such a service on behalf of its pupils, but has decided this is not a feasible option because:
- Schools do not necessarily possess the specific skills required for this service;
 - Schools already face challenges recruiting staff for the length of the school day. To ask these staff to cover sessions before and after school is challenging operationally.
 - Young people attend a variety of institutions and school participation would not easily provide the range of cover required;

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The contract will be offered to the successful tenderer for a two year period, with the option to extend for a further year. Once a provider has been chosen a Summary DPR will be written to award the company the contract.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

5.1.1 The promotion of Independent Travel Training contributes to the following Council priorities:

- more young people with complex disabilities will stay in Barnet, where they grew up, and live in their own homes, with education and training opportunities helping them to grow in independence.
- the council will continue to ensure a great start in life for every child and that young people are well prepared for adulthood
- traffic flow on Barnet's roads will be managed to reduce congestion, with regeneration areas designed effectively to keep traffic moving

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 The introduction of independent travel training is a key part of the agreed strategy for achieving MTFS savings in the SEN Home to School transport budget.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.4 Statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education in July 2014 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-to-school-travel-and-transport-guidance>) encourages Local Authorities to:

- Develop sustainable transport arrangements – this means that the method of transport improves the physical well-being of those children and young people who use them, and/or the environmental well-being of Barnet;
- Introduce approaches that train and support young people to become independent travellers, so developing “skills for life”.

5.4.1 Council Constitution, Contract Procedure Rules, Appendix 1 Table A details that decisions with a procurement value of between £25,001 and £172,514 that are not included on the Procurement Forward Plan need to be approved by a Full Officer DPR. Officers must obtain a minimum of two written quotations for a contract of this value. Acceptance is via a Summary DPR.

5.4.2 As the activity was not included on the Procurement Forward Plan, under the Council's Constitution, Contract Procedure Rules - an Officer DPR is required to authorise this procurement activity.

5.4.3 Procurement for the provision of an independent travel training service will be undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules and a minimum of two competitive quotations will be sought using the procurement portal.

5.4.4 Council Constitution, Contract Procedure Rules, Section 5.10 requires that HB Public Law must approve the contract terms and conditions to be used in the

procurement.

5.5 Risk Management

5.5.1 The CYP referred will have either one or more of the following conditions: learning disability, physical disability, sensory impairment, complex health need and/or social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Most will have an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) or a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or a Learning and Development Agreement (LDA) and will have been identified as being ready to take up independent travel training.

5.5.2 Once the CYP has been identified by the SEN Referral and Assessment team and the SEN Transport team, they will be referred to the independent travel training service which will undertake a full assessment of the student's readiness to begin independent travel training, including meeting the CYP and consulting teaching staff and any other relevant professionals. This assessment will include the completion of a full risk assessment and an agreed risk management plan. During this process, the trainer will assess whether the CYP will be able, once trained, to complete the home to school journey safely with minimal risk.

5.5.3 The focus of the training will be:

- learning the route
- travelling at peak times
- confirming the CYP is safe (semi-independent journeys)
- confirmation/sign off stage.

The service provider will be required to demonstrate that it:

- is suitably qualified and experienced for the provision of independent travel training for CYP with a range of disabilities, impairments and complex needs.
- has a sound understanding of the needs of CYP with special educational needs and the impact of their disability on their life experiences.
- employs staff that have met the requirements of safer recruitment for staff working with CYP, including the appropriate level of DBS clearance.
- ensures that staff employed have attained Level 2 or an equivalent of the Authority's Safeguarding Standards related to working with vulnerable people.
- provides supervision for all trainers on a planned and regular basis.
- works effectively with schools, colleges, other establishments and

professionals.

- adopts a child centred focus to their work and establishes successful relationships with CYP and their families.
- provides and delivers an independent travel training package including all tools, materials, resources and assessment materials required to deliver an effective programme.
- evaluates the efficiency and outcomes of the service on an annual basis including a lessons learnt/service improvement section.

5.5.4 There is a risk that the contractor may employ staff who are not DBS checked or suitably trained to deliver the service. The contract will emphasise that these are minimum requirements and that the contractor will be subject to frequent audits by staff from Education & Skills to ensure these requirements are met.

5.5.5 The contractor may determine inappropriately that a young person is able to travel independently before that is actually the case. The contract will require the tenderer to set out the process for assessment and the implementation of this process will be audited frequently by staff from Education & Skills.

5.6 **Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 The move to Independent Travel Training may mean that some children and young people, who might previously have been transported to their school or college by bus or taxi, will be offered this service in accordance with the national and Council policies of promoting skills for independence, where possible. Eligibility criteria and any changes to travel assistance will be discussed on an individual basis with the individual and/or their carer.

5.6.2 A full for all proposed changes to SEN transport (of which this proposal is part) was carried out in February 2015. This noted that, of the 865 service users, up to 60 pupils could be moved onto public transport following a period of Independent Travel Training, which would provide a useful life skill and promote independence.

5.6.3 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the council and all other organisations exercising public functions must have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by or under the Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

5.6.4 The relevant protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race, religion or belief; and sex and sexual orientation. 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

5.7 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.7.1 This proposal was the subject of consultation with Barnet residents in January 2015 as part of the budget and 5 year business plan consultation. As reported to 55% of parents who responded were in favour of Independent Travel training, and 24% disagreed.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 A report on the outcome of the budget and 5 year business plan consultation was approved by the full Council on 3rd March 2015. The outcomes of the consultation are included in the following report:

<https://barnet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s21538/Appendix%20B%20Consultation%20Headline%20Findings%20UPDATED.pdf>

7. DECISION TAKER'S STATEMENT

- 7.1 *I have the required powers to make the decision documented in this report. I am responsible for the report's content and am satisfied that all relevant advice has been sought in the preparation of this report and that it is compliant with the decision making framework of the organisation which includes Constitution, Scheme of Delegation, Budget and Policy Framework and Legal issues including Equalities obligations.*

8. OFFICER'S DECISION

I authorise the following action

8.1

Signed Assistant Director Inclusion and Skills

Date 5 October 2015
