

Home to School Transport Policy

Scrutiny Task Group **PROJECT PLAN**

Agreed: 3 May 2022

Established by the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 February 2022

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

Version 1

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1. Introduction

On 17 February 2022 the People OSC established a Scrutiny Working Group to consider the Home to School Transport Policy, as a Member Group to provide a review of the existing policy, identify financial pressures and the methods for achieving savings associated with the agreed 2022/23 budget, and make recommendations to Cabinet in accordance with the Council's stated strategic direction.

The Scrutiny Working Group will consult with officers, stakeholders and witnesses where necessary to gain an understanding of their issues and needs.

The Scrutiny Working Group will scrutinise the different elements of the policy, what is nationally mandated and what is determined by the County Council, how we assess the equalities implications and any moves to reduce carbon emissions.

The Scrutiny Working Group acknowledges that there may be some cross over findings into the Place Scrutiny Committee and scrutiny officers will provide appropriate connections to that Committee, where needed.

2. Membership of the Scrutiny Task Group

Membership:

Councillor Andy Graham (Chair)

Councillor Michael Waine

Councillor Juliette Ash

Councillor Kate Gregory

Councillor Ian Corkin (observer as Chair of People Scrutiny Committee)

3. Aims and Objectives

The terms of reference have already been set by the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee as follows:

RESOLVED – (1) That the report and the information presented be noted.

(2) That a Working Group be set up to consider the Home to School Transport Policy and the options for the policy, the impact on carbon emissions, the equalities implications.

(3) That if possible, the Working Group should meet before the next meeting of the Committee to consider the issue and agree a report and any recommendations to the Cabinet for submission to the next meeting of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee for endorsement.

(4) That the membership of the Home to School Transport Policy Scrutiny Working Party is:

(Cllr Juliette Ash, Cllr Andy Graham, Cllr Kate Gregory and Cllr Michael Waine) with the following terms of reference:

- i). to consider the Home to School Transport Policy and the options for the policy,
- ii). to consider the impact on carbon emissions,
- iii). to consider the equalities implications.
- iv). to agree a report and any recommendations to the Cabinet for submission to the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee for endorsement

Out of Scope

TBC

4. Possible Outcomes for the Inquiry

The scrutiny working group will document its findings and any recommendations to the Cabinet in one or more reports that will be submitted to the Council's scrutiny committees and may thereafter be referred to the Cabinet for consideration and response.

Possible recommendations to the Cabinet include suggesting changes to the current policy in respect of eligibility and any associated impacts on reducing carbon and strengthening the equity of the policy's intention.

5. Limitations

The working group is keen to progress this work at reasonable pace but recognises that agreed work is already in progress in tandem with this review.

That is: -

- Commissioned work in order to make savings within the existing Home to School Transport Strategy
- Commissioned work in order to de carbonise our transport fleet with the organisation Gfleet.

Gfleet have been commissioned to produce two pieces of work regarding how we can decarbonise the Supported Transport Service, namely H2ST. The first piece of work is to inform the procurement strategy and they have until September 2022 to complete. This will be followed by the 2nd piece of work on our overall strategy, which will be towards the end of the year.

6. Stakeholders

Portfolio Holder(s):

Principal Portfolio Holder:

Councillor Liz Brighthouse – Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Other Relevant Portfolio Holders

Councillor Duncan Enright - Cabinet Member for Travel & Development Strategy

Councillor Pete Sudbury - Cabinet Member for Climate Change Delivery and Environment

Officer Input

Kevin Gordon – Corporate Director, Children and Young People
Hayley Good - Deputy Director of Children’s Services/ Education
Sandra Pearce – Supported Transport Manager
Neil Darlington – Service Manager (Education)

7. Evidence

Documentary Evidence and Reports

Evidence should include oral and documentary evidence from a range of stakeholders and include an examination of best practice nationally.

Reports:

Expert Witnesses

Members of the public
Community Groups
Anthony Kirkwood (OCC Officer) who uses Road Safety GB
Gfleet – commissioned to provide a view on opportunities to become net zero by 2030
Climate Change Team - OCC

8. Key Lines of Enquiry

Colour coded to identify which KLOEs will be translated into which report for the task group to consider.

All items in red – report 1

Items in blue – report 2

Items in green – report 3

- Q1.** What are the current policy intentions?
- Q2.** What national guidance is available / expected?
- Q3.** What elements of the policy are based on national legislation?
- Q4.** What elements of the policy are discretionary (inc. spare seats scheme) and are therefore at the discretion of OCC?
- Q5.** What effect do the agreed budget savings associated with Council’s budget 22/23 mean for the existing policy? Impact of this saving against global fuel prices.
- Q6.** What elements of the existing policy relate to equity?

- Q7. To understand the appeal process, the legislative requirements, the effectiveness and consequences of it and opportunities for improvement
- Q8. What are the ways in which we assess road and route safety part of the existing policy?
- Q9. How do we ensure that H2ST contributes to reducing carbon emissions?
- Q10. How do we ensure that H2ST contributes to progressing our legal duties under the equalities act?
- Q11. Are there specific overlap issues across School Admissions Policy and the Home to School Transport Policy that create conditions for parental advantages unfairly and any issues in relation to a parent achieving their first choice school.

9. Equalities Implications

As above, but what are the equalities implications for the councils plans and targets for carbon reduction? (consider the Equalities Act Protected Characteristics).

10. Budgetary and Resource Implications

As above. Identification of the possible budgetary and resource implications to be investigated during the inquiry – eg existing resources, existing budget, possible savings, possible additional resources / budget requirements.

11. Publicity & Communications

TBC

12. Risks

The following potential risks to the Scrutiny Commission Inquiry have been identified:

- ▶ Time overrun- failure to deliver timely report, commitment of scrutiny officer support, commitment of staff in the service to support
- ▶ Lack of availability of key stakeholders and witnesses over consultation period
- ▶ Scope creep – failure to restrict investigations to terms of reference
- ▶ Lack of stakeholder buy-in.

13. Schedule of Meetings

Date of Meeting	Purpose of Meeting	Documentary Evidence/reports	Witnesses/inc officers
7 June 2022 10 AM County Hall IN PERSON MEETING	MEETING CANCELLED AT THE REQUEST OF SERVICE. ITEMS ROLLED INTO 16 JUNE MEETING.		
16 June (this meeting will take place after People OSC) 1.30pm IN PERSON MEETING	To consider 2 papers covering items in green and blue at point 8		Gfleet Anthony Kirkwood Kunal Prasad
	Develop and issue interim report to Exec Member and People OSC by email		
19 July	Cabinet		
TIMESCALES AFTER THIS POINT WILL NEED TO BE REVISITED FOR ACCURACY			
September	Receive final output of the first Gfleet paper (Procurement Strategy)		Gfleet Kunal Prasad
10 November	People OSC		
December / January	Receive final output of second Gfleet paper		Gfleet Kunal Prasad

	People OSC		
February	Cabinet		