

Equality Impact Assessment Template

To be completed for all key changes, decisions and proposals. Cite specific data and consultation evidence wherever possible. Further guidance is available at:

<http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/About/Equality.aspx?nccredirect=1>

Duties which need to be considered:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

PART 1 – Overview of the change, decision or proposal

1. Title of the change, decision or proposal:

Provision of Post 16 Transport

2. Date of equality impact assessment:

February 2018

3. Brief description of the change, decision or proposal:

The introduction of a revised Post 16 Transport Scheme which would make free travel available for eligible 16-19 year-olds to their local school or college.

4. Name(s) and role(s) of officer(s) completing the assessment:

Jane Jack, School Place Planning and Admissions Manager

5. Overall, what are the outcomes of the change, decision or proposal expected to be? (E.g. will it reduce/terminate a low-priority service, maintain service outcomes at

reduced cost, or change the balance of funding responsibility for a service which will remain the same?)

The proposal would result in the removal of charges for eligible students who are provided with a place on council contracted school bus or taxi service (currently £600 per year). The Council may also fund the costs of travel for eligible students accessing public transport. Eligible students with an Education, Health and Care Plan and those from low income families would continue to travel for free. There would be a one-off fee of £50 which will help cover the cost of administering the travel scheme. The fee would not be payable in respect of those students with an Education, Health and Care Plan and those from low income families

6. If you judge that this proposal is **not** relevant to some protected characteristics, tick these below (and explain underneath how you have reached this judgement).

Disability Sex Age Race Religion Sexual orientation

People who have changed gender Women who are pregnant or have babies

Employees who are married/in civil partnerships

After considering employees and service users, the characteristics checked above are not relevant because:

A consultation exercise will be undertaken on the proposal to introduce a revised Post 16 Transport Scheme which would make free travel available for eligible 16-19 year-olds to their local school or college. At this stage there are no obvious disproportionate impacts for the groups ticked above arising from this proposal. A consultation exercise will run from 20 February to 2 April 2018. Members of the public/all consulted, are asked via the consultation process to explain their concerns if they feel that this change to the Post-16 transport policy would have any specific impacts on particular groups of students more than others.

The Council would continue to ensure that individual circumstances, for these groups, would be considered on a case by case basis so that none would be disproportionately disadvantaged by this proposal.

PART 2 – Relevance to different Protected Characteristics

Answer these questions both in relation to people who use services and employees

Disability

Note: “disabled people” includes people with physical, learning and sensory disabilities, people with a long-term illness, and people with mental health problems. You should consider potential impacts on all of these groups.

Please answer these questions with reference to our employees and people who use our services

7. What do you know about usage of the services affected by this change, decision or proposal by disabled people, about disabled people's experiences of it, and about any current barriers to access?

For those students in Post-16 education who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the Council would make arrangements for and meet the costs of the transport necessary to transport the student to the nearest educational establishment which can meet their needs as set out in their EHCP, as it does now. There would be no fee charged for these students either. Students who fall into this category would therefore not be affected by the changes.

There will be other students who have a disability (whether temporary or permanent) but are not subject to an EHCP, and where their disability means that they cannot access the normal transport arrangements that the majority of their peers would have been able to access from their home to their appropriate place of study. In these cases the Council would continue to consider on a case by case basis whether or not to make arrangements for and pay for transport for the student.

8. Could disabled people be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the change, decision or proposal?

Disabled students who have an Education, Health and Care Plan would not be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the adoption of this proposal as explained above as they will not be affected by the changes. Compared to those without an EHCP however, they would be advantaged as they would not have a fee to pay.

The Council would continue to ensure that appropriate transport arrangements are put in place for other disabled students as their needs would be assessed on a case by case basis. In doing so the Council would ensure they are not disproportionately disadvantaged by this proposal.

9. Could the change, decision or proposal affect the ability of disabled people to participate in public life? (e.g. by affecting their ability to go to meetings, take up public appointments etc.)

No.

10. Could the change, decision or proposal affect public attitudes towards disabled people? (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)

No.

11. Could the change, decision or proposal make it more or less likely that disabled people will be at risk of harassment or victimisation?

No.

12. If there are risks that disabled people could be disproportionately disadvantaged by the change, decision or proposal, are there reasonable steps or adjustments that could be taken to reduce these risks?

There remains a statutory duty on the Council to provide transport for those students who cannot, for whatever reason, travel independently and that would include those who can't access local bus services because of disability. In other words the Council is obliged to provide appropriate transport arrangements to enable them to access Post-16 Education and ensure they are not disproportionately disadvantaged by the implementation of this proposal.

13. Are there opportunities to create *positive* impacts for disabled people linked to this change, decision or proposal?

The positive impact remains as currently – disabled people already receive free transport if they have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and attend their nearest appropriate educational establishment and no fee would be charged. Appropriate transport arrangements will be put in place for other disabled students as their needs would be assessed on a case by case basis.

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Age

Please answer these questions with reference to our employees and people who use our services

21. What do you know about usage of the services affected by this change, decision or proposal by people of different age groups, about their experiences of it, and about any current barriers to access?

The age group affected is 16 to 19 year olds seeking to access Post 16 education. Currently there are 179 students benefiting from free travel (those with an EHCP/disability or from low income families, or provided with free travel on discretionary ground), which is approximately 3.5% of all students in Post 16 Education. It is predicted that the introduction of free travel may lead to the number of students being supported rising to approximately 20%-25% of all students in Post 16 education.

22. Could people of different age groups be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the change, decision or proposal?

All eligible 16-19 year olds will be advantaged by the proposal as at present many meet the cost of their post 16 transport provision from other than the council.

23. Could the change, decision or proposal affect the ability of people of different age groups to participate in public life? (e.g. by affecting their ability to go to meetings, take up public appointments etc.)

No

24. Could the change, decision or proposal affect public attitudes towards people of different age groups? (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)

No

25. Could the change, decision or proposal make it more or less likely that people of different age groups will be at risk of harassment or victimisation?

No

26. If there are risks that people of different age groups could be disproportionately disadvantaged by the change, decision or proposal, are there reasonable steps or adjustments that could be taken to reduce these risks?

There are no risks that people of different age groups could be disproportionately disadvantaged by the proposals.

27. Are there opportunities to create *positive* impacts for people of different age groups linked to this change, decision or proposal?

It is hoped that the proposals may lead to an increase in the number of young people accessing Post 16 education.

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Religion or belief

Note: *In the Equality Act, religion includes any religion. It also includes a lack of religion. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief or a lack of such belief.*

Please answer these questions with reference to our employees and people who use our services

35. What do you know about usage of the services affected by this change, decision or proposal by people with different religions or beliefs, about their experiences of it, and about any current barriers to access?

The proposal would be supportive of those students who want to attend an educational establishment which although is not the nearest or catchment, is the nearest that is consistent with their religion or belief (or lack of religion or belief).

36. Could people with different religions or beliefs be disproportionately advantaged or disadvantaged by the change, decision or proposal?

No

37. Could the change, decision or proposal affect the ability of people with different religions or beliefs to participate in public life? (e.g. by affecting their ability to go to meetings, take up public appointments etc.)

No

38. Could the change, decision or proposal affect public attitudes towards people with different religions or beliefs? (e.g. by increasing or reducing their presence in the community)

No

39. Could the change, decision or proposal make it more or less likely that people with different religions or beliefs will be at risk of harassment or victimisation?

No

40. If there are risks that people with different religions or beliefs could be disproportionately disadvantaged by the change, decision or proposal, are there reasonable steps or adjustments that could be taken to reduce these risks?

Even though there may be educational establishments located closer to their home address, a student's desire or a parent's wish to send their child to a faith establishment (or not as the case may be) would be supported.

41. Are there opportunities to create *positive* impacts for people with different religions or beliefs linked to this change, decision or proposal?

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Human Rights

66. Could the change, decision or proposal impact on human rights? (e.g. the right to respect for private and family life, the right to a fair hearing and the right to education)

All young people are required to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 18. This proposal will lend support to young people and perhaps impact on the number of young people who are Not In Education, Employment or Training (NEET).

PART 3 - Course of Action

67. Based on a consideration of all the potential impacts, tick one of the following as an overall summary of the outcome of this assessment:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The equality analysis has not identified any potential for discrimination or adverse impact and all opportunities to promote equality have been taken.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The equality analysis has identified risks or opportunities to promote better equality; the change, decision or proposal will be adjusted to avoid risks and ensure that opportunities are taken.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The equality analysis has identified risks to equality which will not be eliminated, and/or opportunities to promote better equality which will not be taken. Acceptance of these is reasonable and proportionate, given the objectives of the change, decision or proposal, and its overall financial and policy context.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The equality analysis shows that the change, decision or proposal would lead to actual or potential unlawful discrimination, or would conflict with the Council's positive duties to an extent which is disproportionate to its objectives. It should not be adopted in its current form.

68. Explain how you have reached the judgement ticked above, and summarise any steps which will be taken to reduce negative or enhance positive impacts on equality.

Steps already exist within the Council's existing post 16 transport policy to ensure special provision is made for some students i.e. students from low income backgrounds, students with an Education, Health and Care Plan. As a result of these measures and the fact that these students are not being asked to pay the fee, it does not appear that there is any potential for discrimination or adverse impact as a result of implementing this proposal.

PART 4 - Ongoing Monitoring

69. What are your plans to monitor the actual impact of the implementation of the change, decision or proposal on equality of opportunity? (include action points and timescales)

The monitoring of the actual impact of the proposal would take place on an on-going basis following its implementation, i.e. from September 2018. The cost of implementing free Post 16 Transport for eligible students will need to be monitored to ensure this is sustainable given the financial pressures that the Council is experiencing.

PART 5 - Authorisation

70. Name of Head of Service and Date Approved

Once completed, please send to: Keith.Thompson@northumbria.nhs.uk