



## SPECIAL EDUCATION FOR LIFE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 19TH JUNE 2014

**SUBJECT: CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH EDUCATION TRANSPORT MEDIUM  
TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2015/17 – ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**REPORT BY: ACTING DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

---

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) contributions from Caerphilly County Borough Education Transport service in accordance with the Cabinet report – next stages of MTFP – 2015/16 and 2016/17 dated 16 April 2014.

### 2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report is put before Education for Life Scrutiny Committee to consider the County Borough Education Transport Service's review options in assisting the Local Authority to meet its obligations in respect of the 2014/17 Medium Term Financial Plan, taking due note that:-

- i) The Councils MTFP requires estimated savings of £6.5m for the 2015/16 financial year and £6.9m for 2016/17.
- ii) Discretionary services are reviewed in full, including those areas of statutory provision where delivery exceeds the minimum required levels, with a view to identifying savings proposals totalling over £8m. Saving proposals are to be presented to Special Scrutiny Committees after April 2014 and before October 2014.
- iii) Further proposals for Members to consider in respect of up to 3% efficiency savings. These efficiency savings targets to be applied to those statutory and essential services that the Authority has to deliver, either directly or via a third party organisation. Reports to be presented to Special Scrutiny Committees after April 2014 and before October 2014.

- 2.2 Cabinet on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014 agreed that 9 discretionary services will be considered by the Education for Life Scrutiny over three meetings:

- 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014
- 18<sup>th</sup> September 2014
- 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014

- 2.3 The range of discretionary services are listed in Appendix 1 of the report, together with an approximate budget value.

2.4 The three service areas being reviewed at the Education for Life Scrutiny meeting of the 19<sup>th</sup> June 2014 are:

- (1) Library Services
- (2) Home to School Transport (discretionary element)
- (3) Music Service

2.5 Eleven areas of discretionary provision form the basis of this report to Scrutiny Members. These are as options put forward are as follows:-

1. ET1: Review of post 16 transport arrangements. There is no statutory duty to provide transport for these pupils and students. Caerphilly fully funds transport provision in this area.
2. ET2: Review of walking distances for pupils aged 5 to 16. There is a statutory duty to provide transport to the nearest primary school if a pupils lives more than 2 miles from their nearest school and to the nearest secondary school if a pupil lives more than 3 miles away from their nearest school. Caerphilly funds transport for pupils living 1.5 miles from their nearest or catchment primary school or 2 miles from their nearest or catchment secondary school.
3. ET3: Review of Post 16 transport arrangements for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN). There is no statutory duty to provide transport for these pupils and students. Caerphilly fully funds transport provision in this area.
4. ET4: Provision of free concessionary seats when spare seats are available. There is no statutory duty to provide these and many local authorities charge for the concession. Caerphilly does not levy a charge and offers them to students providing they are attending their nearest or catchment school and live under the defined walking distances.
5. ET5: Provision of escorts on primary school transport. There is no statutory duty to provide escorts on mainstream school transport. The Council introduced escorts in 1999 to address health and safety concerns.
6. ET6: Provision of escorts on secondary school transport. There is no statutory duty to provide escorts on mainstream school transport. The Council specifies escorts on transport to Lewis Boys School, following a number of serious incidents and health and safety related concerns.
7. ET7: Provision of transport to Faith schools. The Council provides free transport to the nearest Voluntary aided school of the parent's denomination, in accordance with the prescribed walking distances for primary and secondary schools. There is a general duty on local authorities to have regard to preference, but at the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.
8. ET8: Provision of transport to Welsh Medium schools. The Council provides free transport to the nearest Welsh Medium school, in accordance with the prescribed walking distances for primary and secondary schools. There is a duty on a local authority to assess travel needs and consider parental preference, as well as to promote access to education through the medium of Welsh language.
9. ET9: Provision of transport for pupils who change address in years 10 to 13. There is no statutory duty to provide transport for pupils who change address in years 10 to 13. The Council provides free transport to enable pupils and students to complete their current course, providing they're attending their catchment or nearest school and their new address is beyond the agreed walking distances.
10. ET10: Provision of transport for pupils residing in refuges, hostels or temporary housing. The Council provides free transport in these circumstances, which are usually short term and temporary. There is no statutory duty on the Council to provide transport in these circumstances.
11. ET11: Review of free transport on hazardous walking routes, identified as negligible or low risk, but less than the defined policy distance for free transport. These routes have been subject to thorough reviews previously. Current guidance suggests routes assessed as negligible or low risk generally does not warrant transport provision.

### 3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

3.1 The work of Caerphilly County Borough Library Service contributes to a number of the Councils key strategic priority areas and plans including 'Caerphilly Delivers: The Single Integrated Plan 2013-2017', in particular with respect to:

- **Prosperous Caerphilly** – supporting local people to improve their employment opportunities and compete for work.
- **Learning Caerphilly** – providing access to a range of resource, facilities, and services that underpin basic skill development, qualification attainment, and access to materials that support improved educational achievement among residents of all ages.

### 4. THE REPORT

4.1 Eleven areas of discretionary transport provision are detailed as proposals for Scrutiny Committee Members consideration and comments.

4.2 Each area defines the statutory duty and identifies the discretionary areas of provision defined by the current education transport policy set by the Council. Each area includes a summary of the potential options available to reduce or withdraw discretionary areas of provision within the broader context of the Council's Medium Term Financial Planning constraints.

#### 4.5 Education Transport Service Review Areas

4.5.1 ET1: Review of post 16 transport arrangements.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET1: Post 16 Transport for Mainstream pupils / students.</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b>	£60,000 to £800,000
<b>Financial Year:</b>	2016/17
<b>Comment:</b>	Protection for existing pupils means full savings would not be realised initially.

The Council has no statutory duty to make / provide transport arrangements for pupils / students over the age of 16 years old. Legislation does however require that if transport is provided in line with the Council's prescribed criteria, the provision must be equitable, with no differential policy.

For post 16 pupils attending school, the Council provides transport to pupils attending their relevant school (nearest or catchment) and reside beyond walking distance to the school (defined as 2 miles or more) for ages 16 to 18 years old.

For colleges, students aged 16, 17 or 18 at the start of the academic year and who attend a course of full time study (16 hours a week or more) are entitled to free transport, provided the student is attending the relevant (catchment or nearest) college to home and resides more than 2 miles from the establishment.

Transport is currently provided in a number of ways – to schools, pupils travel with Year 7 to 11 pupils. For colleges, transport is through dedicated buses (e.g. to Coleg y Cymoedd, Ystrad Mynach) or through season tickets to travel on local buses (e.g. to Coleg Gwent or to Coleg y Cymoedd, Nantgarw). Some courses are not available locally and students travel outside the county borough – e.g. Pencoed College. The Council provides dedicated transport for some, or season tickets (on bus or train) for others in these circumstances.

Where a course of study is not available locally, a travel grant of £370 per annum is available, but historically some transport has been provided to particular courses some distance away – such as the Pencoed campus of Bridgend College for agriculture based studies. Petrol grants are offered to students where there are no formal transport arrangements in place and the journey is not viable by public transport.

Options are:

- Discontinue post 16 transport. Potential saving £800,000 per annum but would not be realised in full due to current contract arrangements. Contract buses to Ystrad Mynach college are procured at a competitive rate, as the start / finish times of the College allow contractors to serve one or more schools and the college with one vehicle in the morning and afternoon. This spreads the cost of operating the vehicle over different contracts. If the College journeys are withdrawn, the cost of operation will fall solely on the schools contracts, leading to additional costs for these.
- Introduce a travel grant for pupils to part fund the purchase of a season ticket, or to make their own transport arrangements. This is the favoured policy adopted by many neighbouring Councils and typically ranges between £140 and £225 for each academic year, potentially saving between £300,000 and £400,000 each academic year.
- Introduce a cap on transport costs, by setting a maximum contribution. This would be based on the current travel grant rate (£370) and would protect the Council from rising costs and fully funding more expensive transport to more specialised courses. Although these arrangements only apply to a small minority of students transported, the costs can be much higher than conventional transport. For example, the minibus contract to Pencoed college, transporting 14 students from the county borough costs the Council £2,400 per student each year. Potential saving £60,000 per annum.

### **Cost to Implement**

<b>Staff Costs:</b>	None
<b>Resource Costs:</b>	None
<b>Additional Costs:</b>	Administration of payments / pass issue

### **Timeframe to Implement**

<b>Consultation:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and students, schools, colleges, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors
<b>Statutory Process:</b>	If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of

discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.

<b><u>Risks of Implementation</u></b>	
<b>Not Achieving -</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets.
<b>Savings:</b>	Protection for existing pupils and students so full saving would not accrue in first year of implementation.
<b>Timeframe:</b>	September 2016
<b><u>HR Implications:</u></b>	
<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated
<b><u>Other Options/Issues:</u></b>	<p>2400 pupils affected.</p> <p>Savings are impossible to quantify accurately at this stage as there are several permutations and consequences within each option.</p> <p>The implementation would mean that the Council no longer makes travel arrangements for post-16 students and this could be a major barrier for students accessing further education.</p> <p>Of the former Gwent Councils, Caerphilly is the only authority that fully funds the cost of season tickets for Coleg Gwent scheme. The scheme is part funded by Coleg Gwent – if Caerphilly reduces its contribution towards the cost of the pass, then each student would also pay a flat fare for each journey, similar to students residing in the other participating Councils. If a capped rate was introduced, the Council would be protected from future cost pressures associated with changes to the scheme.</p> <p>There may be an impact on the local bus network in some areas, where funding from season ticket sales helps sustain higher frequencies and supports more capacity in the network.</p> <p>Careful consideration needs to be given to maintaining the consistency of provision as some pupils attending 6<sup>th</sup> form travel on contract buses shared with year 7 to 11 pupils.</p>

4.5.2 ET2: Review of walking distances for pupils aged 5 to 16.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET2: Walking Distances for Pupils aged 5 to 16</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b> <b>Financial Year:</b> <b>Comment:</b>	£400,000 2016/17 Protection for existing pupils means full savings would not be realised initially.
<p>The Council has a statutory duty to provide pupils aged 5 to 16 years old with free school transport to their nearest school if the walking distance between their home and nearest school is more than 2 miles (for primary education) or 3 miles (for secondary education). Caerphilly provides transport for pupils who attend their relevant” school and defines walking distances as 1.5 miles for primary education and 2 miles for secondary pupils. “Relevant” school is defined as the catchment school or the nearest school.</p> <p>Proposal is to revert to the statutory provision – i.e. provide transport only for primary school pupils living 2 miles or more from their relevant school and for secondary school pupils living 3 miles or more from their relevant school.</p>	
<b><u>Cost to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Staff Costs:</b> <b>Resource Costs:</b> <b>Additional Costs:</b>	Could be significant – would require assessment of existing provision in respect of safe walking routes. Could be significant – would require assessment of existing provision in respect of safe walking routes Reassessment of routes to establish resource requirement to meet reduced demand for transport. Termination and retender of existing contracts.
<b><u>Timeframe to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Consultation:</b> <b>Statutory Process:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.
<b><u>Risks of Implementation</u></b>	
<b>Not Achieving - Savings:</b> <b>Timeframe:</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets. Phased in, with protection for existing pupils provided with free transport. The change would affect children: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• starting school for the first time (reception aged children) from September 2016</li> <li>• Who change school</li> <li>• Transferring to secondary schools in September 2016. Gradually, over a period of years as protection would apply to pupils</li> </ul> September 2016 onwards.

<b><u>HR Implications:</u></b>	
<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated
<b><u>Other Options/Issues:</u></b>	
	<p>Savings are impossible to quantify accurately at this stage as both statutory distance and discretionary distance pupils travel together. Ceasing to allow discretionary distance pupils to travel will reduce the capacity requirement overall, but this does not necessarily equate to direct cost savings (for example, if demand decreases from 70 or 50 seats to 40, the operational cost of running a 40 seat vehicle will not be significantly different from a 70 or 50 seater vehicle).</p> <p>Will cause difficulty and hardship for some pupils and families.</p> <p>Revised guidance for the Assessment of Walked Routes to Schools, due to be published by the Welsh Government shortly will place a stronger duty on the Council to consider a wide range of hazards and mitigate these – this may result some in routes being protected and savings not realised.</p> <p>Estimated 1100 pupils affected, based on assumptions around additional routes that be retained (due to the walking routes being designated as unsafe).</p> <p>Would require an extensive review of the current arrangements to refine the actual saving.</p>

4.5.3 ET3: Review of Post 16 transport arrangements for pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET3: Post 16 Transport for pupils / students with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b>	£165,000 (£200,000 including Trinity Fields)
<b>Financial Year:</b>	2016/17
<b>Comment:</b>	Protection for existing pupils means full savings would not be realised initially.

The Council has no statutory duty to make / provide transport arrangements for pupils / students over the age of 16 years old. Legislation does however require that if transport is provided in line with the Council's prescribed criteria, the provision must be equitable, with no differential policy. Local authorities are, however, required to have regard to the needs of disabled learners or those with learning difficulties.

Caerphilly currently transports 68 pupils with ALN at a cost of £165,000 per academic year. In addition, 31 students travel to Trinity Fields, but some are transported with pupils from younger year groups, making it difficult to confirm the full cost, but it is estimated to be £200,000.

Options are:

- Discontinue post 16 transport for pupils with ALN. Potential saving £165,000 to £200,000 per annum.
- Introduce a travel grant for pupils to part fund the purchase of a season ticket, or to make their own transport arrangements. Potential saving £90,000 per annum.

### **Cost to Implement**

<b>Staff Costs:</b>	None
<b>Resource Costs:</b>	None
<b>Additional Costs:</b>	Administration of payments / pass issue

### **Timeframe to Implement**

<b>Consultation:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and students, schools, colleges, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors
<b>Statutory Process:</b>	If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.

### **Risks of Implementation**

<b>Not Achieving -</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets.
<b>Savings:</b>	Protection for existing pupils and students so full saving would not accrue in first year of implementation.
<b>Timeframe:</b>	September 2016

### **HR Implications:**

<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated



<b>Other Options/Issues:</b>	<p>Pupils with ALN often require more specialised and therefore more expensive transport. Travel grant would not cover the cost of this – the average cost of post-16 transport for pupils with ALN is £1467 per annum, compared with £297 for mainstream post-16 pupils.</p> <p>Whilst some ALN pupils could travel by public transport, many are vulnerable and their needs are such that they could not travel on public transport. Withdrawing this element of support would disadvantage pupils with ALN and potentially prevent them benefiting from further education.</p>

4.5.4 ET4: Provision of free concessionary seats when spare seats are available.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET4: Free concessionary transport when spare seats are available.</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b>	£25,000 to £50,000 (income)
<b>Financial Year:</b>	2016/17
<b>Comment:</b>	<p>The Council makes spare seats available to pupils attending their nearest or catchment school on contracted transport, provided there is no additional cost to the Authority. Parents / guardians are advised that the provision is entirely dependent on the capacity of the vehicle used and any changes in circumstances could lead to the concession being withdrawn at short notice.</p> <p>Consideration for concessionary transport is made in the following circumstances, with applications required in writing and dealt with on a strict first come first served basis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children or nursery age</li> <li>• Children who attend their nearest or catchment school, but reside under distance.</li> <li>• Children who wish to travel from an alternative address (e.g. a grandparent or child minder) provided their school is the nearest or catchment school for both the home and alternative addresses.</li> </ul> <p>Current Caerphilly policy prohibits provision of transport to an out of catchment school (unless it is the nearest) and this is strictly enforced, although many requests are received on this basis.</p> <p>There is no legal obligation on the Council to offer concessionary transport when spare seats are available.</p> <p>Caerphilly is one of the few Councils in Wales that does not charge for the concession. The amount charged varies, but is typically between £180 and £360 per annum.</p> <p>The proposal is to introduce a charge within this range.</p>
<b><u>Cost to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Staff Costs:</b>	None
<b>Resource Costs:</b>	None
<b>Additional Costs:</b>	Administration of payments / pass issue
<b><u>Timeframe to Implement</u></b>	

<b>Consultation:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors
<b>Statutory Process:</b>	If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.
<b><u>Risks of Implementation</u></b>	
<b>Not Achieving -</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets.
<b>Savings: Timeframe:</b>	From date of introduction. September 2016
<b><u>HR Implications:</u></b>	
<b>Redundancy: Redeployment: Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated None anticipated None anticipated
<b><u>Other Options/Issues:</u></b>	It is estimated that 150 pupils would be affected by this change. The introduction of a charge would incur additional administrative costs for the Council, but these would not be significant. The cost could be a barrier to existing parents with children who benefit from the free seats. Consideration could be given to reviewing the policy and allowing pupils not attending their catchment or nearest school to purchase a concessionary seat and raise additional income, although demand would outstrip the availability of spare seats on many routes.

#### 4.5.5 ET5: Provision of escorts on primary school transport.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET5: Escorts on Primary School Transport</b>
<b>Savings (£): Financial Year: Comment:</b>	£103,550 2016/17

The Council specifies that escorts must be provided on all mainstream Primary school routes since agreement in 1999.

There is no legal obligation on the Council to specify escorts on mainstream school transport.

The policy was introduced as it was recognised that children in Primary education require assistance with boarding or alighting from vehicles, particularly on larger buses due to the higher steps. Escorts ensuring that pupils are safely belted prior to vehicles moving off and in ensuring that children remain seated during the journey and maintain an acceptable standard of behaviour.

Escorts act as a safeguard to ensure that younger pupils are met by a designated adult at the bus stop on the return journey home.

**Cost to Implement**

<b>Staff Costs:</b>	Nil
<b>Resource Costs:</b>	Nil
<b>Additional Costs:</b>	Nil

**Timeframe to Implement**

<b>Consultation:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors
<b>Statutory Process:</b>	If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.

**Risks of Implementation**

<b>Not Achieving -</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets.
<b>Savings:</b>	From date of introduction.
<b>Timeframe:</b>	September 2016

**HR Implications:**

<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated

<b><u>Other Options/Issues:</u></b>	It is estimated that 1180 pupils would be affected by this change. Health and Safety concerns for the pupils and transport operators if escort provision is withdrawn. Removing escorts would cause some operators to review their position and consider whether to continue provision without escorts. This could inflate costs and reduce / outweigh the potential savings.
-------------------------------------	---

4.5.6 ET6: Provision of escorts on secondary school transport.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET6: Escorts on Secondary School Transport</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b> <b>Financial Year:</b> <b>Comment:</b>	£30,000 2016/17
<p>The Council specifies that escorts must be provided on all mainstream school transport routes to Lewis Boys School, Pengam. This was a direct result of significant issues with poor pupil behaviour on routes to the school and a number of serious incidents recorded.</p> <p>The incidents were a serious threat to the health and safety of other pupils transported and the operators concerned. Prior to the provision of escorts, the situation was difficult, with operators indicating that they would refuse to provide transport to the school due to health and safety concerns.</p> <p>There is no legal obligation on the Council to specify escorts on mainstream school transport.</p>	
<b><u>Cost to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Staff Costs:</b> <b>Resource Costs:</b> <b>Additional Costs:</b>	None None None
<b><u>Timeframe to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Consultation:</b>  <b>Statutory Process:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors  If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.
<b><u>Risks of Implementation</u></b>	
<b>Not Achieving -</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets.
<b>Savings:</b> <b>Timeframe:</b>	From date of introduction. September 2016
<b><u>HR Implications:</u></b>	
<b>Redundancy:</b> <b>Redeployment:</b> <b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated None anticipated None anticipated

<b>Other Options/Issues:</b>	450 pupils would be affected by this change. Health and Safety concerns for the pupils and transport operators if escort provision is withdrawn. Removing escorts would cause some operators to review their position and consider whether to continue transport provision without escorts. This could inflate costs and reduce / outweigh the potential savings.

#### 4.5.7 ET7: Provision of transport to Faith schools.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET7: Transport to Faith Schools.</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b> <b>Financial Year:</b> <b>Comment:</b>	£468,000 2016/17 Protection for existing pupils means full savings would not be realised initially.
<p>The Council provides free transport to the nearest Voluntary Aided school of the parent's denomination in accordance with the Council's agreed walking distances for primary and secondary pupils.</p> <p>Section 9 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on local authorities to have regard to the general principle that pupils are to be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents so far that it is compatible with the provision of effective instruction and training and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.</p> <p>Section 6 of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure provides local authorities with the power to provide discretionary arrangements for learners who are not attending their nearest suitable school because of denominational preference.</p> <p>Most Councils in Wales provide transport to Faith Schools on this basis, although Neath Port Talbot and Wrexham have recently withdrawn provision and some others are reviewing their policy.</p> <p>This proposal is based on withdrawing transport to Faith Schools.</p>	
<b><u>Cost to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Staff Costs:</b> <b>Resource Costs:</b> <b>Additional Costs:</b>	None None None
<b><u>Timeframe to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Consultation:</b>  <b>Statutory Process:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors, denominational representatives.  If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.

<b><u>Risks of Implementation</u></b>	
<b>Not Achieving - Savings:</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets.
<b>Timeframe:</b>	Protection for existing pupils and students so full saving would not accrue for a number of years. September 2016
<b><u>HR Implications:</u></b>	
<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	N/a
<b><u>Other Options/Issues:</u></b>	
	It is estimated that 190 primary school and 273 secondary school pupils would be affected by this change. Transport to Faith Schools typically involves long journeys that are difficult to make on public transport and the withdrawal of free transport could have a significant affect on the sustainability of Faith Schools.

#### 4.5.8 ET8: Provision of transport to Welsh Medium schools.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET8: Transport to Welsh Medium Schools.</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b>	£1,316,500
<b>Financial Year:</b>	2016/17
<b>Comment:</b>	Protection for existing pupils means full savings would not be realised initially.
<p>The Council provides free transport to the appropriate Welsh Medium School in accordance with the Council's agreed walking distances for Primary and Secondary school pupils.</p> <p>Section 2 of the Learner Travel Measure (Wales) requires local authorities to assess travel needs and consider parental preference with regard to Welsh or English medium education when deciding to provide free or assisted school transport.</p> <p>In addition, section 10 of the Measure places a duty on local authorities in Wales to “promote access to education through the medium of Welsh language when exercising its functions under the Measure.</p> <p>Welsh ministers wish to see a continuation of a pattern of provision, which is responsive to parental preference for Welsh Medium education and local circumstances.</p> <p>Most Councils in Wales provide free transport to Welsh Medium Schools on this basis, although Bridgend Council have recently consulted on a proposal that would require that parents pay the transport costs if there is a Council run English Medium school closer to home.</p> <p>This proposal is based on withdrawing transport to Welsh Medium Schools.</p>	
<b><u>Cost to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Staff Costs:</b>	None

<b>Resource Costs:</b>	None
<b>Additional Costs:</b>	None
<b><u>Timeframe to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Consultation:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors
<b>Statutory Process:</b>	If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.
<b><u>Risks of Implementation</u></b>	
<b>Not Achieving -</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets.
<b>Savings:</b>	Protection for existing pupils and students so full saving would not accrue for a number of years.
<b>Timeframe:</b>	
<b><u>HR Implications:</u></b>	
<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated
<b><u>Other Options/Issues:</u></b>	It is estimated that 525 primary school and 1209 secondary school pupils would be affected by this change. Transport to Welsh Medium Schools typically involves long journeys that are difficult to make on public transport and the withdrawal of free transport could have a significant affect on the sustainability of Welsh Medium Schools.

4.5.9 ET9: Provision of transport for pupils who change address in years 10 to 13.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET9: Transport for pupils who change address in years 10 to 13.</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b>	£9,500
<b>Financial Year:</b>	2016/17
<b>Comment:</b>	Protection for existing pupils means full savings would not be realised initially.

The Council provides free transport for pupils who permanently change address in years 10 to 13. This enables them to complete their current course at the same school, providing they were attending their catchment or nearest school and their new address is beyond the agreed walking distance.

Caerphilly's policy provides transport irrespective of the costs incurred for these pupils and students and applies where pupils have moved into the county borough from neighbouring authorities. In recent years, most of these pupils have been issued with season tickets to travel by public transport, rather than the bespoke taxis that were organised previously, to bring the Council in line with most other Councils.

There is no legal duty on the Council to provide transport for pupils who move home in years 10 to 13.

Proposal is to withdraw this provision.

**Cost to Implement**

<b>Staff Costs:</b>	None
<b>Resource Costs:</b>	None
<b>Additional Costs:</b>	None

**Timeframe to Implement**

<b>Consultation:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors
<b>Statutory Process:</b>	If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.

**Risks of Implementation**

<b>Not Achieving - Savings:</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets. Gradually, over a period of years as protection would apply to pupils.
<b>Timeframe:</b>	September 2016

**HR Implications:**

<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated



<b>Other Options/Issues:</b>	<p>This would affect around 10 pupils (based on current / past trends).</p> <p>Rather than complete withdrawal – an alternative would be to facilitate transport only where pupils can make use of existing school transport, or use public transport. Most other Welsh Councils only offer transport on this basis and costs incurred would be much lower.</p>

4.5.10 ET10: Provision of transport for pupils residing in refuges, hostels or temporary housing.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET10: Transport for pupils residing in Women’s Aid Refuges, Homeless Hostels or Temporary Housing</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b> <b>Financial Year:</b> <b>Comment:</b>	<p>£29,000 2016/17 .</p>
<p>The Council provides free transport for pupils residing in Women’s Aid Refuges, Homeless Hostels or Temporary Housing irrespective of the cost.</p> <p>This often involves transporting more than one child and in some cases to different schools. Due to the circumstances, season tickets to travel on public transport are issued to the pupil and an appropriate accompanying adult. These costs are significantly lower than previously arrangements, when provision was generally arranged by bespoke taxis.</p> <p>Although provision is temporary, it is not unusual for transport to be required for two terms or longer.</p> <p>Where other local authorities in Wales provide this facility, they generally only provide transport where pupils can make use of existing services (e.g. contract routes) or where appropriate public transport exists, resulting in minimal costs and in line with most other Councils.</p> <p>There is no statutory duty to provide free transport in these circumstances.</p> <p>This proposal is based on withdrawing this provision.</p>	
<b><u>Cost to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Staff Costs:</b> <b>Resource Costs:</b> <b>Additional Costs:</b>	<p>None None None</p>

<b><u>Timeframe to Implement</u></b>	
<b>Consultation:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors
<b>Statutory Process:</b>	If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.
<b><u>Risks of Implementation</u></b>	
<b>Not Achieving -</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets.
<b>Savings:</b>	From date of introduction.
<b>Timeframe:</b>	September 2016
<b><u>HR Implications:</u></b>	
<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated
<b><u>Other Options/Issues:</u></b>	It is estimated that 20 pupils would be affected by this change. Due to the often difficult personal circumstances, the Council is likely to be faced with making alternative arrangements for transport through Social Services in some cases, so overall, the savings will not be realised.

4.5.11 ET11: Review of free transport on hazardous walking routes, identified as negligible or low risk, but less than the defined policy distance for free transport.

<b>Budget Title / Ref:</b>	<b>Discretionary Education Transport Provision – ET11: Transport for pupils living under policy distance for free school transport</b>
<b>Savings (£):</b>	£98,000
<b>Financial Year:</b>	2016/17
<b>Comment:</b>	.

In 2007, a thorough review was undertaken of walking routes where transport was historically provided (most were established prior to local government reorganisation in 1996) for pupils who resided under the 1.5 and 2 mile distance criteria. Only routes categorised as low or negligible risk were formally reviewed, additional routes classified as medium to high risk were excluded from the 2007 review, having previously been accepted as necessary by Members.

Technical Officers in the Engineering Services Division undertook the review and the routes involved were categorised as negligible or low risk. Officers proposed at the time that the provision be continued for existing pupils, but discontinued for all new pupils from September 2007. Members did not endorse the proposal and transport continues to be provided for new and existing pupils residing in these areas.

There are concerns that continuing to provide transport over routes identified as low / negligible risk leaves the Council open to claims from parents who could claim discrimination and precedent. The Learner Travel (Wales) Measure sets out that local authorities have a duty to risk assess walking routes to school, including walking routes, in line with various guidance documents available.

However, the Minister for Economy, Science and Transport has raised concerns about the limited scope of the safety factors considered in the current guidance and has undertaken a Consultation on a new policy for Wales that would extend the criteria used for assessing routes before being considered as safe. Most (if not all) Welsh local authorities have raised concerns over the additional criteria proposed and the potential to raise parental expectations and place additional financial burdens on local authorities. The revised formal guidance is due to be published shortly.

The current annual cost of the provision on routes classified as low or negligible risk is £98,000 for 195 pupils.

This proposal is to withdraw support for routes classified as low or negligible risk.

### **Cost to Implement**

<b>Staff Costs:</b>	Could be significant – would require assessment of existing provision in respect of safe walking routes.
<b>Resource Costs:</b>	Could be significant – would require assessment of existing provision in respect of safe walking routes
<b>Additional Costs:</b>	None anticipated

### **Timeframe to Implement**

<b>Consultation:</b>	Extensive consultation required with parents and pupils, schools, governing bodies, communities, town and community Councils, local Councillors
<b>Statutory Process:</b>	If a local authority decides to change or remove any element of discretionary transport it provides, it must publish the information before 1 October of the year preceding the academic year in which the changes will come into force in accordance with the Learner Travel Information Regulations 2009.

### **Risks of Implementation**

<b>Not Achieving - Savings:</b>	Savings would need to be found from alternative budgets. Gradually, over a period of years as protection would apply to pupils .
---------------------------------	--

<b>Timeframe:</b>	September 2016
<b><u>HR Implications:</u></b>	
<b>Redundancy:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redeployment:</b>	None anticipated
<b>Redirected Resource:</b>	None anticipated
<b><u>Other Options/Issues:</u></b>	
	It is estimated that 195 pupils would be affected by this change. Consideration could be given to allowing pupils to travel on existing contracts, or through the purchase of season tickets on public transport at a much lower cost.

## **5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Dependent on which option, or options, Members wish to explore further appropriate Equality Impact Assessments will be prioritised as part of the next stage in the formal review process. Where required the detailed Equality Impact Assessments undertaken will form part of subsequent reports to Members for their information and consideration.

## **6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 The financial implications of each review area considered as part of this report have been noted where known at present in section 4 above. The full cost implications of each area that Members may wish to take forward will be prepared as part of the next stage in the process and included in a further report to Education for Life Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in due course.

## **7. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no direct personnel implications.

## **8. CONSULTATIONS**

- 8.1 The views of all consultees listed have been incorporated in this report.

## **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That Education for Life Scrutiny Committee Members consider and comment upon the Education Transport Review areas / options detailed in this report.

## **10. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 10.1 To ensure that the views of the Scrutiny Committee are considered prior to the report being presented to Cabinet.

## **11. STATUTORY POWER**

- 11.1 1996 Education Act.

## 11.2 Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008.

**Author:** Tony Maher, Assistant Director of Planning & Strategy.  
**Consultees:** Sandra Aspinall, Acting Deputy Chief Executive  
Corporate Management Team  
Terry Shaw, Head of Engineering Services  
Clive Campbell, Transportation Engineering Manager  
Huw Morgan, Team Leader – Integrated Transport Unit  
Education Senior Management Team  
Kathryn Davies, Acting Principal Personnel Officer  
Cllr R Passmore, Cabinet Member, Education and Lifelong Learning  
Cllr T Williams, Cabinet Member Transport, Highways and Engineering  
Jane Southcombe, Principal Accountant

Appendices  
Appendix 1

Initial list of discretionary services to be reviewed