

## CABINET MEMBER (EDUCATION)

28<sup>th</sup> November 2012

Cabinet Member

Present: Councillor Kershaw

Other Member Present: Councillor Noonan

Employees Present: A. Brennan (Children, Learning & Young People Directorate)  
S. Durkin (Children, Learning & Young People Directorate)  
C. Green (Children, Learning & Young People Directorate)  
D. Haley (Children, Learning & Young People Directorate)  
J. McLellan (Customer & Workforce Services Directorate)

Apologies: Councillor Williams

### **Public Business**

#### **31. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **32. Post-16 Transport Policy – Support to Access Education and Training**

The Cabinet Member considered a report of the Director of Children, Learning and Young People which sought approval for a public consultation on the post-16 Transport Policy.

Local Authorities have a duty to prepare and publish an annual Transport Policy Statement which specified the arrangements that the Local Authority considered necessary to 'facilitate the attendance of all persons of sixth form age receiving education or training' (The Education Act 1996 S509AA). From 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2010, this duty was extended to require a Transport Policy Statement covering young people aged 19-24 who were continuing in learning and had learning difficulties and/or disabilities (Education Act 1996 S508G).

Local authorities were also required to have regards to 'the needs of those who could not access education or training provision', the needs of young parents and those who are vulnerable to becoming NEET (Not in education, employment or training) at the age of 16 or 17 or those who have already become NEET.

The Council's current Transport Policy offered free transport support to young people aged 16-19 who had learning difficulties and/or disabilities who were participating in education and were subject to a Learning Difficulty Assessment (Section 139a). It does not specify the arrangements for those aged 19-24 who had learning difficulties and/or disabilities. It was acknowledged that the current policy does not clearly describe the support that was available, nor the criteria for assessing such support. It was also acknowledged that the current policy does not address access to education and training for other vulnerable groups.

In 2010/11, the total cost of transport support for young people aged 16-19 was c£465,000. Free transport support does not take into account family/household income. This level of support had been, in part, subsidised by a grant from 2006/07 from the

Learning and Skills Council and its successor body, the Young People's Learning Agency. 2010/11 was the final year of this grant (£80,162).

The Council's officers believed that there was a need to review and revise the current policy to ensure that it was compliant with the Council's statutory duties and that financial resources were used effectively, particularly in the current economic environment.

**RESOLVED that, after due consideration of the report and matters raised at the meeting, the Cabinet Member (Education) requests:**

- (1) That a public consultation is carried out following further work, in collaboration with colleagues in Community Services, and that as part of the SEN and Disabilities FSR, further proposals for a full consultation be brought forward in a future Cabinet Member report.**
- (2) That the current post 16 transport policy is reviewed to ensure that it meets statutory requirements and published by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2013.**
- (3) That the revised policy be submitted to the Cabinet Member early in 2013.**

### **33. Any Other Items of Public Business**

There were no other items of public business.

#### **Private Business**

Nil

(Meeting closed at 3.15 p.m.)