

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**5 August 2014**

**Report of the Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults**

**Independent Travel Training**

**1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** To seek approval to procure services to provide Independent Travel Training (ITT) for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

**2. Information and Analysis**

**2.1 Current Project**

The Children and Younger Adults (CAYA) Department currently runs an Independent Travel Training Programme which started in June 2012. Since the start of this project over 135 young people have benefited from group travel awareness sessions within their school/college setting.

The training programme also offers one to one training for suitable students with an aim for them to become confident to travel independently. This increases the student's independence and improves access to employment and social networks.

For a SEN pupil to be eligible they must be:

- In Year 8 or above at school or be aged between 16 and 24 and attending post-16 education
- Being provided with transport to their place of education, paid for by the County Council

Table 1 shows a breakdown of the number of students who have taken part in the ITT one to one training and the outcome.

Table 1

<b>Breakdown of the outcome of individuals who have taken part in ITT one to one training</b>	
<u>Completed</u>	
Now fully independent	21
Independent one way (due to route or student's need)	4
Back in taxi due to absconding	2
Back in taxi due to concerns or increased anxiety	2
Will be independent when at college in September	1
Withdrew	3
Currently being trained	6
<u>Waiting for training</u>	
Deferred until September 2014 to start college	11
Deferred until Summer 2015 ready for college	4
Ready to be assessed	3

The current contract is due to end at the end of September 2015. It is not possible within the terms of the current contract for it to be extended beyond this date. The original contract was approved in February 2012 and was for eighteen months with a value of £75,000. The option to extend for a further two years has taken place.

## 2.2 Recent changes to the home to school transport policy

After a recent public consultation a decision was taken by Cabinet to introduce a charge for SEN sixth form learners as a contribution for their transport assistance. For Students aged 19 – 24 transport assistance will only be given if the Authority deems it is necessary. As part of the student's assessment ITT is discussed where it is applicable. These changes have the potential to increase the number of students requesting transport assistance. These changes were made after a review of the home to school transport policy had taken place. All areas where transport assistance was provided over statutory requirement was consulted on.

## 3. Financial Considerations.

- 3.1 The cost of the current contract to the Authority is £50,000 per year. This project is currently a spend to save project and would continue to be so. The average current cost of transport assistance for an SEN pupil is £5,399; the average cost for transport assistance to a further education college is £2,797 per student (figures as at June 2014). As part of this scheme the Authority has agreed to pay for a public transport pass on either bus or train whilst ever the pupil/student is still attending the course they are on at the time of the training. Even with the cost of the bus/train pass an average saving of above £3,000 per student per year could be made. As the majority of courses are for 2 years this amount could reasonably be expected to double.
- 3.2 Although the current project started in June 2012, due to the fact the Travel Trainers work term time only and the potential students needed to be assessed, the first Autumn term was used to deliver classroom based training. This in effect means that the majority of students who have received the one to one training in table 1 have done this in the 18 months from January 2013 to date. As can be seen from table 1, 21 students have become fully independent, 4 partially and 6 are about to become independent. On the average saving of £3,000 per year this project is already saving more than its initial costs of £50,000 per year.
- 3.3 The project was originally funded from underspent grant funding. It is now funded from the home to school transport budget, as this is where any potential saving is made. The intention is to continue funding the project from this budget.
- 3.4 If a charge is applicable under the revised policy this will still be charged towards the transport assists. It may be more cost effective for some students to pay their travel costs directly on a daily basis.

#### **4. Legal and Human Rights Considerations**

- 4.1 The procurement process will be carried out in accordance with the Authority's financial regulations.

#### **5. Human Resources Considerations**

- 5.1 The National Star Foundation currently employs 2 full time equivalent term time only members of staff to provide this training. TUPE considerations would be made for these staff members.

#### **6. Equality of Opportunity Considerations**

- 6.1 This training will be offer to the identified young people to improve their independence. By traveling independently they will have access to education, work and social networks.

**7. Health Considerations**

- 7.1 Some student's health could be improved if they walk to school/college rather than being transported in a contract vehicle which collects them from their home.

**8. Environmental Considerations**

- 8.1 As more students become independent and use public transport this will reduce the amount of contracted vehicles, this change will make a modest contribution to reducing carbon emissions.

**9. Transport Considerations**

- 9.1 The type of transport assistance offer to the students will change as their ability to travel independently improves.

**10. Property Considerations**

- 10.1 Derbyshire County Council accommodation will not be provided as part of this contract. If the provider requires accommodation from the Authority this may be provided if available at an agreed cost.

**11. Other Considerations**

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered – prevention of crime and disorder.

**12. Background Papers**

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**13. Key Decision - no**

**14. Call-in**

Is it required that the Call-in period be waived in respect of the decisions being proposed within this report? No.

**15. Strategic Director's Recommendation**

That the Cabinet Member agrees to:-

- 15.1 The procurement exercise being undertaken for the ITT Project for a period of 3 years, with a possible extension period of an additional 2 years.
- 15.2 Consider a further report on the results of the procurement exercise.

**Ian Thomas**  
**Strategic Director for Children & Younger Adults**