

WLA Travel Assistance Policy for young people Consultation - Public Meeting on 24 January 2013

PRESENT:

Sara Williams – Assistant Director, Early Help and Education
 Carmen Coffey – Head of Pupil and Parent Services
 Meena Mehta – Brent Parent Partnership Service
 Duncan Matthews – Independent Travel Programme Manager
 Marcia Payne – SEN Officer, Special Educational Needs Assessment Service (Minutes)

Parent - child attends The Village School.

APOLOGIES

Councillor Mary Arnold – Lead Member for Children and Families

SW	<p>Welcome and introductions</p> <p>SW explained that the meeting was part of a wider consultation process and that the consultation closes on 10 February.</p>
SW	<p>Opening comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no automatic entitlement to school transport. • Resources are limited and budget pressures are enormous. There is a high level of need across all of our services. • Transport costs the Council £3.7 million per year. • Other aspect – want to do what’s best for children and young people themselves. Sensitive issue. Can be challenging for families. Not just about saving money, but doing what’s in the child’s long-term best interests. • Safety underpins all of our policies, as does the need to be fair and transparent. • Confirmed that this meeting was not about whether the current transport service was a good or bad service, but about the policy of allocating transport. • Consulting on the new policy. Proposal is to be using the new policy for all new clients and reviewing all existing clients.
CC	<p>There will be a review of Transport provision annually by May each year. The decision on the provision of transport will be made following a review of one or all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -medical evidence -Consultation with the child’s school - Family situation <p>There will be an appeal process to the Head of Pupil and Parent Services</p>
DM	<p>15% of 700 consulted responded. Will use the response and other ideas to brief Executive on 23 April 2013. If policy approved it will come into effect immediately.</p>

MM	Aware that parents are in favour of the flexibility of the policy. The feedback she has received from parents has been fairly positive.
CC	Consultations in the schools with parents have been good. Secondary transition in particular is important. Safety and security is paramount.
	Q and A
Parent	No questions, just comment. Son doesn't perceive danger. Happy with the current arrangements but look forward to having the opportunity to have options. Need transport as have younger child to get to/from school as well. Optimistic son will be able to travel independently when older.
SW	Logistics always and issue for families. Will consider this when making decision about transport requirements. No further questions/comments. Meeting closed