



18 June 2012

Agenda Item: 11

**REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND
SUPPORT, CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND CULTURAL SERVICES**

**ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRANSPORT HUB FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND
CULTURAL SERVICES**

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the establishment of posts within a new Transport Hub for Children, Families and Cultural Services (CFCS) in line with the 'Review of Management and Commissioning Arrangements regarding Transport for Children and Young People' approved in 2011 by CFCS Performance Board.

Information and Advice

2. In July 2011, following a cross departmental review into the management and implementation of transport policy and commissioning arrangements, agreement was given for a Transport Hub to be established. This review constituted one of the original work packages of the County Council's Transport Transformation Programme in 2010/2011, a corporate programme lead by Transport and Travel Services.
3. Transport policy and commissioning arrangements across the department include: mainstream home to school transport; Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) transport for children and young people to special schools and the Nottinghamshire Learning Centre; Post 16 transport (including SEND); school swimming, social care and health services including residential homes; short breaks and transport for disabled children; provision for Looked After Children; Youth Justice and Targeted Youth Support Services regarding young people attending court or on remand; Youth Services and Library Service mobile provision. The budget across these areas related to travel and transport for children and young people is in the region of £14m per annum.
4. Within many of the above services, transport has historically been dealt with on an 'ad hoc' basis in a supporting role in relation to the services' core functions. Notwithstanding a number of departmental restructures and revised local priorities, this continues to be the case. The transport review concluded that establishment of a strategic hub within the department would provide a more consistent overview and coherent systems to monitor expenditure, streamline monitoring arrangements and maximise opportunities for economies of scale and joined up working. The budget for transport has been under pressure in recent years as it is needs led. A strengthened lead will allow the department to identify opportunities for efficiency savings in these areas and provide greater accountability around discretionary decision making.

5. Greater clarity with regard to leadership and guidance for the department will reduce duplication, standardise procedures and reduce costs which will be of benefit to service users. In addition, improved transparency regarding roles and responsibilities would be appreciated by colleagues across the Council, for whom existing arrangements appear confused and inconsistent.
6. By providing a strategic lead for the department on all aspects of transport, the Transport Hub will be better able to interface with our key partners across the County Council, particularly Transport and Travel Services, ensuring that the department is effectively represented corporately and is pivotal to all decisions regarding service user transport provision.
7. Links with Transport and Travel Services (TTS) as our 'key provider' are very positive and cooperative but will be strengthened through a more focussed approach through the Transport Hub. The priority for the CFCS Transport Hub will be to ensure that we commission appropriate services through TTS which meet the needs of our customers, comply with statutory requirements and support County Council policy.
8. The proposed staffing structure to implement the Transport Hub consists of three posts (see staffing structure chart attached as **Appendix 1**) i.e. two permanent full time positions plus part time administrative support. The post of Senior Professional Practitioner, Transport Policy Development, is currently a full time post within the Business Development and Support Group, at Hay Band D. This post will be revised and have an increased remit to manage the Transport Hub. The second position will be a new full time post of Transport Policy Coordinator and, thirdly, administrative support will be provided through the Business Support Service.
9. The posts will be as follows:

- 1 fte Senior Professional Practitioner: Transport Policy Development (changed job description)

The majority of the management function fulfilled by the current Transport Policy Officer is around Home to School Transport. The introduction of a Transport Hub for CFCS will see this role broaden to provide a link to all areas of the department providing guidance, advice and support, transport budget overview and process management, enabling the department to take a consistent approach to transport provision. The role would also establish policy and guidelines for the whole department and quality assure existing policies which contain a transport element, ensuring we meet our statutory duties with Best Value in mind.

- 1 fte Transport Policy Coordinator

This role will support delivery of the everyday work of the Hub, eg: processing transport requests from a range of sources and investigating appeals; providing front line support to both Nottinghamshire residents regarding transport requests and appeals and also support to the department regarding transport issues. With the embedding of the Discretionary Travel Scheme for children to travel to preferred schools, continued resource is required to monitor this scheme and provide support to both the department and TTS.

- 0.5 fte Business Support Administrator

The Business Support function will be wide ranging to include managing calls, drafting letters, budget processing and administration.

Other Options Considered

10. To continue current arrangements, however, there is currently insufficient capacity to implement change to working practices, achieve efficiency savings across the department and fulfil the expectations of the departmental review of transport arrangements.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

11. The Transport Hub will enable the department to manage the provision of transport to service users more effectively. It will provide a strategic lead for the department on corporate initiatives, driving efficiencies out of coordinated policies and working practices and will provide robust capacity to fulfil statutory obligations and operational activities.

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Human Resources Implications

13. This report seeks to establish two new posts and a changed job description of one existing post to establish a Transport Hub for Children, Families and Cultural Services. Posts will be recruited to in accordance with Nottinghamshire County Council recruitment protocols and procedures.

Financial Implications

14. The total cost of this proposal is as follows, including on-costs to be met from the existing Home to School Transport Budget.
 - 1 fte Senior Professional Practitioner, Transport Policy Development
Hay Band D
Current post - no additional cost (£50,138 pa)
 - 1 fte Transport Policy Coordinator
Anticipated Grade 4
Additional cost £25,409 pa (max)

- 0.5 fte Business Support Administrator
Grade 2
Additional cost £9,714 pa

NB all grades determined through the appropriate Job Evaluation process

Equalities Implications

15. The post holders will be expected to demonstrate commitment and compliance with the specific requirements of the County Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. This includes responsibilities relating to the development and provision of transport services.

Implications for Service Users

16. The establishment of a Transport Hub will enhance the service received by children and families, providing a more efficient and consistent service.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That a staffing structure and management arrangements to support a Children, Families and Cultural Services Transport Hub be established as follows with immediate effect:
 - Senior Professional Practitioner, Transport Policy Development (1 fte) - changed job description to reflect the increased remit of the post Grade D
 - Transport Policy Coordinator (1 fte) - Grade 4
 - Business Support Administrator (0.5 fte) - Business Support Administrator Grade 2

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Constitutional Comments (KK 21/05/12)

17. The proposal in this report is within the remit of the Children and Young People's Committee.

Financial Comments (NDR 30/04/12)

18. The financial implications are set out in paragraph 14 of the report.

Background Papers

CFCS Performance Board Report March 2011

CFCS Performance Board Report July 2011
Job Descriptions

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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