

REPORT OF THE INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TRAINING OFFICER INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TRAINING A COUNTY WIDE REPORT.

Purpose of the Report

This report outlines the costs and benefits of introducing a county wide Independent Travel Training (ITT) scheme in Nottinghamshire. The scheme is forecast to save over £1m on education transport costs and train a minimum of 350 clients over five years. The report seeks endorsement to start implementing the scheme from April 2013.

1. Background

As part of the TITAN project, it was identified that an ITT scheme may have the potential to generate significant savings for the authority whilst also providing benefits for participants and their families. Public consultation produced positive feedback in support of independent travel training.

ITT is complementary to the Government's Independent Living Strategy, which aims for individuals to have:

- choice and control over the assistance and/or equipment needed to go about their daily life, and;
- equal access to housing, transport and mobility, health, employment and education and training opportunities.

ITT is a great enabler and it is also complementary to the outcomes specified in 'Every Child Matters' (ECM) which is a major Government agenda. The ECM Green Paper identified the five outcomes that are most important to children and young people as:

- be healthy
- stay safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- achieve economic well-being

2. Benefits to the Local Authority, Service User and Society

The benefits of ITT are widespread and encompass individuals, families, carers, Local Authorities and other organisations associated with the individuals concerned. The Department of Transport's Travel Training Discussion Document and Strategy Outline identifies the following benefits:

- increased independence, confidence and personal mobility;
- increased access to education opportunities at colleges and universities, local services and leisure activities;
- reduced burden on Local Authority specialist service provision;
- reduced need for home visits and reliance on carers;
- increased public transport patronage;
- improvement in life skills, such as handling money, personal and road safety skills.
- increased opportunity to gain employment
- increased attendance at school
- reduced burden on personal budgets

3. Progress Update

Children's, Families and Cultural Services Clients

Pupils and students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) are a key target for ITT because of the following reasons:

- Many are in receipt of bespoke transport which is of high unit cost
- The cost benefits can often be realised over a long period of time, ie throughout the remainder of their time in education and throughout any period of accessing adult social care services
- Young people are generally more receptive to learning and less set in their ways than older people
- The personal benefits of training can be immense in terms of opening up their life choices at an early stage and assisting them to access more employment opportunities
- The independence benefits their families in many ways including removing the need for others to transport them

There are 486 SEN clients who have been identified as suitable for training as they have mild or moderate difficulties and there is appropriate transport to support their independent journeys.

The average unit cost for the identified clients using SEN home to school/college transport is £3,800 per annum per pupil. The forecasted net savings identified are:

Year 1 – No savings and £52,000 set up costs
 Year 2 - £ 69,600
 Year 3 - £ 252,000
 Year 4 - £ 348,000
 Year 5 - £ 396,000

Total anticipated net savings over the full 5 year period are just over £1m.

A spread sheet detailing the costs and savings is appended.

Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection Clients

Indicatively there are 3,065 adults currently using transport at an average cost of £2,700 per annum. Out of this client population 108 have been identified as potential beneficiaries of ITT which could realise additional savings of £290k per annum. The TITAN project is looking at adults currently transported by taxis and reviewing their transport needs. Essex County Council is currently starting to implement training to adults after 7 years of delivering only to children and young people.

4. Delivery options

There are generally three models of delivery;

1. One to one
2. Group
3. Combination of one to one and group

The training model recommended for Nottinghamshire is (3) the combination model. This model has already been well developed by Norfolk County Council and successfully delivered in Norfolk and at least 15 other Local Authorities across the country. The demonstrated benefits of this established model are:

- Positive outcomes, Norfolk has trained 205 young people in this year alone and in the past five years has successfully trained 536 young people
- Low delivery costs
- Established management and monitoring systems which are easily transferable.
- Proven track record demonstrated by use of this model in other Local Authorities
- Sustainability as 'Independence' is embedded within the curriculum and the SEN assessment review and process.

5. Recommendations.

It is recommended that the Board:

- (a) Considers the contents of the report
- (b) Endorses the introduction of the ITT scheme and the staffing resources required to deliver it
- (c) Seeks approval of this as an 'Invest to Save' scheme with an appropriate budget allocation from the Improvement Programme.

6. Risks

Changes of such a significant nature carry a high level of risk which can be summarised as follows:

- Parent and carer resistance, which can be overcome successfully by early positive engagement
- Schools reluctance to participate in ITT. In other Authorities there have been a few slow adopters of the scheme, however, when schools see the positive outcomes and feedback from other schools they tend to engage with the process
- ITT scheme does not meet its targets: i.e. transport re-configuration cannot be fully realised to achieve maximum savings
- Service and other changes that may impact on this area.

7. Conclusion

The introduction of a county wide ITT scheme ensures Children, Young People and Adults in Nottinghamshire are provided with the opportunity to gain new skills to assist them on the road to independence. Implementing ITT will enhance life choices for vulnerable people in Nottinghamshire and also provide cost benefits for the local authority.

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Background Papers

Business Case

DfT - ITT Discussion document

DfT – Every Child Matters

TITAN Project Board – ITT Interim Report