

Agenda Supplement



Meeting: Cabinet
Time: 10.00 am
Date: 18 January 2017
Venue: Committee Room 1, County Hall, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset, DT1 1XJ

Debbie Ward
Chief Executive

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11. Admissions Arrangements 2018-2019 and Transport Policy 2017-2018 3 - 6

To receive an Equalities Impact Assessment in relation to the report as part of Appendix 2.

13b People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 11 January 2017 7 - 10

To receive a recommendation from the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 11 January 2017.

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SEN Post -16 Transport Charging - Equalities Impact Assessment

Applicant details

Date of assessment	10:30:40 16 Jan 2017
Created by	Madeleine Graham
Email	m.c.graham@dorsetcc.gov.uk
Directorate	ChildrensServices

Strategy Details

Title of strategy, policy, project or service.	SEN Post -16 Transport Charging
Type of strategy	Changing_ update or revision
If other type of strategy	
Officers involved	Madeleine Caines, Joseph Rose
What is the aim of the strategy, policy, project or service?	The aim of the changes to policy is to implement charging for SEN Post-16 transport. Currently, SEN students are not charged for transport, however, mainstream students are. This was deemed to be unfair. Cabinet has approved the bringing of SEN Post-16 transport charges in-line with Mainstream. This approval was given as part of changes to Home to School Transport Policy taken to Cabinet in February 2016.

Information gathered.

What, data, information, evidence, research was used in this EqlA and how has it been used to inform the decision making process?	Eligible student information - i.e. needs, transport and placement data. Home to School Policy Consultation - impact on users. Home to School Transport Legislation.
What data do you already have about your service users, or the people your proposal will have an impact on?	Information regarding age, gender, special educational needs, disabilities.
What engagement or consultation has taken place as part of this EqlA?	A home to school policy consultation was undertaken in October and November 2015 for six weeks determined by Cabinet in January 2016 for an abortive application in September 2016. The consultation was directed to all Dorset schools (including academies), neighbouring LAs, any primary school within three miles of the Dorset border, any secondary school within five miles of the Dorset border, all elected County Councillors, all district councils, all town and parish councils, any nursery and pre-school settings, advertised on Dorset For You, requested that all schools inform parents of the consultation via newsletters and their website. Also Early Years and pre-school settings were informed and it was included in the Family Information Service newsletter. In addition to this an FAQ note detailing the changes to Post-16 transport, and the introduction of the charging policy, was made available to parents via the Dorset Parent Carer Council. It was also discussed at the Policy and Practice Transport Group over a period of four months with Dorset Parent Carer Council providing parent representation
Is further information needed to help inform this proposal?	Monitoring of the impact of this decision will inform it's appropriateness.
How will the outcome of consultation will be fed back to those who you consulted with.	Feedback has happened via the Home to School Transport Policy which has been published on Dorset for You and the Local Offer. We will also inform all affected families and education providers so they can communicate this with prospective students.

Who does the service, strategy, policy, project or change impact?	
Age	
Age impact	Negative
Further details of the age impact	The scheme is targetted at post-16 students who will have to pay for transport.
Age action plan	
Objective/Outcome	SEN Post 16 students make informed decisions about their place of study. ,SEN Post-16 Students make informed decisions about their place of study.
Action	The changes to charging will be communicated with all affected families, education providers and prospective students,Charges will only be applied to new starters. Existing students will not be charged as they have already made choce on where to study.
Lead officer	Madeleine Caines,Madeleine Caines
Deadline	31 Jan 2017,01 Sep 2017
Disability	
Disability	Negative
Further details of the disability impact	Students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities will be required to contribute financially to their travel to school or college. It is anticipated that in line with the policy many of the Post 16 SEND applications will be entitled to the 50% discount detailed within the policy.
Disability action plan	
Objective/Outcome	SEN Post-16 Students make informed decisions about their place of study.
Action	Charges will only be applied to new starters. Existing students will not be charged as they have already made choce on where to study. This will allow the new stydents to make decisions in full knowledge of the likley cost the family may have to absorb due to their choice of course
Lead officer	Madeleine Caines
Deadline	31 Jan 2017
Gender impact	
Gender impact	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	
Pregnancy and maternity	Neutral
Race and ethnicity	
Race and ethnicity	Neutral
Religion or belief	
Religion or belief	Neutral
Sex	
Sex	Neutral

Sexual orientation

Sexual orientation	Neutral
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Other socially excluded groups

Other socially excluded groups	Negative
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Further details of the other socially excluded groups impact	Travel choices for young people in rural areas are limited meaning that they will have less options about how they get themselves to college. The charge may impact more on those young people from low income families.
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Groups affected	People who are rurally isolated ,People who are on a low income or are economically disadvantaged
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Other excluded groups action plan

Objective/Outcome	
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Action	
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Lead officer	
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Deadline	
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Cabinet – 18 January 2017

Recommendation from the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 11 January 2017

9. The Committee considered the minutes of the final meeting of the Policy Development Panel on Registration held on 2 December 2016 and its report on future Registration Service proposals.

A question had been submitted under the Council's Public Participation arrangements by Councillor Jon Andrews, Sherborne Town Councillor, which related to changes to the Registration Service provided in Sherborne. This, and the response provided, is attached to the minutes as an annexure.

Comments had also been received from the County Councillor for Rodwell, who supported the retention of a service in Weymouth. Her comments are included in the annexure to the minutes.

The Chairman of the Policy Development Panel presented the Panel's report and drew attention to an amendment to it in that Option 5C(h) should be italicised, not Option 5C(e) as shown in the report. He explained that the review had taken nearly a year and had proven more complex than originally anticipated. The review had been detailed, the need to make financial savings accepted, and had led to the recommendations put forward which would cause least disruption. He confirmed that Town Councils had agreed to financially support outreach services in Gillingham, Sherborne and Swanage. Officers were thanked for their work in supporting the Panel. The Assistant Director – Early Help and Community Services highlighted the success of the Service which was self-funding and reminded members that the Panel had been established to address potential forthcoming legislative changes to marriage ceremonies and budget pressures arising.

Recommended

That the Cabinet approve:

1. That the service provided be developed into a more customer focussed service, through six office locations across Dorset (at Blandford, Bridport, Dorchester, Ferndown, Wareham and Weymouth) and for outreach services to be provided at (Gillingham, Sherborne and Swanage), subject to Town Council support being secured for the outreach services.
2. That the service be based on seven ceremony rooms across the County. (At Blandford, Bridport, Ferndown, Gillingham, Sherborne, Swanage and Weymouth this reflects the present circumstances, however, as property matters emerge in the future it might be appropriate to make changes to these arrangements).
3. That Officers be encouraged to develop a schedule of fees and charges based on a full cost recovery model in relation to ceremonies, and to authorise the Assistant Director - Early Help and Community Services, after consultation with the Cabinet Member for Health, Care and Independence, to set the schedule.
4. That the Tell Us Once service for deaths be retained, and the service for births be withdrawn.

People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 11 January 2017

Questions

Question from Councillor Jon Andrews, Sherborne Town Council

Please can the committee explain how the decision on the towns that will continue to be supported by the registrar services was taken? Could the committee also explain how they came to the conclusion that all people would be able to access their nearest registrar service with a 20 minute drive and will the people in the towns and villages that will not be affected have their council tax raised, as they will in Sherborne, to pay to keep the service if agreed and do you believe this to be fair?

Answer

No decision has been made at this point – the People and Communities Committee will make recommendations for the Cabinet to make a decision in due course.

The report to committee makes recommendations from the work of the Policy Development Panel. The Panel considered options for future registration offices and agreed that one proposal should be consulted on. This public consultation ran for eight weeks opening on Thursday 16 June and closing on Thursday 11 August. The on-line survey was kept open until Wednesday 17 August, allowing an additional week for late respondents and to allow for a two working days delay in public consultation notification to Dorset Parish and Town Councils.

Dorset Registration Service continued to accept paper survey responses until 23 August, allowing for postal delays etc.

The question asked in the consultation was:

Number and Location of Registration Offices:

On average a customer will attend a registration office four times in their lifetime. Customers usually attend to:

- Register a birth
- Register a death
- In the case of non-Anglican marriages to give notice of their intention to marry or,
- To give notice of their intention to form a civil partnership.

Currently registration offices are based at the following eleven locations:

- Blandford
- Bridport
- Christchurch
- Dorchester
- Ferndown
- Gillingham
- Shaftesbury
- Sherborne
- Swanage
- Wareham
- Weymouth

Our preferred view is to reduce the number of registration offices from eleven to five. A reduction in the number of offices will reduce the amount of central support required for each office. The proposal is for the offices to be based at the following locations:

- Blandford
- Bridport
- Dorchester
- Ferndown
- Wareham

This will mean that 91% of Dorset residents will live within a 20 minute car journey of an office.

The Panel considered the results of this public consultation, representations received from Councillors and directed that officers undertook further work with Sherborne, Gillingham and Swanage Town Councils. As a result of this consideration the Panel has made recommendations to the People and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There has never been any conclusion that all people would be able to access the registration within 20 minutes' drive time. In looking at accessibility of the service consideration was given to indicative journey times which found that 44% of the population were within an estimated 10 minute car journey of an office, 91% within an estimated 20 minutes and 100% within an estimated 30 minutes.

In respect of council tax the report describes the position reached through discussions with Gillingham, Sherborne, and Swanage Town Councils. The gist of this is that the County Council continues to pay for the registrars' time in providing public service at these three locations and that the Town Council assists with paying for travel time and mileage. It is estimated that on average a person will use the Registration Service four times during their lifetime. This balances the pressures on the County Council budget with the local Town Council view that local access in the towns is important. The question of fairness is one for the Committee and Cabinet to consider as the County Council makes a decision on this matter.

Comment from Councillor Clare Sutton, Elected Member for Rodwell

I would like to express my very strong support for the retention of the Weymouth office, for the following reasons:

The registry office serves, in effect, around 17% of DCC residents (in Weymouth, Portland and Chickerell). It is currently the only Registry Office other than Dorchester open full-time, and it is booked out.

This office serves the least well off part of Dorset (lowest wages), with the lowest level of car ownership (24% of households do not have a car, compared to 15% for DCC as a whole), and with unemployment almost double the DCC average. I therefore believe that the residents of Weymouth and Portland, particularly the elderly and frail, when needing to register the death of a loved one, would be least able to carry the cost burden should their local office close.