

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET****DATE: 31 OCTOBER 2017****REPORT OF: MRS MARY LEWIS, CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION****MR MIKE GOODMAN, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT****LEAD OFFICER: LIZ MILLS, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SCHOOLS AND LEARNING****SUBJECT: INDEPENDENT TRAVEL TRAINING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Surrey County Council (SCC) is introducing a new travel assistance offer for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), designed to better meet the diverse needs of the county's pupils through a broader, more flexible range of assistance options. The first in a wide-ranging package of improvements, independent travel training will equip children and young people with the skills and confidence to travel independently to school, college or placement, where appropriate, building their resilience and preparing them for adulthood.

The Council's existing travel assistance offer is limited to mainly taxi and minibus transport, resulting in an annual cost of nearly £27m that is no longer sustainable. There is a need for the Council to work together with families, young people, schools, colleges and transport providers to develop a change in culture and approach to home to school travel assistance. Independent travel training is the first step in this direction, and provides an invaluable opportunity to provide more lasting support to children and young people with SEND, whilst delivering savings to the public purse in the longer term.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is recommended that:

1. Following consideration of the results of the procurement process, in Part 2 of the meeting, a five year contract supported by a Social Impact Bond be awarded to CT Plus Community to deliver independent travel training.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATION:

A full tender process, in compliance with the requirement of Public Contract Regulations and Procurement Standing Orders has been completed, and the recommendation provides best value for money for the Council, and aims to deliver better outcomes for children and young people with SEND.

<u>DETAILS:</u>

Business Case

The case for change

1. The Council has a duty to provide home to school travel assistance to children and young people with SEND who meet certain eligibility criteria. There are nearly 3000 SEND children and young people who are currently assisted on their journey from home to school or college. The majority of these, approximately 2,800, are transported by taxi or minibus, at an average cost of £10,000 per pupil each year.
2. The Council's 2017/18 budget for SEND transport is £25.5m, however an overspend of £1.2m is expected in the current financial year, due to the increasing number of children and young people becoming eligible for travel assistance, repeating the pattern seen in recent years. In order to maintain a sustainable service, the Council needs to achieve £7m savings from the overall SEND transport budget by 2021, included within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. The introduction of travel training will contribute to achievement of these savings by reducing the number of children and young people requiring taxi or minibus transport.
3. Managing this complex priority requires a more strategic approach to how the Council commissions, plans and delivers travel assistance. For this reason, the Council plans to introduce a comprehensive package of initiatives over the next 12 months aimed at enhancing the quality of the service, improving the experience of children, young people and families receiving travel assistance, and developing a more efficient and sustainable model of provision for the future. This will be supported by a broader range of flexible assistance options better adapted to meet the diverse needs of the county's pupils.
4. It is the local authority's intention to work together with parents, carers, schools and colleges to transform the culture around SEND transport, with an emphasis on supporting and enabling independence where this is appropriate and in the best interests of children and young people. Independent travel training is the first important step in this direction, and puts the support in place to enable children and young people to thrive and develop essential life skills.
5. Independent travel training is already included in the Council's existing Pre-16 and Post-16 SEND travel assistance policies, however there is currently no delivery model in place to support this. By commissioning this service, the Council will be providing children and young people with access to specialist training and support to equip them with the skills and confidence to travel independently, offering lifetime benefits.
6. The Council has consulted parents and carers on a proposed new 'Travel Assistance Policy for Children and Young People with SEND 0-25 years', due to come fully into effect from September 2018 (but parents and carers will be able to opt in sooner), which will set out the Council's new approach to travel assistance. Parents and carers are supportive of the introduction of independent travel training, and view this as an improvement to the existing Council offer, as long as this is aimed at children and young people who can

reasonably manage this type of assistance. Consequently, independent travel training will be maintained and embedded in the Council's new Travel Assistance Policy once this has been finalised.

7. Travel training provides children and young people with tailored and practical assistance to travel safely and without anxiety by public transport, on foot, or by bicycle, to school, college, or placement; as well as socially, to access other key services and connect with friends and family.
8. Local authorities also have a duty to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people with SEND up to the age of 25 in education, employment or training. Independent travel is an invaluable life skill that provides greater opportunities for young people with SEND by increasing confidence in their own abilities, and is therefore essential to achieving this goal.
9. Independent travel training supports a child or young person's development as they progress from childhood to adulthood, and children and young people who are trained to travel independently are likely to transfer these skills into adult life. Independent travel is an essential employability skill, enabling young people to develop and maintain independence, potentially reducing the need (and associated costs) for Adult Social Care and other statutory services as they progress into adulthood.
10. Training children and young people to travel independently, where appropriate and practicable, will contribute to savings in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan by reducing the need for taxi and minibus transport, whilst preparing children and young people for adulthood and independence.
11. Independent travel training has the potential to benefit hundreds of children and young people over the next five years, and after. An initial analysis identified up to 474 children and young people in Surrey (age 11 or over) who could be suitable for independent travel training based on their level of need, and having a journey to school that is practical for independent travel. Further testing and comparisons against the Council's transport data confirmed that at least 286 children and young people could benefit from independent travel training. Furthermore, 147 of these have a minimum of five years left in education – offering a greater potential to support these children and young people earlier ahead of transition to adulthood, increasing confidence and reducing anxiety, and to generate savings.
12. Whilst some schools and other organisations already provide a variety of independent travel training, there is a need for a more comprehensive offer that supports a wider range of children and young people in Surrey, and that also provides parents and carers with the confidence to encourage their children and young people to start travelling independently. The Council's new offer, in partnership with CT Plus Community, aims to address this gap in provision, whilst complementing existing training as much as possible.

Procurement options

13. The SEND Transport Programme carried out research into how other local authorities approach independent travel training. The findings were that not all local authorities deliver independent travel training, and those that do, tend to deliver this internally, but on a small scale, with a focus on young people age 16 or above. Surrey County Council proposes to offer this training on a greater scale to a wider age group (age 11 and above) for the additional benefits that this brings. Councils who provide travel training themselves already have the skills and resources in place to deliver this service in-house, whilst Surrey County Council does not. Furthermore, cost comparisons against other local authority models identified that better value for money options were available in the market.
14. As there is no existing or comparable contract for the provision of independent travel training, there is a business need to procure this expertise. Several delivery options were considered prior to commencing the procurement activity. These are summarised in the table below:

Option	Strengths/ Opportunities	Weaknesses/ Risks
Do nothing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional investment required 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No improvement to existing provision Children and young people have less opportunities to develop independence skills Transport costs continue to rise alongside increasing demand
Deliver in-house	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knowledge of Surrey and established relationships with parents, carers and Surrey schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Significant investment and time required to recruit and train staff to meet the scale of demand SCC would need to fund full cost of delivery, creating further pressure on already stretched financial resources
Contract with an external provider funded through a Social Impact Bond (SIB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIBs are designed to deliver outcomes, as they operate on a payment-by-results basis Better value for money, as SCC will only pay on delivery of agreed outcomes Set up capital and revenue costs funded by social investor Provider already has the resources, systems, and referral processes in place to mobilise training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Innovative funding model new to SCC Investor requires a financial return on their investment (and this has been negotiated separately between the provider and social investor) Provider unknown to SCC and Surrey schools, so will need to establish base across the county
Contract with an external provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider already has the resources, systems, and referral processes in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Council has to fund full cost of activity, regardless of whether the provider

funded by the local authority	place to mobilise training	has been successful in delivering outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No social investor covering set up capital and revenue, potentially leading to increased cost of contract • Other providers may not agree to payment-by-results model without backing from a social investor
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15. The options analysis identified a Social Impact Bond as the funding mechanism that would provide the best value for money to the Council, and deliver the training outcomes required for children and young people.
16. Social Impact Bonds are a funding tool that can enable organisations to deliver outcomes contracts and make payment for services conditional on achieving results. Social Investors pay for the project at the start, and then receive payments based on the results achieved by the project.
17. The outcomes sought from this contract are that children and young people with SEND have the skills and confidence to travel independently and safely to school or college, and arrive ready to learn. A further outcome is that parents and carers have confidence in their child or young person's travel assistance offer.
18. The investor will normally require a return which could increase the cost of the contract. However, the Council's chosen provider, CT Plus Community, has secured funding from the Big Lottery who have agreed to underwrite the investor's return, further strengthening the business case.
19. Benefits of commissioning independent travel training using a Social Impact Bond model include:
 - Contract model is designed to deliver outcomes for children and young people with SEND, whilst providing value for money to the taxpayer
 - Potential to innovate and trial a new service whilst protecting public expenditure, as the risk of the training programme being unsuccessful is transferred to the social investor
 - Unlocking opportunities to improve services and create future savings by shifting the focus on prevention and early intervention, and investing upfront.
20. Consequently, a full tender process, compliant with the European Public Procurement Regulations and Procurement Standing Orders has been carried out to invite tenders from suppliers funded through a Social Impact Bond.

Financial Benefits Case

21. Tenders were sought for the service using a staged outcomes-based payment mechanism. Payments would be made:

On completion of initial training, once a pupil is confirmed by their parents and carers, school and Council as independently travelling for more than one month	40%
After a further three months of successful independent travel	30%
After a further six months of successful independent travel	20%
After completion of 12 months of successful independent travel	10%

22. Prospective suppliers were invited to submit prices based on the referral of 70 suitable pupils a year, over a five year contract period. This is the minimum number of children and young people that the local authority can confidently estimate will participate in independent travel training each year, to begin with. The aim is to enable as many children and young people to travel independently as possible, however it will take some time for the provider to establish their reputation across the county, and to build confidence in the training programme among parents and carers.

It is the Council's ambition to scale-up the training programme over time, therefore discounted prices were also sought for additional pupils trained, for up to 90, and over 90, pupils a year. Outcome payments will be due over the five years of the contract.

23. The table below summarises the anticipated net costs and savings from the five year contract with CT Plus Community, based on implementation from the beginning of 2018. The savings are based on pupils no longer requiring taxi or minibus transport for the remainder of their school careers. The savings have been reduced by 10% to account for the possibility that some children and young people may return to council organised transport after a period of independent travel due to changes in circumstances.

	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s	£000s
Net Cost/ Saving	39	100	-107	-282	-403	-533

24. There is an initial investment in the first two years, before the savings start to be realised, and the contract will break even in year three. The average cost of transport for the cohort of pupils most suitable for travel training is £5,500 per pupil, per year (the overall average cost per pupil out of all children and young people in SEND transport is £10,000, but this takes into account children and young people with more complex needs requiring increased

assistance). Allowing for the cost of alternative bus or train travel, the saving per pupil for this group is estimated to be approximately £0.5m per year, by year five.

25. The annual savings are sustainable beyond year 5, and potentially greater, assuming the Council decides to continue with this service. At the end of the contract, and on review of the success of this commission, preparations will be made to re-tender for this service. However, any pupils within their first 12 months of independent travel would continue to be supported by the incumbent contractor to ensure continuity.
26. Further benefits will accrue overtime as pupils enter adulthood more independent and able to travel to other key services without travel assistance, reducing overall support costs over a lifetime.
27. Non-financial benefits of providing independent travel training to children and young people include:
 - Increased support to develop essential independence skills, so that children and young people are better prepared for adulthood, building resilience and reducing dependence in the longer-term;
 - Provides greater opportunities for accessing further education, training and employment, raising confidence and self-esteem;
 - Children and young people have the skills and confidence to pursue their ambitions, hobbies and interests, and are able to independently connect with friends, family and support networks, benefiting their overall development and wellbeing.
28. Further commercial details relating to this contract are set out in Part 2 of this report.

Competitive tendering process

29. The contract is being let following an Open Tendering Procedure under the Public Procurement Regulations 2015. It was decided that the Open Procedure was appropriate because this is a specialist and limited market where few qualified suppliers exist.
30. An OJEU contract notice was issued on 28 June 2017. The tender was published on the Council's e-Sourcing portal on 5 July 2017 and received eight expressions of interest. Bidders were given 30 days to complete and submit their tender. Two tenders were received by the closing date.
31. These tenders were then evaluated against the criteria and weightings set out in Part 2 of this report. Evaluation of submissions was carried out in two stages. Only those that scored 30% or more (out of a possible 50%) for quality were considered for full evaluation. From the two suppliers who submitted tender responses only one supplier, CT Plus Community, was successful in being considered for full evaluation.
32. CT Plus Community's price was evaluated, and achieved the maximum score for price (45%) and for social value (5%). The quality scoring of CT Plus Community was 36.4% out of 50%, giving a total score of 86.4%.

CT Plus Community Model

33. CT Plus Community is a market leader and has extensive experience and expertise in delivering independent travel training for children and young people with SEND. CT Plus Community's training programme has been tried and tested in Leeds and the London Borough of Camden, with approximately 500 pupils trained to travel independently over five years.
34. The programme has demonstrated immediate and lasting benefits for children and young people who have been supported to start travelling independently. Success stories include young people with SEND who have transitioned from their special school to attend mainstream college, and who have secured employment as a direct result of training. It has also enabled young people to access after-school/college classes and social events, as well as take on more responsibility, such as doing the weekly food-shop, preparing them for adulthood.
35. Parents and carers of children and young people who have completed CT Plus Community's programme in Leeds and Camden report that their children and young people are more confident and independent as a result of independent travel training. This has encouraged them to pursue further education and employment, as well as individual interests and hobbies, which has raised their self-esteem and improved their general wellbeing.
36. The CT Community Plus model, which follows the HM Department for Transport Guidance for independent travel training, is as follows:
 - The prospect of independent travel can trigger anxiety and concern among parents, carers, children and young people. CT Plus Community will work together with the Council, education providers and families to establish if a child or young person is suitable for independent travel training. This will be supported by a comprehensive training consultation with the pupil (at home with parents and carers; at school or college; and in public, with the training coordinator accompanying a pupil on the journey to school or college), to determine readiness and suitability.
 - A pupil is assigned a personal travel trainer who works with the pupil for five days a week on a one-to-one basis, before and after school, for 6-12 weeks (training is adapted to each child and young person's pace of learning).
 - Each trainer works with the pupil, parents and carers, and school or college, to design a bespoke personalised training plan. They work together to identify the new route to school or college, and to prepare the pupil to travel. This includes aspects such as 'stranger danger', who to ask for help, and to address any anxiety the pupil or parents and carers may have.
 - On day one of the programme, the trainer will meet the pupil at the home and accompany them to school or college. Over time, this support steps back to allow the pupil to travel more and more independently, such as meeting at the bus stop rather than at the home, and eventually shadowing the pupil from a distance.

- Once the pupil has proven able to independently travel and this is agreed by the parents and carers, and the school and college, the Council becomes liable for the first payment.
 - The Council will provide a bus or train pass to assist the child or young person to travel where needed. CT Plus Community will also provide top-up or re-training for up to two years after training, where required, to support children or young people to regain confidence after a change in circumstances, incident on the way to school or college, or break from independent travel.
37. CT Plus Community will recruit and develop a high quality team to increase local capacity to deliver training. This will involve engaging with local people who are already invested in the community, including but not limited to, part-time school staff, linking in with local community organisations and working directly with disability organisations to recruit people with the relevant skills and expertise. The rigorous training programme is designed to cover all eventualities, and includes safeguarding training, emergency first aid, disability awareness, and close supervision of trainers.
38. It estimated that the first phase of the recruitment and training of travel trainers will take up to three months following the proposed commencement of the contract on 1 December 2017, with the potential for the first cohort of pupils to start training from March 2018. Training for each pupil will take 6-12 weeks, so the first pupils could start travelling independently on completion of training from the beginning of the summer term (April 2018).

Key Implications

39. By awarding a contract to CT Plus Community for the provision of independent travel training, the Council will be meeting its duties to encourage, enable, and assist children and young people in education and training, whilst delivering value for money services that are sustainable for the future.
40. The management responsibility for the contract lies with the Schools and Learning Service under the Children, Schools, and Families Directorate. Performance will be closely monitored through a series of Key Performance Indicators, and reviewed at regular intervals as part of effective contract management.
41. The contract will operate on a payment-by-results basis, where staged payments will be made to CT Plus Community upon the completion of staged-outcomes, set out in the table on the next page.

KPI/Outcome	Target
Number of children and young people travelling independently for more than one month after training.	The target is to successfully train 70 pupils per year, with the ambition to exceed that target by training up to a total of 100 pupils per year.
Number of children and young people travelling independently for more than 3 months after training.	
Number of children and young people travelling independently 6 months after training.	
Number of children and young people travelling independently 12 months after training.	

42. It is the local authority's ambition to support and enable as many children and young people as possible to travel independently to school, college or placement. The target of 70 pupils per year reflects the minimum number of pupils the Council can confidently estimate will participate in travel training to begin with, as it will take some time for CT Plus Community to establish their reputation in the county, and to build confidence in the programme among parents and carers.

43. It is the Council's ambition to scale-up the training programme overtime, and there is the aspirational target to train up to 500 pupils over 5 years. The Council will work closely with CT Plus Community, parents, carers, schools and colleges to raise awareness of the programme, communicate success and actively promote the benefits of independent travel training, to ensure that as many children and young people as possible are offered this opportunity.

CONSULTATION:

44. A series of engagement events and webinars have been held with parents and carers throughout 2017 more broadly on the topic of the future of SEND Travel Assistance. Feedback has been very positive about the new opportunities for travel training, however some parents and carers have expressed concerns about their child's suitability.

45. Surrey County Council together with CT Plus Community is committed to working together with parents, carers, schools and colleges to design, plan and deliver independent travel training. The Council will consider a number of criteria when considering which children and young people should be offered independent travel training, including, but not limited to, the age and SEND of the pupil, existing level of independence skills, distance and practicality of route between home and school, and journey times using public transport or walking. This would be further supported by a comprehensive training

consultation involving parents, carers and the school or college to determine suitability and readiness.

46. Families will also be involved in developing the training plan, and will receive regular feedback on progress, and parents and carers will have the opportunity to shadow training sessions. Furthermore, once the training programme has been completed, parents and carers will be asked to confirm they are happy for their child or young person to continue travelling independently.

47. The SEND Transport Programme also engaged with a number of schools in the initial “discovery” or scoping phase of the project. Schools are keen to see a greater emphasis on independence, and as long as the independent travel training offer is made available to children and young people who can manage this mode of transport, there is strong support.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

48. The following key risks associated with the contract and contract award have been identified, along with mitigation activities:

Category	Risk Description	Mitigation Activity
Safeguarding	The chosen provider will be responsible for the safety and welfare of children and young people undertaking independent travel training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provider has the relevant safeguarding and child protection policies and processes in place, evaluated in the tender process, and these are in line with Surrey Children’s Safeguarding Board’s requirements. The provider’s staff are subject to rigorous safeguarding and training. This includes enhanced level DBS checks, and the Council will conduct regular reviews (at least annually) of the provider to ensure that DBS checks are in place for all provider staff coming into contact with children and young people. The provider’s policies will be submitted annually for assessment and approval by the Council.
Financial	Parents and carers do not have confidence in the independent travel training offer, resulting in low take-up.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The chosen provider is a market leader and has extensive experience and expertise in developing and delivering independent travel training. The provider has a good track record of delivering quality services that are highly regarded and trusted by parents, carers, schools and funders. The provider will be responsible for building effective working relationships with families to increase awareness and confidence in independent travel

		training. This will be supported by appropriate marketing and communications.
	Low numbers of children and young people completing the course successfully, leading to reduction in potential savings and efficiencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provider is accredited to deliver independent travel training, and is experienced in working with children and young people with SEND. The Council only pays for the results delivered, no more, no less, so public money is not wasted.
	If the local authority fails to meet the requirement to make an agreed number of referrals for travel training to CT Plus Community, agreed as part of the contract, then it could be at risk of breaching the 'authority default clause' in the contract.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis undertaken by the SEND Transport Programme Team has identified that at least 230 children and young people in Surrey could be suitable for independent travel training. The provider has a good track record of delivering quality services that are highly regarded and trusted by parents, carers, schools and funders. The provider will be responsible for building effective working relationships with families to increase awareness and confidence in independent travel training. This will be supported by appropriate marketing and communications. The local authority will effectively support the provider to undertake the necessary engagement with parents, carers, schools/colleges, and SEN services.
Financial (continued)	If the relationship between the social investor and CT Plus Community were to break down, the delivery of the service and outcomes could be negatively impacted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The contract with CT Plus Community will appropriately mitigate against issues that may arise between the provider and social investor.
Reputational	The Social Impact Bond is an innovative funding model new to SCC and could be open to more scrutiny and challenge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about the funding model has been made open and transparent. This model has been evaluated as the most cost efficient and effective approach for the Council to deliver independent travel training through a formal procurement process, and is most suited to delivering outcome-based services.
	The Council is commissioning a new	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provider has a good track record of delivering quality services that are highly

	<p>provider unknown to SCC and Surrey schools. The provider will need to establish its base and reputation across the county.</p>	<p>regarded and trusted by parents, carers, schools and funders.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The provider will be responsible for building effective working relationships with schools to effectively market and promote independent travel training. This will be supported by appropriate marketing and communications.
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Financial and Value for Money Implications

49. The Social Impact Bond is offered by an experienced social investor. The investor will fund CT Plus Community upfront to deliver the service, and the Council pays upon successful completion of training.
50. CT Plus has secured development funding from the Big Lottery to support them to design and implement the Social Impact Bond. The Big Lottery through its 'Commissioning Better Outcomes and Social Outcomes Fund' has agreed to underwrite the investor's return through outcomes based payments under a separate contract. Surrey County Council does not know the details of this arrangement, but it is likely to have lowered the cost of travel training to the local authority.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

51. The contractual arrangements will be between the County Council and the provider, CT Plus Community. The Social Impact Bond details and arrangements have been negotiated separately, and although we are aware of the headlines, we do not know the details. The Section 151 officer would expect the contractual terms and conditions to mitigate against issues that may arise between the provider and the social investor.
52. The budget saving by year five is £0.5m and this will continue and increase if the travel training continues beyond the five year contract period.
53. Travel training should lead to wider benefits in the social care system as children and young people acquire independent life skills.
54. The local authority will need to ensure that children are referred to the provider for training and that the outcomes are monitored, as this will inform the provider payments and level of savings.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

55. The Council has a statutory duty to provide travel assistance to children of statutory school age to get to school. Additional support provided by the Council is discretionary.
56. Under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999, the Council has a duty to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy,

efficiency and effectiveness". This duty applies to providing travel assistance to children and young people with SEND.

57. Post-16 Transport to Education and Training Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (February 2014) advocates the provision on independent travel training schemes. It states "If the local authority and/or providers operate an independent travel training scheme it is good practice to include such initiatives in the transport policy statement" and "these schemes enable young people to gain skills which can be used for travelling to education or training and have, in some cases, enabled local authorities to make cost savings. It is strongly recommended that local authorities consider these schemes for the all-round benefits they can bring".
58. The Council has an obligation under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 to conduct a competitive tendering process before it can award new contracts to service providers when the value of the contracts is over the threshold, as it is in this case. The contract between the Council and the provider contains provision to terminate should the Social Impact Bond not be in place.

Equalities and Diversity

59. An Equalities and Impact Assessment has been carried out which has identified that the positive impacts of independent travel training are that children and young people with SEND will be supported and enabled to develop essential independence skills, better preparing them for adulthood.
60. A potential negative impact is that a prospect of change in routine travel arrangements for children and young people previously travelling by taxi or minibus could cause anxiety and distress. This will be mitigated by the Council and CT Plus Community's approach to working closely with children, young people and families outlined in paragraph 36 of this report, so that children and young people are best prepared for training. The Council will also only offer independent travel training to children and young people who it reasonably believes should be able to travel to school or college safely after training, based on their age, SEN, and distance and practicality of route, in addition to other factors. A comprehensive training consultation will provide additional assurance that a child or young person is ready to undertake training.
61. Once a child or young person is travelling independently, an incident on the journey to school or college could cause anxiety and a loss of confidence. This will be mitigated by a two-year after care package to provide ongoing support, including the option of retraining where needed.
62. Another potential negative impact is where a child or young person might benefit from travel training but does not have a practical route to school or college by public transport. In order to mitigate this, the Council may provision transport assistance for a part of the route, where appropriate, to enable the child or young person to travel to school or college independently.
63. Furthermore, vulnerable students who are unable to use public transport or walk to school due to their special needs or physical disabilities will still receive the support they need to get to school, college or placement.

- 64. The contract manager will monitor access to the service from different communities and groups to ensure that it is as fair and inclusive as possible.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

- 65. The chosen provider will be responsible for the safety and welfare of children and young people undertaking independent travel training.
- 66. The provider has the relevant safeguarding and child protection policies and processes in place, evaluated in the tender process, and these are in line with Surrey Children’s Safeguarding Board’s requirements.
- 67. The provider and their staff will be subject to rigorous training and checks, including enhanced level DBS checks and safeguarding training.
- 68. The provider’s policies will be submitted annually for assessment and approval by the Council, including enhanced DBS information.

Public Health

- 69. The provider will maintain suitable risk and health and safety management processes for all of its work for the Council. Copies of risk assessments will be available for audit at any point without notice.
- 70. There will be a comprehensive training consultation prior to the commencement of training, and a written assessment produced and shared with parents, carers and school/college to determine their suitability for independent travel training.
- 71. Routes for each pupil will also be defined and assessed by the parents/carers and school/college as safe for the needs of pupils to travel independently.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

- 72. Independent travel training contributes to reducing carbon emissions through enabling children and young people to opt for more sustainable modes of travel, such as walking, cycling or using public transport, where appropriate.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

- 73. The timetable for implementation is as follows:

Action	Date
Cabinet decision to award (including ‘call in’ period)	31.10.2017
‘Alcatel’ Standstill Period	10.11.2017
Contract Commencement Date	01.12.2017
First cohort start training	05.03.2018
First cohort start travelling independently	16.04.2018

- 74. The Council has an obligation to allow unsuccessful suppliers the opportunity to challenge the proposed contract award. This period is referred to as the ‘Alcatel’ standstill period.

- Next steps – Subject to Cabinet approval, the Council will proceed to award the contract to CT Plus Community to commence mobilisation of independent travel training.
- Future decisions – Cabinet will be taking a decision on the new Draft Travel Assistance Policy for Children and Young People with SEND, 0-25 years, once this has been finalised. This will complement Independent Travel Training, and set out the Council's overall new approach to SEND travel assistance.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

- Family Voice Surrey
- Surrey Special Schools
- Parents and carers

Annexes:

- Annex 1: Part 2
- Annex 2: Equalities and Impact Assessment

Sources/background papers:

- 'Proposal for implementing Independent Travel Training for SEND Children and Young People', Education and Skills Board, (8 March 2017)