Appendix A - Equality Impact Assessment

For support in completing this EQIA, please consult the EQIA Guidance Document or contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

www.rbwm.gov.uk Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

1. Background Information

Title of policy/strategy/plan:	School Transport Policy 2024/25
Service area:	Children's Services
Directorate:	Operations

Provide a brief explanation of the proposal: ● What are its intended outcomes? ● Who will deliver it? ● Is it a new proposal or a change to an existing one?
School Transport are proposing to change one element of the home to school transport policy for 2024/25 regarding the post-16 SEND transport offer for entitled students from contributing to the cost of a seat on an Achieving for Children contracted route to offering a Personal Transport Budget (PTB).

2. Relevance Check

Is this proposal likely to directly impact people, communities or RBWM employees? ● If No, please explain why not, including how you have considered equality issues. ● Will this proposal need a EQIA at a later stage? (for example, for a forthcoming action plan)
Yes, the change will impact the transport offer for post-16 SEND eligible students only.

If 'No.' proceed to 'Sign off.' If unsure, please contact equality@rbwm.gov.uk

3. Evidence Gathering and Stakeholder Engagement

Who will be affected by this proposal? For example, users of a particular service, residents of a geographical area, staff
The change will impact the transport offer for post-16 SEND eligible students only. For awareness, post-16 students with SEND do not have a statutory entitlement to transport assistance.
Among those affected by the proposal, are protected characteristics (age, sex, disability, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy/maternity, marriage/civil partnership) **disproportionately represented?** For example, compared to the general population do a higher proportion have disabilities?

Yes, these include age and disability.
What engagement/consultation has been undertaken or planned? ● How has/will equality considerations be taken into account? ● Where known, what were the outcomes of this engagement?
A consultation was undertaken from 15 April to 13 May 2024. The Transport Team Leader specifically targeted the stakeholder consultees by contacting them via email and by text as necessary. The RBWM website and social media channels have been used to promote the consultation was also used. The targeted stakeholder consultees are noted at Appendix B and are summarised as follows: - parents/guardians of all SEND children who are current recipients of school transport - schools and colleges in RBWM - schools and colleges outside RBWM area currently served by school transport - Charities and parent SEND groups - Ward Councillors, Parishes, and other interested stakeholders
What sources of data and evidence have been used in this assessment? Please consult the Equalities Evidence Grid for relevant data. Examples of other possible sources of information are in the Guidance document.
National research: DfE Home to School Transport Guidance January 2024 **JSNA:** N/A **User feedback:** Consultation held April - May 2024 **Hampshire County Council:** Peer review carried out October 2023 - March 2024

4. Equality Analysis

Please detail, **using supporting evidence**:

- How the protected characteristics below might influence the needs and experiences of individuals, in relation to this proposal.
- How these characteristics might affect the impact of this proposal.

Tick positive/negative impact as appropriate. If there is no impact, or a neutral impact, state ‘Not Applicable’

More information on each protected characteristic is provided in the Guidance document.

	Details and supporting evidence	Potential positive impact	Potential negative impact
Age	Despite the raising of the age of participation, statutory school age for transport eligibility continues to be to the end of the academic year in which a child becomes 16. The council continues to support young people generally through the Post-16 Transport Policy and will specifically continue to support eligible post 16 students with SEND with the offer of a personal transport budget.		✔

Disability	Children and young people with additional needs have been provided with a range of transport which exceeds the statutory provision required to meet assessed needs and goes beyond the council's statutory duty. This is particularly true in the post 16 SEND cohort. It is a key outcome for all children and young people, and especially those with additional needs, that they develop their independent travel skills to enrich all aspects of their life. It is important that young people are supported to maintain their mobility and supported to access all the options available to them. Full details of the options available to post-16 students can be found in the Post-16 Policy.		✔
Sex	N/A		
Race, ethnicity and religion	N/A		
Sexual orientation and gender reassignment	N/A		

Pregnancy and maternity	N/A		
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A		
Armed forces community	N/A		
Socio-economic considerations e.g. low income, poverty	The eligibility for home to school transport is not changed by this proposal and specifically focuses on providing support to low income families. However, any changes to the delivery of this support will therefore have a potential impact on those low income families. Those experiencing particular socio-economic disadvantage are likely to be most impacted as they will have the least capacity to 'top up' the PTB if it does not cover their preferred means of transport		

Children in care/Care leavers	The eligibility for home to school transport is not changed by this proposal and specifically focuses on providing support to low income families. Young people who are care or are care leavers will continue to have their transport needs met either through the school transport policy or through specifc arrangements made direct with themselves, their foster carer or their placement provider.		✔

5. Impact Assessment and Monitoring

If you have not identified any disproportionate impacts and the questions below are not applicable, leave them blank and proceed to Sign Off.

What measures have been taken to ensure that groups with protected characteristics are able to benefit from this change, or are not disadvantaged by it? For example, adjustments needed to accommodate the needs of a particular group
Vulnerable young people in education or training can apply for a government bursary via their school, college or institution for financial support to help them remain in education. A bursary is worth up to £1,200 per year. Additional bursary funding may be made available via direct application to the school, college or institution that the young person is attending. All post-16 SEND students will also continue to remain eligible for a Free Bus Pass (public bus services) through the government-funded National Scheme, together with a free Companion Pass if a student should need to be accompanied whilst travelling. Students can travel at any time of the day - which is an additional concession for RBWM residents. In addition to the aforementioned concessions, the School Transport Policy will allow for Personal Transport Budgets (PTBs), ranging in value from £2,000-£5,000 depending on distance travelled, to be paid to eligible post-16 SEND students to

assist them with the cost of travelling to their school, college or institution. A PTB may be paid in addition to any bursary funding awarded and can be flexibly used to pay for bus or train passes, purchasing a bike, purchasing or maintaining a vehicle or given to a family member or friend to cover travel costs.
Where a potential negative impact cannot be avoided, what measures have been put in place to mitigate or minimise this? ● For planned future actions, provide the name of the responsible individual and the target date for implementation.
We are unable to put any mitigations in for the age impact as statutory entitlement is defined by legislation and the age of the child impacts the criteria used for assessment. The council's Post-16 Home to school transport policy and post-16 Supporting Statement sets out in detail the transport options available for young people aged 16 and over. Options include student railcards offered by National Rail, student concessions available through public transport providers, local authority support and support provided by schools and colleges.
How will the equality impacts identified here be monitored and reviewed in the

future? See guidance document for examples of appropriate stages to review an EQIA.
There is continual monitoring of assessments and eligibility as part of our standard procedure through weekly transport panel for high level cases and via monthly budget monitoring. The policy is updated annually and reviewing is part of this process.

6. Sign Off

Completed by:	**Date**:
Approved by:	**Date:**

If this version of the EQIA has been reviewed and/or updated:

Reviewed by:	**Date**: