

Proposed changes to the provision of home to school / college transport for post 16 students

Have your say!

Closing date for responses: Wednesday 16th March 2011.

In the light of the significant savings that Lincolnshire County Council and all local authorities have to make over the next four years, the Council has concluded, reluctantly, that certain elements of its discretionary post-16 home to school/college policy need to be changed to ensure its longer term sustainability. The total home to school/college transport budget in Lincolnshire is currently £30,683,000, which makes the County one of the very highest spending authorities per pupil in the country. The law does not define precisely the circumstances which make assistance with transport necessary for post-16 pupils. There is no statutory requirement for the local authority to provide the transport. It is, therefore, for the County Council to decide, against the statutory guidance on post-16 transport issued annually by the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA), what transport provision should be made and under which circumstances assistance with travel should be available.

The full details of Lincolnshire's 2010/2011 transport policy statement for learners aged 16-18 in further education (schools, colleges and centres offering courses funded by the YPLA) and for continuing learners aged 19 and over can be viewed by using the link:

<http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/parents/schools/school-transport/post-16education-transport-policy/54393.article> Other than the changes detailed in the questionnaire, there are no further changes proposed for 2011/2012.

After careful consideration, the Council is proposing the following policy changes which will still leave in place a high level of support for students but, at the same time, will achieve a very necessary reduction in costs. If agreed, these changes will be implemented 1st September 2011:

1. An increase in the annual contribution by students to the cost of transport to their nearest suitable sixth form or college in Lincolnshire where the home to school/college journey is greater than 3 miles.
2. Provide transport to only the nearest further education (FE) college or sixth form.
3. No longer provide transport for students from home to school or college along unsuitable walking routes where the distance is less than three miles.

1. Annual contribution

At present the contribution from students is £202 towards the total transport costs for the year, or three termly payments of £69 (a total of £207, including administration costs). Lincolnshire County Council is proposing, from September 2011, to increase the annual contribution to £390, or three termly payments of £132 (a total of £396, including administration costs), This amounts to just £2.05 a day, which will still compare favourably with charges made by neighbouring rural authorities.

These proposed costs would be subject to future increases in line with normal annual adjustments made for inflation.

1.1 To what extent do you agree with the above proposal to increase the annual contribution from students for transport provision from £202 to £390?

Strongly agree.. Agree Disagree Strongly disagree

1.2 Why is this?

2. The FE college and sixth form to which transport is provided

a) Currently, students are entitled to transport provision to the main sites of their designated or nearest of four FE colleges in Lincolnshire, where the home to college journey is greater than 3 miles (See map/Appendix A)
Students are, however, also entitled to transport to a college which is out of County if it is closer to the nearest one to them in Lincolnshire. The majority of students who live close to the Lincolnshire border choose this option where the alternative journey to their nearest college in Lincolnshire is a long and arduous one. To offer these students transport to a Lincolnshire college in these circumstances is not only very costly, but also raises the question of fairness. The fact that some students are currently offered the choice of transport to more than one college, whereas most students are offered transport to a single college, their nearest one, can be viewed as not being fair and equitable.

The County Council is, therefore, proposing that transport provision will, for students enrolling for the first time in FE colleges in September 2011, be made only to the college nearest to a student's home address. A map to show which college students will be entitled to transport provision is attached as Appendix B.

The above proposal will similarly apply to students attending sixth forms, other than where a student was both on roll at the school in Year 11 and had a statutory entitlement to transport before transferring to the sixth form of the same establishment.

- b) Where a FE college has a satellite centre at which full time courses are offered, transport provision to this site will be offered to students enrolling for the first time in September 2011 only where the journey from home to that site is equal to or less than the journey to the student's nearest college.
- c) The County Council is also of the view that it is no longer able to make transport provision for students enrolling for the first time in September 2011 to other than the nearest college or sixth form, regardless of whether the course a student wishes to study is available at their nearest college or sixth form.

The only exceptions to the proposal c) above are:

- Attendance of learners with recognised learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) at other than their nearest college or school where this is agreed by the local authority.
- Level 2 or above Land Based courses (listed below) at specialist colleges where the home to nearest college journey does not exceed 45 miles (daily journeys will be arranged for the beginning and end of the normal college day on week days only).

Courses for which transport provision will be considered:

- Agriculture
- Environmental Studies
- Horticulture
- Arboriculture
- Large animal management

2.1 To what extent do you agree with the proposals above to:

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Make transport provision to the nearest FE college or sixth form only? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Make transport provision to FE college satellite centres for full time courses only where the journey from home to that site is equal or less than the journey from home to the student's nearest college? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ci) Make transport provision to the nearest college or sixth form only, regardless of whether, other than the exceptions listed, the course a student wishes to study is available? Make transport provision exceptionally where a course is not available at the nearest FE college or sixth form for: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| cii) LLDD students, where agreed by the local authority? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ciii) Level 2 or above Land Based courses, as specified above? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

3. The criteria on which entitlement to transport provision is granted

Where a pupil or student lives less than the statutory walking distance from their nearest school or college, transport is provided if all or part of the journey includes an unsuitable walking route. The County Council is proposing to remove this provision for post-16 students enrolling for the first time in September 2011 on the basis that they can both judge and avoid traffic hazards along any public right of way which is open to all members of the general public.

3.1 To what extent do you agree with the proposal not to make transport provision for post-16 students for journeys of less than three miles where all or part of the journey includes an unsuitable walking route?

Strongly agree.. Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3.2 Why is this?

About you

This section is about you, our customer. You do not have to complete all of these questions but by doing so you are helping us to better understand your needs. All of the information you provide will remain confidential and will only be used for the purpose of service improvement and will be processed in accordance with relevant legislation, in particular the Data Protection Act 1998.

4.1 Are you : Male Female Prefer not to say.....

4.2 Are you :

A teacher/head teacher/principal

A parent/carer of a pupil(s)/student(s) attending a Lincolnshire school or college.....

A parent/carer of a pupil(s)/student(s) attending an out of county school or college

A pupil/student, 11-16 years, attending a Lincolnshire school.....

A pupil/student, 16-24 years, attending a Lincolnshire school or college

Other

Prefer not to say.....

Other, please specify

4.3 What kind of travel assistance, if any, do you / your child(ren) currently receive?

Free transport

Post-16 transport

Concessionary transport

No assistance with school/college transport

Other

Prefer not to say.....

Other, please specify

4.4 Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes No Prefer not to say

4.5 To which of these groups do you consider you belong to?

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------|
| White British | <input type="checkbox"/> | White and Black Caribbean | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> | White and Black African..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roman Gypsy | <input type="checkbox"/> | White and Asian..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Traveller of Irish heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other mixed background..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Any other White background..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black or Black British | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Asian or Asian British | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black Caribbean..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Indian | <input type="checkbox"/> | Black African | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pakistani..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other Black Background..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Bangladeshi | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Ethnic Groups | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> | Prefer not to say..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Please specify 'Other' background

4.6 Please give the postcode of where you live: (e.g. LN1 1YL)

Consultation meetings

In addition to this questionnaire, there will be meetings with colleges and schools and three public consultation meetings held across the county

1. Thursday 24 February 2011, 7.30 – 9.30 PM, Meridian Leisure Centre, Wood Lane, Louth LN11 8RS
2. Monday 28 February 2011, 7.00 – 9.00 PM, Council Chamber, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YQ
3. Thursday 3 March 2011, 7.00- 9.00PM, The Ballroom, Guildhall Arts Centre, St Peter’s Hill, Grantham NG31 6PZ

What happens next?

The consultation period for these proposals is from 5 January to 16 March 2011 inclusive. Responses will be collated, summarised and then considered by the Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Group 8 April 2011. Final proposals will be submitted to the County Council’s Executive 3 May 2011 which, if agreed, will be implemented in September 2011.

Please return your response form to:
Post-16 Transport Consultation
Lincolnshire County Council
County Offices
Newland
Lincoln
LN1 1YQ