

Extract from the feedback of the 2018 Home to School Transport Consultation:

These comments are relating to the Management and procurement of Home to school transport

Explore care sharing, where appropriate. Look at more cost effective vehicles e.g. people carriers, in rural locations. Look for voluntary drivers and transport assistants. Seek a discount with Dial a Ride school service , as County pays a subsidy to them. Therefore, they don't compete on a level

Response: The integrated passenger transport team currently arrange the commissioning of transport. This already includes utilising the fleet vehicles for both home to school transport and then onto social care provision, sharing some vehicles with schools during the school day, and unless it is identified for a SEND reason, pupils in localities attending the same school will automatically share a vehicle. Due to the safeguarding and contract management, we are unable to utilise volunteer drivers for home to school transport purposes.

Share resources have a better system for collection children to save waste on transport ie using one taxi to collect multiple children on same runs drop off at different schools make use of breakfast and after school clubs to ensure safety and less time unsupervised use buses mini buses instead of private hire taxis and train drivers and staff in sen to help children who need more supervision/ playing field on contracts.

Response: The integrated passenger transport team currently arrange the commissioning of transport. This already includes utilising the fleet vehicles for both home to school transport and then onto social care provision. Due to the nature of some of our children special education need or disability, shared transport may not be appropriate.

Longer contracts with local taxi firms who will like the known forecast workload this will also provide reassurance to parents that there is a familiar arrangement in place. Increasing SEND provision within the Local Authority may reduce the need to transport children out of catchment to specialist provisions. However the out of LA provisions in my case are nearer than some of the NYCC provisions in terms of distance and time.

Response: Due to EU regulations, we are required to retender contract either every 3 years or sooner if the contract reaches the maximum threshold. The LA are also governed by admissions code in relation to school catchment areas. The current development of the strategic plan will review the education provision within the authority

Savings could be made if children on similar routes shared taxis. This may mean an extra 15 minutes leeway timely arrivals but would surely cut costs.

Response: Where possible the Local authority will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient, but also provides small peer communities within transport provision

Coordinate transport with neighboring children rather than sending out several buses that do the same route

Response: Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision. However we are considerate of journey times for the first child to be collected and therefore may

commission more than 1 vehicle within a locality which will have scheduled pick up along slightly different routes to ensure journey times where possible are kept within recommended guidelines

Maybe having mini busses who pick up and transport more children than paying for taxis taking 1 or 2 children.

Response: Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision. However we are considerate of journey times for the first child to be collected and therefore may commission more than 1 vehicle within a locality which will have scheduled pick up along slightly different routes to ensure journey times where possible are kept within recommended guidelines

The council may be able to use the budget more efficiently by bringing transport in-house. A fleet of minibuses to provide the transport required alongside drivers and escorts. Develop satellite units for provision thereby bringing provisions to more rural communities and reducing transport issues.

Response: The LA currently have a number of in-house minibus which are used for both Home to school transport and then utilised to deliver Social care transport instead of remaining idle until a return home to school journey. It would be an inefficient use of funds to increase the fleet without further demand during the day, and through school holidays

A car pooling scheme or promotion of the idea, or a voluntary driving scheme for MIDAS trained people to reduce staffing costs. Pro ide morecand vetter parking at sen schools. What is the percentage forecast of children you will impa t that will need to make their own arrangements if the costs work out too high? Presuming parents will drive them.to school how many daily journeys will this be and how much parking will be needed to acco.odate those journeys most of which will need the parent or guardian to stop park disembark and walk their child safely onto school premises and inside? Where will these people stop and park? Improvements in access that ate needed will have a cost? Anyone thought about that?

Response: Due to safeguarding around children, we are unable to utilise volunteer driving schemes to deliver home to school transport. The anticipated take up of the PTA is expected to be spread across the County and will be minimal per school. As the PTA will be in place of a commissioned taxi the number of vehicles attending will be the same.

Charge all able bodied students for transport no matter what tgeircdistance is.

Response: Local authorities are unable to charge statutory aged children who are eligible for transport, in accordance with the Education Act 1996

Have some more central points, like bigger villages/towns and have more minibus/ small buses rather than lots of taxis going to individual pick-ups from houses.

Response: Where possible and in relation to multiple occupancy, the LA will utilise pick up points/meeting points. However due to the nature of some children's SEND, this may result in a door to door collection

where possible, considering more 'pool car' transport - rather than cabs for 1:1 transport

Response: Due to safeguarding around children, we are unable to utilise volunteer driving schemes to deliver home to school transport. Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to

accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision

Stop transporting excluded children in taxis, make them catch the bus or make the parents take responsibility and pay them 45p per mile to take them.

Response: Where possible and when public transport facilities are available, we would encourage the use of sustainable methods of transport. The LA also have further duties of care for excluded pupils.

Provide free before and after school clubs in special schools so parents can collect children at sensible times after work instead of 3.15 that is impossible for full time working parents. More parents could work and collect themselves.

Response: Before and after school clubs are at the discretion of individual schools and not a requirement for LA to provide.

Why is there so many mini buses and taxis running back and forwards to each school , would it not make more sense to use mini buses and possibly a coach to transport more children in fewer vehicles , we have often seen taxi's with only one student in, a compromise could be a couple of pick up points in town and village centres and pupils been picked up from there as is done with regular school buses cutting taxi costs dramatically .

Response: Due to the home location, needs of the child and the recommended journey times, multiple vehicle may be required to fulfil our duty and ensure that children arrive in school ready to be educated

charge parents who use the service who live less than a certain distance away or have not chosen their nearest school.

Response: Parents who have not selected their nearest school are not eligible for home to school transport, children who live under the statutory walking distance would only receive transport if the nature of their special education need or disability prevents them from accessing school, accompanied as necessary

My daughter has a medical escort, but I am not sure this is required. If consulted, I might have waived this as I feel it is unnecessary expense. Select more local taxi firms - our taxi, for a York-Easingwold pick up, comes from Malton?

Response: Medical Passenger Assistance are employed when a health care plan is submitted which states the person may need medical intervention on transport other than calling 999. When a child transport is reviewed an update from health is also requested. In regards to utilising local taxis. All home to school transport contracts are published on the yortender system, in which available operators are invited to quote.

I think a child with SEND should able to attend a school which is more suitable for their medical needs without being penalised because we have sent a child out of catchment area. there for not entitling them to school transport.

Response: The statutory guidance is clear that transport is only provided to the nearest school which can meet the child needs. If a parent choses to select a school which is not the nearest school available the arrangement and cost of transport is the responsibility of the parents.

Provide more standard school buses for children who can cope with this so more children can travel on one vehicle

Response: Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision

My son travels from Thorpe Willoughby to Selby High. On the 'school service 626' he has to pay £2.00 return, if he gets the Aviva service (which also goes into school) he has to pay £1.50 return. Why does it cost me more to send him on the council 'supported' bus? Unfortunately the Aviva service doesn't return at the same time so he has to wait to come home to use that service or he would use it all the time.

Response: Some of the transport provision in North Yorkshire are operated by the school directly, the LA have no influence of the charging arrangements of these services.

Better planning of transport provision from one area to various SEN provision sites. With support for the child/young people provide at the school if an early arrival is required due to different drop offs/collections.

Response: As most schools operate a similar start and finish time it would difficult to accommodate multiple school drop offs whilst allow for travel time between schools. Schools are often unable to accept children early due to the required supervision and support.

Look carefully at the tenders put in by transport providers. Look at making reductions in this sector. The bus and taxi companies obviously see this as a lucrative way of making money else they wouldn't all be so keen to do it.

Response: all tenders are published on a yortender system, as required by EU regulations and follow code of practise.

Bus routes rather than private taxis?

Response: Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision

Purchasing more NYCC buses or school minibuses to save using taxi companies (saving in the long run).

Response: Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision

Pick up the young people who live near by each other, together. Then you would save and you could have an assistant on the transport to help. One to one workers could get public transport with a P.A? That would save money and carers would use there hour of personal care for them to get them to school maybe? Something has to change.

Response: Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision. As an authority we promote independent travel and encourage young people to develop skills towards independent travel and utilising the public transport network in preparation to adulthood.

I think the funding should be for transport for specialist provision only. My son was in mainstream (currently waiting for a specialist place) and i transported him to and from his local school. However, there are not enough specialist provisions. More specialist schools need to be opened.

Especially high functioning autism schools. The only school that meets his needs is 50 miles away. I cannot drive 200 miles a day and take his sister to school too.

Response: Local authorities have a duty to provide transport to eligible children under the criteria set by the education act – this includes statutory walking distance and unsafe routes to both mainstream and specialist provision

Carry out an in-depth check of all Transport providers currently used by NYCC to ensure that it is receiving the best service that it pays for. If possible check the profits of providers to ensure no 'rip - off'.

Response: all tenders are published on a yortender system, as required by EU regulations and follow code of practise.

Pay schools to arrange transport, instead of taxis.more schools. It would save you money in the long run.

Response: Some of the schools in North Yorkshire do arrange their own transport provision, discussion are ongoing with various schools, to provide additional assistance where possible. This has been achieved in some instances, but has to be with the agreement of the school.

Fewer taxis with just one child in to transport. Consider sharing with another child from similar area. Perhaps parents who don't work could negotiate a price for them to transport their own child/adult. Fewer escorts on the bus.

Response: Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision

We have no complaints about our current arrangement. In some cases it may be possible to improve organisation and efficiency with better planned routes, picking up several children from the same areas or, where possible, using public transport with adequate supervision, as part of a learning experience.

Response: Where possible the LA will commission a vehicle to accommodate a number of children, as this is more cost efficient but also provides small peer communities within transport provision. As an authority we promote independent travel and encourage young people to develop skills towards independent travel and utilising the public transport network in preparation to adulthood.

Summary:

From the comments received it is clear that how the authority commission and arrange transport is not clear to parents and young people. Regulations around procurements and tendering processes, as well as transport review procedures need to be more transparent and available on the local offer to improve communication and expectation from families. This will form part of future communication plans.