

Agenda

Children's Services and Education

Scrutiny Board

Monday, 27 September 2021 at 5.00 pm
At Council Chamber - Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

This agenda gives notice of items to be considered in private as required by Regulations 5 (4) and (5) of The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012.

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

3 Additional Items of Business

To determine whether there are any additional items of business to be considered as a matter of urgency.

4 Scrutiny Review of SEND Transport Models 5 - 12

To consider the findings of the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Transport Models and identify any recommendations arising.



Kim Bromley-Derry
Interim Chief Executive
Sandwell Council House
Freeth Street
Oldbury
West Midlands

Distribution

Councillor Shackleton (Chair)
Councillors Chambers, Chidley, E A Giles, W Gill, Hadley, Hinchliff, Hughes,
McVittie, V Smith and Webb.
Co-opted members: K Heeley, K Kujawa – Sogbesan, C Ward-Lewis

Also invited: Councillors Anandou and L Giles

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Information about meetings in Sandwell



If you are attending the meeting and require assistance to access the venue, please contact Democratic Services (democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk).



If the fire alarm sounds, please follow the instructions of the officers present and leave the building by the nearest exit.



Only people invited to speak at a meeting may do so. Everyone at the meeting is expected to be respectful and listen to the discussion.



Agendas with reports with exempt information should be treated as private and confidential. It is your responsibility to ensure that any such reports are kept secure. After the meeting confidential papers should be disposed of in a secure way.



This meeting may be recorded and broadcast on the Internet. If this is the case, it will be confirmed at the meeting and further information will be provided.



You are allowed to use devices for the purposes of recording or reporting during the public session of the meeting. When using your devices they must not disrupt the meeting – please ensure they are set to silent.



Members who cannot attend the meeting should submit apologies by contacting Democratic Services (democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk)



All agenda, reports, minutes for Sandwell Council's meetings, councillor details and more are available from our [website](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board

27 September 2021

Subject:	Scrutiny Review of SEND Transport Models
Director:	Director – Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer – Surjit Tour
Contact Officer:	Alex Goddard, Democratic Services Officer alexander_goddard@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers the findings of the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) Transport Models and identifies any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet on the matter.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 At its meeting on 2 August 2021 the Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board, supported by the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board, agreed to undertake a review into SEND Transport Models. A scoping document was agreed (attached as Appendix 1) and a working group was established.
- 2.2 Due to the need to complete this review in a timely manner, the Chair directed members involved with the review to undertake specific workstreams as set out in the scoping document. Members have carried out a range of research including collating data, speaking to a range of officers, stakeholders and other local authorities. These findings have been, and at the time of publication continue to be, discussed by the working group.



2.3 The work around the Scrutiny Review of SEND Transport Models will have concluded by the date of the meeting and further information will be shared at the meeting by members. It is now necessary for the Scrutiny Board to identify any recommendations it wishes to make to Cabinet on the matter.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people – providing transport to Sandwell’s children and young people with SEND so that they can access education is a vital component of this objective.
--	--

4 Context and Key Issues

4.1 Further background to the review can be found in Appendix 1.

5 Implications

Resources:	There are no specific financial implications arising from this report, however individual recommendations the Board may make could have financial or other impacts on resources that would need to be considered by Cabinet.
Legal and Governance:	The Council has a statutory duty (Education Act 1996) in relation to SEND Transport – further details on this were reported to the Scrutiny Board on 2 August.
Risk:	There are no associated risks with this report, however individual recommendations the Board may make could have risk implication that would need to be considered by Cabinet.
Equality:	Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
Health and Wellbeing:	SEND Transport contributes to the health and wellbeing of those residents who use it.



Social Value	There are no specific social value implications arising from this report, however individual recommendations the Board may make could have a social value implication that would need to be considered by Cabinet.
---------------------	--

6 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Scoping Document for the Scrutiny Review of SEND Transport Models

7. Background Papers

[Report and supporting documentation considered by the Children's Services Scrutiny Board on 2 August 2021](#)



This page is intentionally left blank

Scrutiny Review – Scoping Document

Review Title:	SEND Transport Models
Scrutiny Board:	Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board
Date of Review:	Summer 2021

Reasons for undertaking the review:

A proposal was approved by Cabinet on 12 August 2020 to establish a new Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the Provision of Passenger Transport for 2021-25 (minute No 65/20 refers). Pursuant to the creation of the DPS, a closed bid tender process was held for the award of four passenger transport related contracts, such contracts to be effective from 1 September 2021.

At its meeting on 16 June 2021, the Cabinet deferred any decision until a suitable review had been undertaken due to questions relating to the process that had been followed. Cabinet has therefore not yet considered the outcomes of the closed bid tender process. The requested reviews have been taken place into the process.

The Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) will be carrying out a piece of work in accordance with its terms of reference and members of Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board agreed that to add value by considering SEND Transport from another lens would be beneficial, proposing a scrutiny review by the Children’s Services and Education Scrutiny Board of SEND Transport Models.

It is acknowledged that the role of ARAC will be focused on the tendering arrangements and the internal/external review so the scrutiny review will focus on the duty on the Council, ways in which it does and could dispense that duty and to formulate a view on the best model for the provision of SEND Transport.

Intended Outcomes:

To understand service models for SEND Transport locally, regionally and nationally and to evaluate them against a Sandwell context.

To identify recommendations relating to SEND Transport and preferred delivery model(s) that effectively manages all risks.

To identify how the proposals were consulted upon and communicated to those children and families that use the SEND Transport service and how communication with those families could be improved.

Officer Group (including partners):	Lesley Hagger, Surjit Tour, Rebecca Maher, Sue Moore, Angelina Dawson, Alex Goddard, Connor Robinson. There is potential to approach external specialists for input also.
Links to Corporate Plan:	 <p>The best start in life for children and young people</p>
Links to Terms of Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all of the functions of the Council as an authority under the Education Acts, School Standards and Framework Act 1998 and all other relevant legislation in force from time to time (i.e. pre-school, statutory and post 16 education); • any other education related services for children and young people; • services for children, young people and families.
Scoping undertaken by:	Alex Goddard and Connor Robinson
Council Chief Officer (or partner equivalent):	Lesley Hagger
Existing data available for consideration:	
<p>Council's Duty in relation to Special Educational Need and Disability Transport, how it dispenses that duty and rationale for the proposed approach.</p> <p>Report to Cabinet that was deferred – including the contract as proposed.</p> <p>Key data around service user numbers, destinations (in and out of borough) and costs.</p>	

Potential witnesses	<p>Lesley Hagger Sue Moore Angelina Dawson Cabinet Member for Best Start in Life</p> <p>Chair of ARAC (to be kept informed) Members of Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board (to be invited to participate throughout)</p>
----------------------------	---

Review Work Programme:			
Task	Method	Lead person(s)	Completion by:
Briefing paper setting out legal duty relating to SEND and associated information/data (including current and projected future demand, breakdown by school stage, and in/out of borough, personal budgets, parental choice)	Report(s) to meeting	Lesley Hagger	2 August 2021
Background to the commissioning of passenger transport 2018 to 2021	Report to meeting	Lesley Hagger	2 August 2021
Models for SEND Transport provision used: Black Country West Midlands Nationally [including numbers of suppliers contracted/used, use of Dynamic Purchasing Systems]	Working Group	Children's Services	
Understand the evaluation criteria used by the Council, particularly for the 'quality' element of scoring.	Working Group	Procurement	

Evaluate the additional measures designed to ensure good practice, including addressing how specific needs of children and young people are reflected (eg. first aid, specialist knowledge)	Working Group	Travel Assistance Service	
Evaluate models against Vision 2030 and the Corporate Plan to maximise how they can support the Council's ambitions, including those relating to business and the economy	Working Group	Children's Services/ Democratic Services	
Gather lived experience evidence from parents/families	Working Group/Survey	Democratic Services	
Gather experience from existing suppliers	Working Group/Survey	Democratic Services	
Overview of the finances relating to SEND Transport	Working Group	Children's Services/ Finance	
Understanding Equality and Risk impacts	Working Group	Children's Services/ Risk	