

Report to the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board

Monday 14 February 2022

Subject:	Response from the Cabinet in respect of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport Model
Directors:	Director – Law and Governance, Surjit Tour Director – Children and Education, Michael Jarrett
Contact Officer:	Senior Democratic Services Officer, Matt Powis Group Head for Education Support Services, Sue Moore


1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers the response from the Cabinet in respect of the recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

In accordance with the Council's Constitution and the Localism Act 2011, the Cabinet were requested to respond to the recommendations of the Scrutiny Board within two months, setting out any approved recommendations accordingly. The Cabinet considered the Review's findings and recommendations on 20 October 2021.

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.
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4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 The Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board formed a cross-party working group to investigate special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) transport models. It was agreed that the Working Group's membership included Members of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board and parent governor representatives.
- 4.2 The Board had due regard to the role of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee which carried out a separate investigation into tendering arrangements relating to SEND Transport. Therefore, the Working Group focused on the duty of the Council to provide a SEND transport model.
- 4.3 Over a number of weeks, the Working Group carried out a range of research and interviewed witnesses in accordance with their terms of reference. As a result, a number of recommendations were identified which were approved by the Board on 27 September 2021.
- 4.4 The Cabinet considered each proposal presented by the Board at its meeting on 20 October 2021 and resolved to respond to each recommendation within two months. Each recommendation and subsequent Cabinet response is set out in Appendix 1 for the Board to consider.

5 Implications

Resources:	The main implications for the Council's resources relates to financing of SEND Transport.
Legal and Governance:	The Council has a statutory duty (Education Act 1996) in relation to SEND Transport.
Risk:	The Scrutiny Board acknowledged the need to properly assess risk, especially of potential future models of SEND Transport delivery. There was a recommendation that a comprehensive feasibility study be completed for long-term transport options.
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	The recommendations include proposals that the Scrutiny Board feels would increase opportunities for local businesses.
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6 Appendices

Recommendations of the Scrutiny Review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Transport Models – Cabinet Report – 20 October 2021

7. Background Papers

There are no background papers.

