

Cheshire East Council

Post 16 Travel Policy Statement Consultation Summary of results

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Introduction

Background and Methodology

Between 14th February and 6th April 2018 the Council undertook an online survey to seek views concerning potential changes to the Post 16 Travel Policy Statement for 2018/19.

Cheshire East Council proposed to continue to provide at least the legislative minimum that is required to be provided by local authorities regarding this policy statement.

The survey was advertised in the schools bulletin, to the Parent Carers Forum, Foster Carers, Chester and Shrewsbury Dioceses and other Local Authorities. There were also media briefings on the Cheshire East Website. A total of 20 complete responses were received.

Please note: respondents could select more than one box for certain questions.

Analysis of Results

Profile of respondents

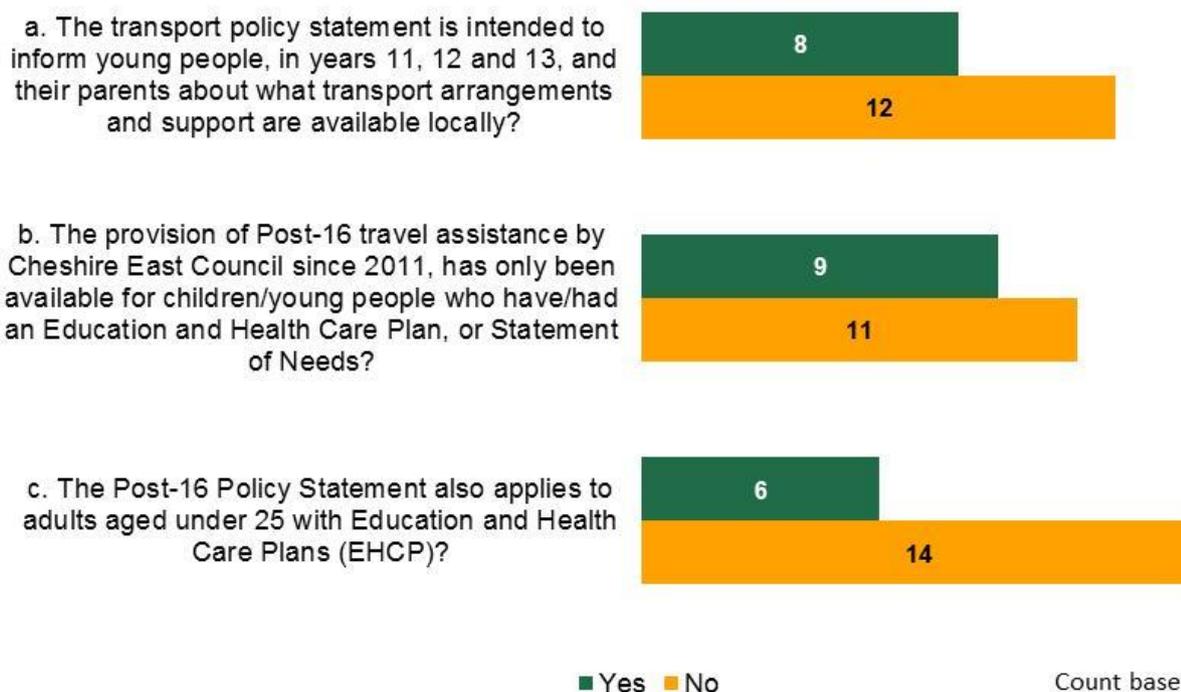
Respondents were asked how many children they currently have/care for and what type of school do these children currently attend. 12 respondents had/cared for one child, 3 had/cared for more than one child. Of those who had/cared for children, 9 had/cared for children who currently attend secondary school and 10 had/cared for children currently attending special school.

At the time the survey was conducted 13 respondents were receiving free transport to school. 11 stated they received it due to special educational needs and/or disability and 8 stated they received it due to the distance to the school.

National Policy/ Statutory Duty

Respondents were asked if they were aware of three given statements related to national policy/ statutory duty. Responses are shown in figure 1 below; slightly more respondents were unaware than were aware.

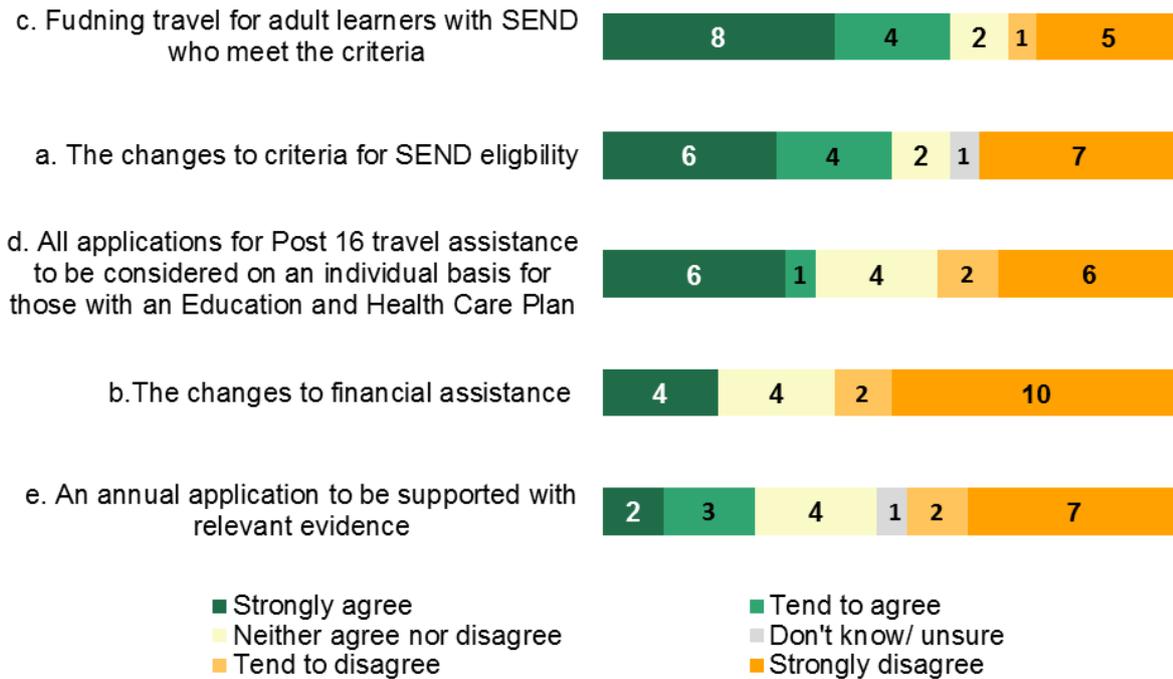
Figure1: Total number of respondents who were aware that...



Proposed changes to current policies

Respondents were asked how strongly they agree or disagree with the proposed new policies that were highlighted within the draft document which would bring the Council in line with statutory guidance. Responses are shown in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Agreement/disagreement with the proposed new policies



Count = 20

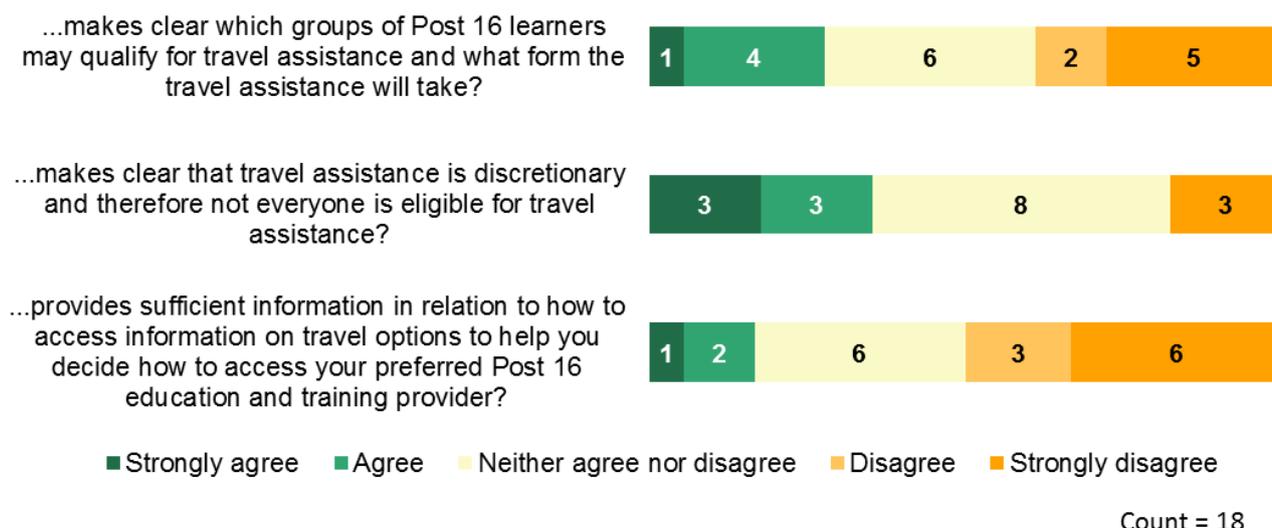
Those who disagreed with any of the statements were asked to explain their reasoning's if they so wished. 11 respondents chose to leave a comment. Table 1 shows the responses received for this question.

Table 1: If you have disagreed with any of the above, please explain why:		
Theme	Typical comment	Count
Lack of information given	<i>"There is no information on how individual decisions will be made, therefore there is not a clear policy or criteria to support this..."</i>	4
Impacting those with disabilities	<i>"..I believe this suggestion discriminates against those pupils with disabilities because they have to travel to school in the first place and this Council can offer them no alternative provision. It has become increasingly harder for parents to receive the mobility part of the PIP/DLA so many do not receive it, despite their child having significant learning difficulties. Just because there is no automatic right to provide something does not take away your moral responsibility to do so. Disability is not a choice.."</i>	7
Council making more problems for parents	<i>"...I already receive a direct payments package and this would be yet another job to administer on top of the all the other daily, weekly and monthly jobs involved in caring for such a child. My son's condition will not change, so asking for it to be considered annually is just making work for everyone, both Cheshire East and myself..."</i>	3
General concern	<i>"Children have to stay on in education until 18 so travel should be provided where necessary"</i>	2
Total number of references		16

Post 16 Travel Policy Statement

Respondents were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with various statements about the document, for example, whether it provides sufficient information and is clear. Responses are shown in figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Agreement/ disagreement that the post 16 document...



Queries or suggestions

Respondents were asked if they had any queries about, or suggestions on how we could improve travel, relating to the new Post-16 Policy Statement. 6 respondents chose to leave a comment. Table 2 shows the responses received for this question.

Table 2: Do you have any queries about, or suggestions on how we could improve travel, relating to the new Post-16 Policy Statement?		
Theme	Typical comment	Count
The need for clear information	<i>“Clear criteria in how judgements will be made Clear facts and figures on who and how families are going to be affected.”</i>	3
Queries around travel provision	<i>“What about escorts say daughter is epileptic will I have to pay extra for an escort as well”</i>	3
Additional consideration	<i>“...Please see https://www.cyclinguk.org/campaigning/views-and-briefings/cycle-friendly-schools-and-colleges-ctc-views https://www.cyclinguk.org/sites/default/files/document/2017/12/schools-and-colleges_7c_brf.pdf for good advice for parents and young people. Perhaps this could be added to the Post 16 Education Travel Policy Statement.”</i>	1
Total number of references		7

Any Other comments

Respondents were asked if they had any queries about, or suggestions on how we could improve travel, relating to the new Post-16 Policy Statement. 6 respondents chose to leave a comment. Table 2 shows the responses received for this question.

Table 3: Any other comments about the topics covered in the survey?		
Theme	Typical comment	Count
Disappointment with the policy	<i>"This is a sad reflection on a Council that seems not to care about its disabled young people and their families."</i>	1
Policy will be a barrier to education	<i>"...The whole group of both child, yp, adult and carers need support. The government stated they would help the most vulnerable in society and the almost managing. We are that group. Some children may not receive an education without transport and this is unacceptable."</i>	4
Additional consideration	<i>"Further info for Cycling to school please write to campaigns@cyclenguk.org"</i>	1

Next steps

Following the publication of this report senior officers will consider the findings and the comments received.

Where possible the policy statement will be amended as a result – within the operational and financial constraints faced by the Council.

This report will be shared with Members to inform the decision-making process which is due for completion at Cabinet on 8 May 2018