

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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COMMITTEE	<b>Education &amp; Children's Services</b>
DATE	<b>25 January 2018</b>
REPORT TITLE	<b>Lochside Academy transport arrangements: hours of operation of free school transport</b>
REPORT NUMBER	<b>ECS/18/014</b>
DIRECTOR	<b>Helen Shanks / Bernadette Oxley (interim)</b>
REPORT AUTHOR	<b>Andrew Jones</b>

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### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT:-**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on discussions regarding the planned hours of operation for free bus travel to Lochside Academy, for pupils living in Torry and Kincorth.

### **2. RECOMMENDATION(S)**

- 2.1 It is recommended that Committee:

(i) notes the outcome of discussion and that the Head of Policy, Performance and Resources will proceed with plans for the agreed free transport arrangements for the applicable pupils for Lochside Academy to operate between the hours of 07:00 and 18:00, Monday to Friday during school term time, subject to the appropriate budget provision being confirmed through the annual budget setting process.

### **3. BACKGROUND/MAIN ISSUES**

- 3.1 At its meeting on 16 November 2017, the Education & Children's Services Committee considered a report on planned arrangements for pupil transport to the new Lochside Academy, and agreed,:

*in order to support the transition to the new school, to approve Option 2a as detailed in the report [Free transport for Torry and Kincorth pupils only (using public bus services)] ;*

and:

*to instruct the Interim Head of Planning and Sustainable Development and Head of Policy, Resources and Performance to enter into discussions with the school Senior Management Team to ascertain*

*whether the bus pass should be valid beyond the current hours of 07:00 to 18:00 to ensure pupil access to school related extra-curricular activities – with a report to be submitted to the next meeting of Education and Children’s Services Committee.*

- 3.2 In response to this instruction, officers have discussed the matter with the head teacher of Lochside Academy, who has confirmed that school-led extra-curricular activities at the new school will be completed each day by 17:30.
- 3.3 Officers therefore consider that the planned hours of operation for the school bus passes as agreed at the last meeting of the Committee, from 07:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday during school term time, remains appropriate, and ensures that pupils will have access to school related extra-curricular activities whilst still being able to travel home afterwards using the provided free transport.
- 3.4 Consequently it is recommended that the planned hours of operation of the free school transport remain as 07:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday during school term time.

#### **4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The estimated costs for providing free transport to the new school for pupils living in Torry and Kincorth, were calculated on the basis of the transport being available between the hours of 07:00 and 18:00 Monday to Friday during school term time. The budget provision required to meet these costs was approved (subject to the annual budget setting process) by the Finance, Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 1 and 6 December 2017. Any extension in time would require to be budgeted for and a budget identified.
- 4.2 There are no further financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

#### **5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation in this report.

#### **6. MANAGEMENT OF RISK**

##### **Financial**

- 6.1 The recommendation in this report does not present any significant financial risks, for the reasons outlined in Section 4 above.
- 6.2 However, if a decision is made by Committee to extend the hours of operation of the free school transport beyond the hours of 07:00 and 18:00, Monday to Friday during school term time, there is a high risk that this would result in additional costs for the provision of the transport. Any additional cost is not budgeted for and an additional budget would require to be identified.

## **Customer / citizen**

- 6.3 Given that the head teacher of the school has confirmed that extra-curricular activities will be completed before 18:00 each day, there would be minimal risk of pupils being affected, if the recommendation in this report is accepted.

## **Reputational**

- 6.4 It should be noted that providing pupil bus passes which are valid for use outwith school hours is beyond the level of support normally provided by the Council. There is therefore a medium level risk that any further extension to the timings for the free transport would not be well received by parents of pupils at other schools in the city, where bus passes are only valid during school hours, which could lead to a negative impact on the Council's reputation.
- 6.5 The recommendation in this report does not present significant risks in any of the following categories:
- Employee
  - Environmental
  - Technological
  - Legal

## **7. IMPACT SECTION**

### **People**

- 7.1 By ensuring that all pupils at the school have appropriate means by which to travel to and from school, and by ensuring the timing of the travel arrangements are appropriate for those taking part in extra-curricular activities, the Council will be helping to improve equity in educational outcomes, and contributing to the drive to close the poverty-related attainment gap, as outlined in the Scottish Government's Scottish Attainment Challenge.
- 7.2 This will also help to demonstrate that the Council has shown due regard to the need to carry out school education functions in a way which is designed to reduce inequalities of outcome for those pupils experiencing them as a result of socio-economic disadvantage.
- 7.3 The recommendation in this report is not expected to impact on any of the following areas:
- Economy
  - Place
  - Technology

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Education and Children's Services Committee: 16 November 2017:  
*Subsidised Transport and Safe Walking Routes to Lochside Academy*

**9. REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS**

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