

Report to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools
Report submitted by: Head of Service – Special Educational Needs and
Disability
Date 27 February 2017

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Independent Travel Training
(Appendix 'A' refers)

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Executive Summary

The aim of this project is, through the introduction of independent travel training (ITT) across Lancashire, to improve the quality of life of individuals who currently rely on local authority transport support and in doing so reduce reliance on non-statutory transport provision; which will reduce the costs of providing transport in an increasingly challenging financial climate. Travel training also enables people to travel in a more sustainable way (i.e. by public transport, on foot or by bicycle) and prepare/equip individuals for adulthood.

Recommendation

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools is recommended to approve the setting up of an Independent Travel Training Service for 0-25 year olds as set out in this report, and to the funding being provided from grant funding on a sliding scale over the first three years of the service.

Background and Advice

Independent travel training is the provision of training and support, to develop a range of educational, social and personal skills necessary for a person to travel safely and independently in the community.

The training is predominantly aimed at people who are less able or less inclined to travel independently. This includes (but is not limited to) people with reduced mobility and learning difficulties, and enables them to have equality of access and independence. It assists in overcoming challenges, removes barriers to independent travel and gives people greater access to education, jobs, services and social networks. It empowers people to take greater control in their lives, enabling them to learn new skills and take advantage of opportunities in their communities.

Travel training provides tailored and practical help in travelling by public transport, on foot or by bicycle. The training activity can be short-term, supporting a person to become familiar and confident when learning a new route, through to longer-term more intensive involvement, encompassing the need to acquire a range of the essential skills most people take for granted (e.g. managing money). Travel training can take many different forms, including a practical hands-on element involving accompanied journeys, as well as some classroom based tuition.

Independent travel training supports the principles of the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reform code of practice in supporting the successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment (Section 1.39). By supporting an individual to travel independently, it facilitates their development to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood in practical situations in everyday settings (e.g. regular travel to education, jobs, services or social networks).

The target population is children and young people aged 0 to 25 with Special Educational Needs and Disability who require support in developing independent travel skills.

"1.39 with high aspirations, and the right support, the vast majority of children and young people can go on to achieve successful long-term outcomes in adult life. Local authorities, education providers and their partners should work together to help children and young people to realise their ambitions in relation to:

- *higher education and/or employment – including exploring different employment options, such as support for becoming self-employed and help from supported employment agencies*
- *independent living – enabling people to have choice and control over their lives and the support they receive, their accommodation and living arrangements, including supported living*
- *participating in society – including having friends and supportive relationships, and participating in, and contributing to, the local community*
- *being as healthy as possible in adult life"*

Options

A benchmarking exercise was completed to determine the benefits and disadvantages of various ITT schemes used around the country. It was determined that there were three key types of ITT scheme utilised in local authorities. These are:

- a) 1-to-1 only ITT training. This is very resource intensive and the most expensive type of scheme, however the success rate of training individuals to travel independently is high;
- b) A mixture of 1-to-1 and group training sessions backed up by group classroom sessions with input from dedicated trainers and from schools;
- c) Group sessions and classroom training delivered as part of a school curriculum only with no co-ordination from the local authority.

The type of scheme described under b) seemed the most cost effective, engaging schools in the process whilst allowing an oversight of the type and quality of training being delivered.

Four main options for how this type of scheme could be delivered were considered for use in Lancashire:

a) In-house coordination – Training carried out by a mixture of dedicated trainers school staff and buddies (volunteers) (TITAN model)

Lancashire County Council (LCC) has a small team that could coordinate a rolling programme of training, support and awareness sessions to staff, volunteers, parents and carers. The team would do some training of young people themselves but school staff would be trained to deliver most of the ITT and support the individuals.

(Low cost - very flexible approach as a number of staff can be trained at each school so the training is not dependent upon one or two people, the training is absorbed into the school curriculum. High consistency of approach allows understanding of the scheme by travel operators, users, parents and carers. Able to monitor the quality of the training being delivered). (Preferred option)

b) In-house complete package – LCC specific trainers and coordination

LCC would coordinate a rolling programme of training and awareness sessions to staff, volunteers, parents and carers and also train and support all the individuals who are partaking in the scheme.

(High cost - intensive support needed for each individual from the team. Requires additional staff to become ITT trainers. High consistency of approach allows understanding of the scheme by travel operators, users, parents and carers. Able to monitor the quality of the training being delivered).

c) External training (trainers bought in) – internal coordination

LCC coordinate trainers to come and deliver a rolling programme of ITT.

(High cost - low flexibility. Dependent on availability and quality of trainers to ensure quality of training and a consistent approach. Consistent if the trainers are the same).

d) Schools coordination and schools deliver training

(Lowest cost - least flexible option. Highly dependent on school engagement to achieve outcomes. Could lead to low consistency of approach and differing quality of training.

From the benchmarking exercise, other key learning points from other local authorities are:

Funding - many existing schemes are funded using short-term, one-off grants rather than ongoing revenue, though this is starting to change in some areas as the benefits of travel training are more widely recognised, and it has become a clearer part of travel planning within local authorities. Without guaranteed continued funding, several schemes reported that it was difficult to recruit and keep staff, or to provide continuity of training for any period of time.

Participation - where local authorities brought travel training into the school curriculum this resulted in wider participation in and enthusiasm for the training. Ensuring schools and staff are engaged in the ITT schemes is essential.

Engagement – working alongside parents, families and carers in the travel training enhances the learning for the individuals, and also encourages additional learning experiences being taken. In addition, involving local public transport companies in the project provides added support and encouragement for individuals, especially those still new to travelling independently.

Costs

In comparison to infrastructure measures, travel training schemes have relatively low costs, with the main costs predominantly relating to staff time. Economies of scale will apply to travel training schemes, because while direct costs are likely to increase proportionally to the number of people receiving training, indirect costs and overheads will not increase at the same rate.

Regardless of which ITT option is introduced, the benefits associated with an ITT scheme far outweigh the costs of implementing it.

The TITAN Model (Travel Independence Training Across the Nation)

Following discussions between the SEND and Integrated Transport Services and discussion at the Transforming SEND Programme Board, the adoption of the TITAN model is seen as the most appropriate for Lancashire and was an unanimous decision by the parent and professional representatives. It is the most flexible and consistent option in its approach whilst allowing quality to be monitored and includes engagement from schools, parents and carers. The TITAN model is currently used amongst others by Norfolk County Council and Nottinghamshire County Council. Nottinghamshire would provide the information packs for the training and deliver the initial training and support for an Independent Travel Training team.

The TITAN Independent Travel Training scheme works on a "train the trainer" approach. With a small number of full time trainers who then train staff in schools and colleges, volunteers, or other staff to carry out the training of young people whilst also carrying out training themselves. The schools are provided with training packs (printed training packs which enable each school to cascade training) for use in the schools and funded by the ITT service. Support and refresher training is provided for the schools by the full time trainers. The need for travel training is

included in the young person's support plan and is absorbed into the school curriculum.

Once trainers at all of the schools are in place, training can also be provided to staff at LCC Day Centres or other social care establishments to enable people attending these facilities to also benefit from being able to travel independently.

Financial implications

This is an 'invest to save' measure using grant funding to pump prime the cost of implementing an ITT scheme. As this is a grant fund, it is proposed to utilise the grant to fund the ITT scheme in its entirety in the first year, and apply a reducing amount in the following year in line with the table below. The cost savings realised from the reduction in transport costs as a result of implementing an ITT scheme will be used to pick up the year on year reduction of grant available as shown below.

Funded from SEND reform grant		Funded from transport service savings	
Year 1	100%	Year 1	0%
Year 2	66%	Year 2	33%
Year 3	33%	Year 3	66%
Year 4	0%	Year 4	100%

The costs associated with a TITAN Independent Travel Training scheme can be broken down as follows:-

1. Training Packs

- £50 each
- Initial estimate 33 packs to cover the initial 3 years
- Total £1,650

2. Initial training costs

- The initial training cost for the ITT Team is £750 for three consecutive days of training with a possible 4 follow up days costing £1,000
- Total maximum cost of £1,750

3. Staffing costs

The grades for these staff (confirmation by HR) is Team Leader Grade 7 and Trainers Grade 5. The cost would be:

- 1 X Team Leader Grade 7 (permanent post) 80% of top of grade including on costs £33,441
- 1 X Trainer Grade 5 (permanent post) 80% of top of grade including on costs £24,005
- 1 X Trainer Grade 5 (permanent post) 80% of top of grade including on costs £24,005

- Total staffing cost including on costs - £81,451

Travel

It is difficult to provide a cost for the trainers travel per annum as it could vary considerably depending upon the routes being taken and the location of the training. However, a reasonable estimate is thought to be £1,000 per annum per ITT Team member and initially a further £2,000 pa for all volunteer expenses (although this may increase proportionally if the number of volunteers and therefore the number of people being trained increases over time).

Total Cost Breakdown:

- | | |
|--|---------|
| • Initial set up costs (initial training and packages) | £3,400 |
| • Scheme operation p/a estimate | £86,451 |

The average cost of transporting a SEND pupil is £4,600 per annum although this cost can vary greatly depending upon distance and level of support needed.

The cost of a school season ticket per annum currently is across three bands –

Band A £410

Band B £562

Band C £714

For costing purposes, the middle band has been used giving a potential net transport cost saving for each young person of £4,000 per annum.

It is estimated that the full time trainers could train a minimum of 10 people each year (whilst also training the schools, colleges and volunteers who in turn cascade training). Initially the ITT team would be training the cohort of young people leaving school to start attending college. There would also be a number of young people attending secondary school trained by the schools and from the second year a number of young people leaving school to attend college trained by volunteers. It is estimated that it will take three years of operating the service to achieve the full annual £1,000,000 target saving. At least 273 young people will need to be trained over the first three years of the service to cover the teams' cost and achieve the hoped for £1,000,000 saving.

To maintain the level of saving and cost of the service going forward, it will be necessary to maintain a cohort of 280 young people travelling independently each year, and therefore there needs to be a constant cycle of approximately 100 young people a year being trained, to replace those leaving school. From the experience of Norfolk County Council this figure is seen as attainable.

The estimated gross cost to the Transport service would be as per the table below with this cost offset by the amount of savings made each year.

	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4 on
Funded from grant funding	89,851	57,634	28,817	0
Cost to service	0	28,817	57,634	62,446
	89,851	86,451	86,451	62,446
Estimated saving (Gross)	292,000	400,000	400,000	400,000
No of people trained	73	100	100	100
Estimated saving net of team cost	202,149	313,549	313,549	337,554
Cumulative saving (3 years)	202,149	515,698	829,247	964,652

Savings to transport	Estimated saving net of team cost	292,000	371,183	342,366	337,554
	Cumulative saving	292,000	663,183	1,005,549	1,051,103

Consultations

The proposed introduction of an ITT programme has been discussed with the Transforming SEND Services Board which includes representation from parents/carers, schools, health and LCC officers. The proposed introduction was welcomed and received unanimous support.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated within this report which are predominately positive supporting improved independence for children and young people in developing their independent travel skills.

Greater independence would impact positively upon the reliance of children and young people on LCC for travel assistance and reduce the budgetary pressure on the provision of transport assistance. However it is recognised that for some children and young people fully independent travel would not be appropriate and continued assistance with travel would be required.

Risk management

There are risks in respect of the engagement of all schools and families with Independent Travel Training as the transition to independent travel can be very anxiety provoking for parents/carers. The financial model is based upon projected savings being made through young people becoming less reliant upon transport assistance and the projected numbers becoming independent may not be realised

and therefore target savings not made. However the benefits of independent travel into adulthood are consistent with the SEND reforms and provide a life enhancing opportunity for those involved.

Financial

The start-up costs would be met from grant funding on a sliding scale for the first three years with savings from the transport budget offsetting the costs going forward. There may be a relatively small increase in costs for travel supported by the English National Concessionary Travel Scheme but it is not possible to quantify this.

Legal

LCC has a statutory duty to provide travel assistance to children and young people of statutory school age (Year R to Year 11) as determined within the LCC mainstream and SEND transport policies. The introduction of ITT will enable greater independence for some of those children and young people and potentially improve their outcomes as adults.

Equality and Cohesion

Independent Travel Training supports the principles of the SEND reform code of practice in supporting the successful preparation for adulthood, including independent living and employment (Section 1.39).

The proposal also contributes to advancing equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics (particularly disability) and would therefore assist the County Council in meeting one of the aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty.

An Equality Analysis has been undertaken and is set out at Appendix 'A'.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A