

Draft School Travel Service and Post-16 Travel Service Policy Consultation

Southampton City Council is consulting on proposed changes to a draft School Travel Service and Post-16 Travel Service Policy.

We would like to hear your thoughts on the proposals and any impacts or alternative suggestions you would like us to consider. Now is your opportunity to have your say.

An online version of this questionnaire can be found on Southampton City Council's website at www.southampton.gov.uk/consultations.

You can also email your consultation feedback or queries to yourcity.yoursay@southampton.gov.uk

This consultation closes **Monday 27 November 2023**.

Background

The draft School Travel Service and Post-16 Travel Service Policy sets out Southampton City Council's approach to the operation of the School Travel Service in Southampton. It sets out the Council's statutory requirements along with local policy.

As part of a routine review of our policy, we are proposing a few changes that we would like to hear your feedback on.

This questionnaire will summarise the key proposals, however the full draft policy is available to read online: www.southampton.gov.uk/consultations

Proposals

We are proposing the following changes to the draft policy:

- We are proposing to update the appeals process to bring it in line with government guidance.

The appeals process is for disputing whether travel support is offered by Southampton City Council. In line with government guidance, we propose to introduce a two-stage process for appeals. The first stage would be a review by senior officers within 20 working days of receiving an appeal. Then, if the appellant wishes to escalate the appeal, the second stage would be a review by an independent panel within 40 working days of the appeal being escalated.

- We are proposing to set out a clear order and hierarchy in which travel options will be considered by the council.

The aim of this is to improve transparency. This would apply both to new applicants and to those already receiving travel support. If a child/student/adult learner is eligible for travel support, we would consider a range of options, working with pupils, parents and carers pro-actively to establish the most suitable and sustainable approach. Proposed methods of travel support would be considered in a clear order, which is set out below:

- 1) Travel training – Independent travel training gives children, students and adult learners the essential skills needed to travel independently either on foot, by other sustainable travel option, such as bike or scooter, or by public transport.
- 2) Sustainable travel such as bike or scooter
- 3) Bus/rail pass
- 4) Personal Travel Budgets (PTBs) – only applicable to children and young people with an EHCP. Parents or carers can use PTBs in any reasonable way to get their child to school
- 5) Group pick up/drop off (Where appropriate and reasonable, parents or carers may be expected to take their child to and from a pick-up/drop off point. Pick-up/drop-off points will be within 1 mile of the child's home address)
- 6) Vehicle (taxi / minibus) provision by other Southampton City Council directorates who have suitable vehicles.
- 7) Transport – multi occupancy (Transportation for multiple children)
- 8) Transport (taxi / minibus) – single occupancy (Transportation for a single child)

- We are proposing to that parents/carers who wish to apply for school travel support list their nearest school in their school application forms.

When an application for travel is considered following the normal admissions round, it can be difficult for local authorities to know whether a child could have been admitted to their nearest school if their parent/carer did not list that school as a preference when they applied for a school place. Therefore, Southampton City Council is requesting that parents/carers list their nearest school on their application form if they intend to apply for travel support.

- We have included a proposed definition of a home address and how this would be defined in the case of dual custody arrangement.

We are proposing the following definition: The designated home address will be defined as the address at which the child resides and spends the majority of their time.

In cases where a child has a shared living arrangement, such as equal shared custody for separated parents/carers, we would use the address where the recipient of the child benefit lives. If no child benefit is received, we would use the address where the child is registered at their GP surgery.

- We have suggested changes to the terminology used within the policy to ensure it is consistent and in line with the service's rebrand from 'Home to School Transport' to 'School Travel Service'.

This introduces flexibility to the policy and is a more accurate reflection of the service offer to provide sustainable as well as suitable travel options.

For clarification, the draft policy is not proposing any changes to the following:

- The criteria for entitlement for travel support. This is set out by law. Southampton City Council has a duty under the Education Acts 1996 and 2011 to provide free of charge travel support for 'eligible children' of compulsory school age.
- The Council is not proposing to introduce charges for post-16 travel support.

The full draft policy is available to read online: www.southampton.gov.uk/consultations

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the proposals?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Updating the appeals process to bring it in line with government guidance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Setting out a clear order and hierarchy in which travel options will be considered by the council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Requesting that parents who wish to apply for school travel support list their nearest school in their school application forms.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proposed definition of a home address and how this would be defined in the case of dual custody arrangement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Changing the terminology used within the policy to ensure it is consistent and in line with the service's rebrand from 'Home to School Transport' to 'School Travel Service'.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If implemented, what impact do you feel the proposals may have on you, or your family?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A very positive impact | <input type="checkbox"/> A fairly negative impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A fairly positive impact | <input type="checkbox"/> A very negative impact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No impact at all | <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know |

If you disagree, or have any comments, impacts, suggestions or alternatives you feel we should consider, please provide details:

Reading the draft policy

Have you read the proposed draft policy?

Yes, all of it

Yes, some of it

No

If you have read the proposed draft policy, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The draft policy is easy to understand	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The draft policy provides sufficient information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If there were parts of the draft policy that you did not understand or you feel need more information, please provide further details:

About you

Which of the following describes your interest in this consultation?

Please tick all that apply.

As a parent or carer of a child that receives school travel support or Post-16 Travel support

As a child or adult learner that receives school travel support or Post-16 Travel support receives school travel support

Resident of Southampton

Resident elsewhere

Someone that works, visits, or studies in Southampton

A private business

Public sector organisation

Third sector organisation (e.g. voluntary or community groups and charities, etc)

Employee of Southampton City Council

Political member

Other

If other, please specify:

What is your postcode?

This is used for geographical analysis only and will not be used to identify or contact you.

What is your sex?

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

If no, please write in your gender identity:

What is your age?

- Under 18 35 - 44 65 - 74
 18 - 24 45 - 54 75+
 25 - 34 55 - 64 Prefer not to say

What is your ethnic group?

- Asian or Asian British White other
 Black, Black British, Caribbean or African Other ethnic group
 Mixed or multiple ethnic groups Prefer not to say
 White British

If other, please specify:

Do you have any physical or mental conditions or impairments, lasting 12 months or more, that have a substantial effect on your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

What happens next?

The consultation closes on **27 November 2023**. After this date, all feedback will be analysed and considered before a final decision is made.

Please return completed surveys to:

*Consultations,
First Floor, West Wing,
Civic Centre,
Southampton,
SO14 7LY.*

Alternatively, please hand completed surveys back to any Southampton City Council-run library.

The information collected about you during this survey will only be used for the purposes of research. We may use it to contact you about this. We will only share your information with other organisations or council departments if we need to. We may also share it to prevent, investigate or prosecute criminal offences, or as the law otherwise allows. Please be aware that any comments given on this form may be published in the report. However, the council will endeavour to remove any references that could identify individuals or organisations. Our Privacy Policy (<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/privacy>) explains how we handle your personal data, and we can provide a copy if you are unable to access the Internet.