

Implementing Recommendations of Post-16 Further Education Transport Scrutiny Investigation Report

Cabinet Member's Update (May 2016)

In November 2015 a report was presented that noted the Cabinet Member's intentions with regard to implementing the recommendations of the Post-16 Further Education Transport Scrutiny Investigation Report. The recommendations were divided into three categories:

- implement immediately,
- cooperate in the medium term with other services/partners in order to investigate the practicability of implementing the recommendations,
- not to consider the recommendations for the time being

Here is an update on progress in implementing the recommendations.

(In referring to specific recommendations, the numbering used is that of the 'Summary of the recommendations' found on pages 7 and 8 of the report.)

Implement immediately

Recommendation	What has happened and when	Effect of action
5 Consistency is needed in the provision and the arrangements across Gwynedd, in order to give everyone an equal and fair opportunity.	The wording of the Post-16 Transport Policy has been updated so as to charge one price only for the 16+ Travel Ticket, and in so doing removing any differentiation in price when travelling to a catchment school or college or to any establishment noted in the policy. A single price of £100 per term will be charged. The new policy will be implemented on 1 September 2016.	Charging one price only and removing the concept of a catchment will ensure consistency in the provision and arrangements available to all, be they school pupils or college students, wherever they live.
6 The catchment areas should be reviewed to reduce the travelling times and distances for learners/students in accordance with the Learner Travel Statutory Guidance.	The wording of the Post-16 Transport Policy has been updated so as to charge one price only for the 16+ Travel Ticket, and in so doing removing any differentiation in price when travelling to a catchment school or college or to any establishment noted in the policy. A single price of £100 per term will be charged. The new policy will be implemented on 1 September 2016.	The new wording of the policy removes the concept of a catchment with regards to post-16 transport. This will enable a learner to attend the establishment best suited for them without a difference in the cost of a 16+ Travel Ticket needing to be a consideration.
12c Based on the evidence found during the scrutiny investigation, the same price should	The wording of the Post-16 Transport Policy has been updated so as to charge one price only for the	The new wording of the policy sets one price for everyone.

	be set for everyone.	16+ Travel Ticket. A single price of £100 per term will be charged. The new policy will be implemented on 1 September 2016.	
9	We must secure the joint understanding of the further education providers and Galw Gwynedd of Gwynedd Council's Post-16 Education Transport Policy.	The wording of the Post-16 Transport Policy has been updated so as to charge one price only for the 16+ Travel Ticket, and in so doing removing any differentiation in price when travelling to a catchment school or college or to any establishment noted in the policy. A single price of £100 per term will be charged. The new policy will be implemented on 1 September 2016.	The wording and conditions of the new policy are such simpler and will help in securing joint understanding of the further education providers and Galw Gwynedd of the policy.
10	In the spirit of the Gwynedd Way, it must be ensured that users' questions are answered on their first contact.	The wording of the Post-16 Transport Policy has been updated so as to charge one price only for the 16+ Travel Ticket, and in so doing removing any differentiation in price when travelling to a catchment school or college or to any establishment noted in the policy. A single price of £100 per term will be charged. The new policy will be implemented on 1 September 2016.	The wording and conditions of the new policy are such simpler and will help in ensuring that users' questions are answered on their first contact.
11	Gwynedd Council and the post-16 education providers must collaborate closely to provide consistent, relevant and purposeful information for learners and their families using various and suitable methods that ensure an equal opportunity for everyone	All the communication material used in conjunction with the Post-16 Transport Policy is being reviewed in order to bring it line with the wording of the new policy and any other new arrangements (this would include the website, correspondence with school pupils and college students, scripts for Galw Gwynedd staff, etc.)	This work has started. A leaflet has been presented to current 6 th form pupils, and a leaflet for the current year 11 is about to be released.
12ch	It should be ensured that the service offers an equal opportunity for college students and learners in secondary schools.	It is considered that recommendation 12ch is very similar to recommendation 5 (above), and that removing the concept of a catchment will contribute to the implementation of this recommendation. The new policy will be implemented on 1 September 2016.	Charging one price only and removing the concept of a catchment will ensure consistency in the provision and arrangements available to all, be they school pupils or college students, wherever they live.
3	The foundation of working in partnership with various organisations to arrange a bespoke service should be built on.	It is considered that recommendation 3 is being implemented permanently.	All partners contribute to improving the provision which is in operation.

Short/medium term cooperation with other services/partners in order to investigate the practicalities of implementing the recommendations

Preliminary discussions have been held with Coleg Llandrillo-Menai in relation to recommendations 1, 12b, 5, 7 and 12dd.

Recommendation	What has happened and when	Effect of action
<p>1 In order to improve the benefits for learners/students and their families, reduce the processes and in the spirit of the Gwynedd Way, there should be closer collaboration and negotiation with the Llandrillo Menai Colleges Group to be an agent for Gwynedd Council</p>	<p>Preliminary discussions have been held with representatives from Coleg Llandrillo-Menai regarding the idea that they act as an agent. The College is, in principal, willing to consider administrating the scheme for Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor students.</p> <p>The next ‘annual’ meeting with the College is scheduled for 21st June.</p>	<p>The numbers and costs of producing the travel tickets are being provided to the college.</p>
<p>12b Based on the evidence found during the scrutiny investigation, it is recommended that a combination of options should be considered. Options 3, 6 and 7 – changing to a ticketed system, transferring the service and the administration of college transport tickets to Llandrillo Menai Colleges Group.</p>	<p>The college has no interest in organising the transport.</p> <p>With regards to transferring the administration of college travel tickets to Coleg Llandrillo-Menai, see 1 above.</p>	<p>See 1 above with regards to transferring the administration of college travel tickets to the college.</p>
<p>5 Consistency is needed in the provision and the arrangements across Gwynedd, in order to give everyone an equal and fair opportunity</p>	<p>The proposed change in wording of the transport policy was discussed with representatives from Coleg Llandrillo-Menai. There was no opposition to the principle of removing the concept of a catchment and to charge a single price for everyone.</p> <p>After the new policy was passed in the Cabinet, a letter from the Pwllheli College Council was received which supported the students’ view against the increase in the cost of a ticket and the lack of flexibility in using the ticket.</p>	<p>A User’s Forum will be established (to include representation for students) in order to discuss the conditions of use of the 16+ Travel Ticket. It is intended to schedule a meeting of the User’s Forum before the end of the summer term.</p>
<p>7 Post-16 education providers need to collaborate to put systems in place to collect data to find out whether travelling costs lead to students dropping out of further</p>	<p>This was discussed with representatives from Coleg Llandrillo-Menai.</p> <p>The Gwynedd and Ynys Môn Post-16 Education</p>	<p>We are awaiting the official response from the college with respect to this recommendation.</p> <p>The opinions of current students with regard to</p>

education	Consortium are looking to use their Learner's Voice questionnaire to collect the opinion of students regarding the cost of post-16 transport. This will collect the opinion of current students, but we have not yet found a way of collecting the numbers of students dropping out of education because of transport costs.	travel costs can be collected.
12dd	We should continue with the good practice of the provision of peripatetic teachers/lecturers and build on the foundation of working in partnership, and review regularly.	This recommendation was discussed with representatives from Coleg Llandrillo-Menai.
4	We should have a purposeful Post-16 Transport Policy that considers the students/leaners and their families' means to pay for transport costs	It is considered that the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) already contributes to the implementation of recommendation 4. However, the issue was raised with representatives of Coleg Llandrillo-Menai with a view to shorten the time it takes to ensure the first payment of the EMA. The Education Department has established a system whereby payments can be made through monthly part-payments (rather than having to pay one amount at the beginning of term). The Direct Debit system has been in place since Easter 2016.
		We are awaiting the official response from the college with respect to this recommendation.

Discussions have also been held with the Integrated Transport Unit with regards to recommendations 2 and 12b.

Recommendation	What has happened and when	Effect of action
2	The Post-16 Transport Policy should be reviewed to secure a suitable and purposeful policy to address the requirements of the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure 2008 and the Learner Travel – Statutory Provision and	One aspect of recommendation 2 was to have more flexibility in the travel times for learners/students. There has been a strong call for this aspect from students.
		Learners/students who use their 16+ Travel Ticket on routes which are public transport routes under tender to the Council can continue to travel at any time on those routes, but the use of the 16+ Travel Ticket on commercial public transport routes is still

<p>Operation Guidance, June 2014</p>	<p>For information, learners/students who use their 16+ Travel Ticket on routes which are public transport routes under tender to the Council can already travel at any time on those routes. However, this is not the case for commercial public transport. The use of the 16+ Travel Ticket on commercial public transport routes is restricted to a specific journey at the beginning of the day and a specific journey at the end of the day (as is travel on designated college buses).</p> <p>The matter of attaining flexibility in travel times has been raised with the Transport Unit, but there has been no agreement as yet as to how best to attain more flexible travel times without increasing the cost of the provision.</p>	<p>restricted to a specific journey at the beginning of the day and a specific journey at the end of the day (as is travel on designated college buses).</p> <p>A User's Forum will be established (to include representation for students) in order to discuss the conditions of use of the 16+ Travel Ticket. It is intended to schedule a meeting of the User's Forum before the end of the summer term.</p>
<p>12b Based on the evidence found during the scrutiny investigation, it is recommended that a combination of options should be considered. Options 3, 6 and 7 – changing to a ticketed system, transferring the service and the administration of college transport tickets to Llandrillo Menai Colleges Group.</p>	<p>See comments for 12b above.</p>	<p>See comments for 12b above</p>

Recommendations not to be considered at this current time

Recommendation	What has happened and when	Effect of action
<p>8 Appropriate customer care indicators should be set for the service</p>	<p>Resources are not available at this current time to act upon this recommendation.</p>	
<p>12d Financial loans should also be provided to purchase a vehicle / motorbike in order to facilitate access to further education and training.</p>	<p>There is currently no money available to provide financial loans.</p>	