

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**WEDNESDAY, 06 JANUARY 2021 AT 14:00 HOURS
IN ON-LINE MEETING, MICROSOFT TEAMS**

A G E N D A

1 NOTICE OF RECORDING/WEBCAST

The Chairman to advise/meeting to note that this meeting will be webcast for live or subsequent broadcast via the Council's Internet site (www.civico.net/birmingham) and that members of the press/public may record and take photographs except where there are confidential or exempt items.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Members are reminded that they must declare all relevant pecuniary and non pecuniary interests arising from any business to be discussed at this meeting. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared a Member must not speak or take part in that agenda item. Any declarations will be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

3 APOLOGIES

To receive any apologies.

**4 REQUEST FOR CALL IN: IMPROVING HOME TO SCHOOL
TRANSPORT**

3 - 30

To consider the "Request for Call-In" (the Portfolio Holder and the Lead Officer Identified in the report have been summoned to attend the meeting).

The following documents are attached:-

- (A) The Executive Decision Record
- (B) The relevant form for the "Request for Call-In" lodged by Councillors Alex Yip and Robert Alden.
- (C) The report considered by Cabinet in reaching its decision.

5 **REQUEST(S) FOR CALL IN/COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION/PETITIONS RECEIVED (IF ANY)**

To consider any request for call in/councillor call for action/petitions (if received).

6 **OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

To consider any items of business by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) that in the opinion of the Chairman are matters of urgency.

7 **AUTHORITY TO CHAIRMAN AND OFFICERS**

Chairman to move:-

'In an urgent situation between meetings, the Chairman jointly with the relevant Chief Officer has authority to act on behalf of the Committee'.

[Home](#) / [Decisions](#)
CMIS Login[Phil Wright](#)[CMIS Logout](#)**Public****Login/Registration**[Public Login](#)[Public](#)[Registration](#)**General**[Reports](#)[Decision History](#)

This section allows you to view the general details of a Decision

Details

Status: Decision Subject To Call In

Title:
Improving Home to School Transport

Reference: 008291/2020

Urgent Decision - Not in Forward Plan No

Details for Agenda Sheet
Report of the Interim Chief Executive.

Implementation Date (not before meeting on) Tue 15 Dec 2020

Purpose

Following the Motion passed at Full Council on 15 September 2020, as a result of consistent service failings, Ernst and Young LLP were commissioned to run an independent inquiry to review the service and provide recommendations for sustained improvement in the medium to longer term. This Cabinet Report outlines the Council's response to these recommendations

Key Portfolio	Children's Wellbeing
Include item on Forward Plan/ Key Decision	Yes
Decision Maker	
Reason For Key Decision	
Relevant Documents	
Decision Type:	Committee
Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Directorate	
Other Information	
Private Reason	
Decision Outcome	<p>On 15 December 2020, Cabinet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. Reinforced the apology to parents / carers and the pupils for the disruptions to their lives and education at the start of term;ii. Noted the Inquiry's findings and recommendations;

- iii. Noted the improvements already made to the service and those planned to build upon this, as set out within the report;
- iv. Noted the recommendations for further improvements as set out in sections 3.11 to the report and the associated governance in section 4.8 to the report that will provide the Interim Chief Executive with confidence that the required changes are being made in line with the agreed timelines;
- v. Agreed, in principle, to create an Integrated Passenger Transport Unit, subject to the approval of an Outline Business Case (OBC) by the end of the financial year by the Council Leadership Team;
- vi. Agreed that the OBC will set out a new organisational structure which will be consulted upon and implemented during 2021/22 for Home to School Transport, which is aligned to and will support the creation of a wider Integrated Passenger Transport Unit;
- vii. Agreed that the above activity, the SEND programme, associated commissioning activity, Home to School redesign and Integrated Passenger Transport Unit developed are collated into a cohesive programme of activity with appropriate governance controls, management oversight and resources. The Programme Design Document for this to be completed by January 2021, setting out the key implementation milestones, benefits and required consultations with the public, stakeholders, staff and Members;
- viii. Agreed that additional resources, are commissioned in the new calendar year to drive forward the improvements needed across Home to School Transport and, given dependencies with assessments, the wider

Inclusion, SEND and Wellbeing Portfolio including:

- 1. A dedicated transformation lead who will take forward the recommendations and the programme of improvements;
- 2. Continued external resources to ensure the improvements made since September 2020 are maintained and built upon within the context of the wider transformation programme; and
- 3. Additional external resources to continue a wider SEN transformation programme and deliver and embed the required changes;

ix. Noted that the programme will report into the Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO) and Interim Chief Executive on a monthly basis to ensure that delivery is maintained at the required pace and improvements are being made for pupils, parents / carers and schools; and

x. Received an update report back in summer 2021 that provides a position on progress and an assessment of the readiness of the service ahead of the new academic year.

THE DEADLINE FOR CALL IN IS 1600 HOURS ON MONDAY 21 DECEMBER 2020

Rating:

Is the Decision Maker Aware of the Decision: No

Is the Head of Services Aware of the Decision: No

No

**Is Decision
County Wide:**

**Would the
recommended
decision be
contrary to the
budget and
policy
framework:** No

**Further
Information:**

**Decision
Options:**

Additional Information

Reg 10

Reg 11

Decision Criteria

This Decision does not contain any decision
criteria records.

Wards

This Decision does not contain any Ward
records.

Topics

This Decision does not contain any Topic
records

Overview and Scrutiny

This Decision does not contain any Overview and Scrutiny records.

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Appendix 2: Request for Call In – Pro-forma

To:

Committee Services, Room 315, Council House.

E-Mail: LESCommitteeServicesAll@birmingham.gov.uk (marked "For the attention of Dave Smith")

Date: 21st December 2020

Please arrange for a meeting of the

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

O&S Committee

to be called to discuss the following executive decision:

Title: Improving Home to School Transport

Taken By: Cabinet

On: 15 December 2020

Reason for request:

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| (a) Is the Executive decision within existing policy? | 1. the decision appears to be contrary to the Budget or one of the 'policy framework' plans or strategies; | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 2. the decision appears to be inconsistent with any other form of policy approved by the full Council, the Executive or the Regulatory Committees; | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 3. the decision appears to be inconsistent with recommendations previously made by an Overview and Scrutiny body (and accepted by the full Council or the Executive); | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) Is the Executive decision well-founded? | 4. the Executive appears to have failed to consult relevant stakeholders or other interested persons before arriving at its decision; | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | 5. the Executive appears to have overlooked some relevant consideration in arriving at its decision; | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | 6. the decision has already generated particular controversy amongst those likely to be affected by it or, in the opinion of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it is likely so to do; | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | 7. the decision appears to be particularly "novel" and therefore likely to set an important precedent; | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | 8. there is a substantial lack of clarity, material inaccuracy or insufficient information provided in the report to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hold the Executive to account and/or add value to the work of the Council. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |



(c) Has the Executive decision been properly taken?

9. the decision appears to give rise to significant legal, financial or propriety issues; ☐

10. the notification of the decision does not appear to have been in accordance with council procedures; ☐

(d) Does the Executive decision particularly affect a District?

11. the decision appears to give rise to significant issues in relation to a particular District.

Councillor

(Signed)

Alex Yip

(Print Name)

Councillor

(Signed)

Robert Alden

(Print Name)



Appendix 3: Criteria For 'Call In'

These are the criteria against which the Council expects an O&S Committee to judge any "request for call in". The Council does NOT expect an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to call in an Executive decision UNLESS one or more of the following circumstances applies –

	(a) Is the Executive decision within existing policy?
1	the decision appears to be contrary to the Budget or one of the 'policy framework' plans or strategies;
2	the decision appears to be inconsistent with any other form of policy approved by the full Council, the Executive or the Regulatory Committees;
3	the decision appears to be inconsistent with recommendations previously made by an Overview and Scrutiny body (and accepted by the full Council or the Executive);
	(b) Is the Executive Decision well-founded?
4	the Executive appears to have failed to consult relevant stakeholders or other interested persons before arriving at its decision;
5	the Executive appears to have overlooked some relevant consideration in arriving at its decision;
6	the decision has already generated particular controversy amongst those likely to be affected by it or, in the opinion of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it is likely so to do;
7	the decision appears to be particularly "novel" and therefore likely to set an important precedent;
8	there is a substantial lack of clarity, material inaccuracy or insufficient information provided in the report to allow the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to hold the Executive to account and/or add value to the work of the Council.
	(c) Has the Executive decision been properly taken?
9	the decision appears to give rise to significant legal, financial or propriety issues;
10	the notification of the decision does not appear to have been in accordance with council procedures;
	(d) Does the Executive decision particularly affect a District?
11	the decision appears to give rise to significant issues in relation to a particular District.

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet

15th December 2020



Subject: Improving Home to School Transport

Report of: Chris Naylor, Interim Chief Executive
Relevant Cabinet Member: Cllr Ian Ward, Leader
Relevant O&S Chair(s): Cllr Kath Scott
Report author: Amerdip Kaur, Chief Executive's Senior Policy Officer

Are specific wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s):		
Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference:		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 As a result of consistent issues with the Home to School travel service, an independent inquiry was launched in September 2020 to determine why the service failed children and their parents and carers, and to provide detailed recommendations to improve the service in the medium and long term.
- 1.2 Recognising the frustrations of parents, carers and members, the Interim Chief Executive proposed an immediate set of actions to understand and begin to rectify some of the challenges. This included some focused capacity to create immediate service improvements and a produce a transformation programme to ensure that proposed improvements will be delivered and sustained.

- 1.3 As part of this the City Council commissioned Ernst Young LLP, an independent organisation with a decade of experience of working with local authorities and transforming council services, to undertake this Inquiry and report back by the 1st November. The findings were presented at a public meeting on the 24th November.
- 1.4 The Inquiry undertook an independent assessment of what went wrong at the start of the term; what this meant for changes and improvements to the Travel Assist service; and how any improvements could be successfully implemented.
- 1.5 Whilst COVID was clearly a contributing factor to failings, government guidance was released in June 2020. This would have allowed adequate and timely planning to be undertaken for the start of the September 2020 term. Given this context, it would suggest the nature of the pandemic exposed some more systemic weaknesses within the service.
- 1.6 The Inquiry identified 8 operational reasons why pupils, parents and schools did not receive the level of support they expected at the start of term. These areas are being addressed through the “Immediate Fixes Plan”, with measures put in place to improve the performance in the short-term. It was recognised that the service required additional capacity and capability to implement a series of improvements at pace that would bring the service up to the basic level required.
- 1.7 The Inquiry also identified a series of underlying causes that contribute towards a more systemic problem that has created a fragile service. These are summarised below:
- 1.7.1 **Data and Information: Real Time Data**
- Whilst basic management information is being used to drive the performance of the service, further work needs to be undertaken to develop a wider set of performance metrics to allow information to be reported in near real-time. Limited data was available to enable the effective performance monitoring of the service, during a critical and challenging time.
- 1.7.2 **Processes**
- The lack of a comprehensive end-to-end process means it is not clear who within the council needs to input and be accountable for a successful service, and where the role of the suppliers is part of this.
- 1.7.3 **People and Teams: Functional Structure and Capability**
- Some of the capabilities expected within a transport service are not present in the current service delivery model. Considering the complications and challenges related to COVID-19, there was a lack of leadership oversight around the planning for the delivery of home to school transport services at the start of the school year.
- 1.7.4 **Planning: Supplier and Commercial Management**

- 1.7.5 The current approach and commercial capability, combined with a number of commercial terms in current contracts, makes contract management difficult and suppliers are not being held to account effectively.
- 1.7.6 **Planning: Management of Guides**
The management and allocation of guides by the Travel Assist Team has needed improvement in order to deliver the service effectively.
- 1.7.7 **Planning: Route Planning and Pupil Information**
Route planning is not comprehensive and there is no information available on lengths of routes. This meant the planning of COVID routes became more complicated than would have been expected.
- 1.7.8 **Communications and Channels:** The lack of an effective communication system and approach between schools, parents and BCC has resulted in guides and drivers endeavouring to contact people themselves to provide updates.
- 1.8 To address these in a sustainable way, the Inquiry recommends that a new delivery model should be implemented. The Inquiry considered three options that are available and assessed these against 10 criteria that align with the vision statement. The three options considered were:
- 1.8.1 Improve and enhance the current operating model
 - 1.8.2 Delegate the transport provision to schools
 - 1.8.3 Implement an Integrated Passenger Transport Unit (IPTU) for transport
- 1.9 From assessing the options against a set of success criteria, the Inquiry recommends 1.8.3, for the City Council to move towards creating an Integrated Passenger Transport Unit (IPTU).
- 1.10 The service is establishing a programme to take the work forward, which includes developing and implementing a new delivery model, which needs to be in place for the start of the new academic year in September 2021.
- 1.11 The degree of change required to create a robust and resilient service will require strong programme management discipline. The inquiry sets out two change approach options and recommends that a new programme is established that is integrated into our transformation portfolio.
- 1.12 This report sets out the City Council's response to the Inquiry and the actions required to address the findings.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:
- 2.1.1 Reinforce the apology to parents / carers and the pupils for the disruptions to their lives and education at the start of term;
 - 2.1.2 Note the Inquiry's findings and recommendations;

- 2.1.3 Note the improvements already made to the service and those planned to build upon this, as set out within this report;
- 2.1.4 Note the recommendations for further improvements as set out in sections 3.11 and the associated governance in section 4.8 that will provide the Interim Chief Executive with confidence that the required changes are being made in line with the agreed timelines;
- 2.1.5 Agree, in principle, to create an Integrated Passenger Transport Unit, subject to the approval of an Outline Business Case (OBC) by the end of the financial year by the Council Leadership Team;
- 2.1.6 Agree that the OBC will set out a new organisational structure which will be consulted upon and implemented during 2021/22 for Home to School Transport, which is aligned to and will support the creation of a wider Integrated Passenger Transport Unit;
- 2.1.7 Agree that the above activity, the SEND programme, associated commissioning activity, Home to School redesign and Integrated Passenger Transport Unit developed are collated into a cohesive programme of activity with appropriate governance controls, management oversight and resources. The Programme Design Document for this to be completed by January 2021, setting out the key implementation milestones, benefits and required consultations with the public, stakeholders, staff and Members
- 2.1.8 Agree that additional resources, are commissioned in the new calendar year to drive forward the improvements needed across Home to School Transport and, given dependencies with assessments, the wider Inclusion, SEND and Wellbeing Portfolio including:
 - 2.1.8.1. A dedicated transformation lead who will take forward the recommendations and the programme of improvements;
 - 2.1.8.2. Continued external resources to ensure the improvements made since September 2020 are maintained and built upon within the context of the wider transformation programme; and
 - 2.1.8.3. Additional external resources to continue a wider SEN transformation programme and deliver and embed the required changes.
- 2.1.9 Note that the programme will report into the Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO) and Interim Chief Executive on a monthly basis to ensure that delivery is maintained at the required pace and improvements are being made for pupils, parents / carers and schools; and
- 2.1.10 Receive an update report back in summer 2021 that provides an position on progress and an assessment of the readiness of the service ahead of the new academic year.

3 Background

- 3.1 The Home to School Transport service failed children and their parents and carers at the start of term in September 2020. There were consistent failings in providing the transport children needed to take them to school, and in responding promptly to enquiries, which exacerbated what was already a stressful time for families. We are very sorry for this.
- 3.2 Regrettably, a number of these failings have been highlighted to the Council previously through feedback from parents, carers and schools as well as through a formal internal audit report in October 2019. The Inquiry report provides the impetus and direction to make the changes that are required to address the historical poor level of service.
- 3.3 Although the service put in place more capacity and some improvements, it had not fully addressed some fundamental issues that would have enabled a more robust planning process in the summer. COVID exacerbated this. It affected and continues to affect the routes and bubbles needed day to day, and the ability of staff and providers to deliver them, as these staff too are affected by health impacts and the need to shield or self-isolate.
- 3.4 As a result of these failings, an independent inquiry was launched at pace, in September 2020 to provide detailed recommendations, setting out what needs to change to improve the service in the medium and long term. The City Council commissioned Ernst Young LLP, an independent organisation with a decade of experience of working with local authorities and transforming council services to undertake this inquiry at pace and report back by the 1st November.
- 3.5 The Inquiry heard feedback from parents and carers, schools, elected members and staff, about what had gone wrong and what the service should do better. The current state assessment that is set out within the Inquiry Report has helpfully drawn out some key areas and pragmatic changes we can focus on to ensure, going forward, our service is responsive, effective and resilience.
- 3.6 The seriousness of the situation meant that we did not wait for the Inquiry to be completed before we took actions to address concerns. At the same time, in late-September 2020, we put in place some remedial measures to improve performance of the service.
- 3.7 However, we need to take on board what has worked well and, coupled with the recommendations of the assessment, build a service that is better equipped to meet the demands and needs of our children safely and effectively.
- 3.8 To achieve this, we recognise we still have strategic and operational gaps, and that small changes to the current delivery model will not be enough to create the sustained improvements required to deliver better quality and outcomes.
- 3.9 Work is underway to explore alternative approaches to make the best use of the skills and capabilities we have, identify what additional resources are needed, and consider how we can deliver a more joined up service across the Council. This

will, essentially, require a new operating model that better meets children's and young people's needs and the needs of their parents and carers.

- 3.10 The design and delivery of a new operating model will require clear and effective leadership. How we approach change, engage on this journey, and hold ourselves accountable for improvement as we move to the new model is critical. This is the start of a different way of working, corporately and with our communities. We have opened a positive dialogue with parents, carers and schools and will continue to work with these important groups, as well as our staff, as we redesign how we do things in the future.

Overview of Improvement Areas

- 3.11 The Inquiry considered a number of areas as part of the current state review and made a number of recommendations against each. These are set out in the table that starts on the next page and set out in further detail in the Inquiry Report available on the council's website.

Theme	Findings	Recommendation	Service Response
Vision and Purpose	The Council's vision for travel assistance is to "ensure every eligible pupil can access safe and efficient services that are reliable and flexible and are appropriate to their needs". This vision is not disseminated down through teams effectively or widely understood. This was evidenced by only 3 stakeholders out of 23 being able to articulate BCC's vision during our interviews.	(1.1) Codesign a new vision with parents and schools that focuses on the pupil and promotes independence.	<p>Work will be undertaken to co-create a new vision, which will be translated into strategic objectives and priorities, and operationalised in a service plan. This will need to reflect the future operational model.</p> <p>An improvement programme has been established, aligned to the Council's programme and project management tools and requirements. An interim service improvement plan has also been created to build upon the first Immediate Fixes Plan, which will support continued improvement.</p>
Customers and Channels	Communication channels consist primarily of phone lines and letters to parent, carers and schools to update on changes to service. There is a lack of an effective communication strategy for both internal and external communications, as well as a documented customer journey. This has led to staff being unclear on the service's approach to communications and the process to follow for escalations.	<p>(2.1) Redesign the needs assessment and support planning engagement approach to focus parents, pupils and schools whilst appropriately managing demand;</p> <p>(2.2) Implement a new approach to communicating changes to route information and real-time updates when routes are delayed or cancelled.</p>	<p>The needs assessment and support planning engagement approach will be redesigned. Data will be collated and analysed to support this; modelling children's needs and service demand.</p> <p>In addition, work will be undertaken to better support independence, including providing more independent travel training. We will review the cost of routes and other travel choices, benchmark costs with other councils, and review the travel choices we offer and the way we procure them as a result.</p> <p>The service currently relies on feedback from others, including parents and carers, operators and schools, about cancelled</p>

Theme	Findings	Recommendation	Service Response
			<p>routes and lateness. COVID has resulted in a significant increase in the number of daily changes that are made.</p> <p>In September, a number of people experienced problems in getting through to us by telephone. We have implemented a new telephone system, Cirrus, which has helped us improve our response times in answering calls.</p> <p>We are also implementing a new IT system, 365, which will provide real time information about which routes have run and what time they arrive. This information will be available to the service, to schools, to providers and to parents and carers, and will be used to more effectively communicate changes.</p>
Service Delivery Model	The daily management of the service is overseen by the Travel Assist Team who, following SEND eligibility approval and any appeals, allocate service users to routes and notify schools. Providers are responsible for routing and the provision of transport. BCC receives monthly performance reports from providers.	<p>(3.1) Clarify roles and accountabilities of the strategic commissioning team;</p> <p>(3.2) Set up a new integrated approach to the provision of transport services;</p> <p>(3.3) Clarify roles and accountabilities of the</p>	<p>The service fully supports the creation of an Integrated Passenger Transport Unit (IPTU), which is a sector recognised model of good practice. If members approve this, we will work alongside other council teams to create this. Roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of commissioning, contract and commercial functions need to be clear and effectively aligned within the new IPTU.</p> <p>Our proposed new structure clarifies the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities</p>

Theme	Findings	Recommendation	Service Response
	<p>Regarding the above, there is no clear, documented service model that staff are working to and therefore staff are unclear on the roles and responsibilities for delivering and managing the service.</p> <p>The service delivery model is highly dependent on the external transport providers and guides. However, there is sub-standard approach to managing the performance of both, and ensuring they are delivering on their contractual obligations.</p>	<p>contract and commercial functions</p> <p>.</p>	<p>within the Travel Assist Team. This proposed new structure is subject to consultation.</p>
People	<p>The Travel Assist team consists of the assistant director, 1 team manager, 3 supervisors, 5 customer advisors and 15 coordinators.</p> <p>Currently 387 permanent guides are employed by BCC, with an additional 200 agency staff added as a result of COVID-19, and 113 relief guides.</p> <p>High staff turnover and use of interims is leading to knowledge</p>	<p>(4.1) Across all functions, review the capacity and capability required and implement plans to increase as required.</p>	<p>The lack of capacity and capabilities is a significant risk to operational effectiveness and improvement. The existing structure is not fit for purpose. It lacks capacity and core capabilities in areas such as contract management, performance management and compliance.</p> <p>A proposed new structure is being developed, which will sit within a wider IPTU, if this operating model is adopted going forward. The proposed new structure requires additional investment.</p>

Theme	Findings	Recommendation	Service Response
	<p>gaps, with no one available to strategically develop a long-term service approach.</p> <p>There is a lack of understanding around skills, knowledge and capability of the staff employed by the service, and associated training being delivered to address any emerging gaps or needs that would assist internal staff and guides in effectively undertaking their roles.</p>		<p>Additional resources are also required in the short to medium term, to support the change programme and to drive efficiencies. A high-level assessment of potential improvements to route management, contract management, improved demand management through supporting greater independence and choice, improved reconciliation and debt recovery, indicate that efficiencies can be made in these areas.</p>
Functional Processes	<p>BCC is responsible for the overall service process relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need assessment and support • Market management and procurement of transport providers • Transport bookings • Supplier contract and performance management • Route mapping is completed by transport providers, who oversee communications around this to customers. 	<p>(5.1) Ensure that there is an overall process map that is designed from the view of a pupil. This should clearly show accountabilities across BCC, schools and suppliers. Challenge / assure the individual process maps.</p> <p>(5.2) Develop detailed process maps for each step of the transport provision including how calls are handled, the transfer to pupils to home / schools and what to do in an emergency, and how the Council can receive assurance on the DBS checks of drivers.</p>	<p>End-to-end process mapping and the leaning of processes to improve efficiency are essential to our improvement journey. Additional change resources are needed to support this, and to collate, cleanse and analyse the supporting data needed for this work.</p>

Theme	Findings	Recommendation	Service Response
	<p>There is no fundamental structure in place around business processes, with no global owners, controls or dependency mapping. This includes team processes, documented processes around NEAT drivers or documented escalation paths.</p> <p>There are no systems in place to implement a consistent procurement strategy across providers.</p>		
IT Infrastructure	<p>There is no overall centralised IT architecture strategy, with legacy systems unable to support business requirements (e.g. performance reporting, real time information sharing with customers).</p> <p>There are manual processes still in use (e.g. timesheets are paper-based, and many route maps are stored on word documents) which hinders effective service delivery and performance management.</p>	(6.1) Implement a route mapping system that allows routes to be effectively planned with suppliers and real-time communications dealt with.	<p>The service has procured an IT system, 365, which will support route mapping, planning with providers, and which provides real time information. This system is currently being implemented. Initial work undertaken has identified that the original business case did not include enough resources to implement the system, particularly given that data quality is poor, and processes need to be reviewed and leaned, so that the benefits of the Council's investment are maximised.</p> <p>Additional IT and digital infrastructure are needed to support service improvement. A review of these requirements is being undertaken to support this. Known existing needs include further Cirrus enhancements to support email, bus pass processing</p>

Theme	Findings	Recommendation	Service Response
			software and mobile phones for guides that connect to the new 365 system, which are being commissioned.
Data and Reporting	<p>BCC issues providers with operational data, which includes addresses, parent / carer contact details, equipment requirements (e.g., harnesses and booster seats) and updated bubble information. There have been multiple issues with missing / incorrect information.</p> <p>The data architecture for the service is not defined and which has led to the data quality and accessibility through current systems being poor. This has hindered the ability to monitor performance and provide real time updates to parents and schools, regarding the completion of journeys for planned routes.</p> <p>There are 7 KPIs regarding the performance of the service (provided through SitRep reports) on a weekly basis. Contractual KPIs are reviewed as part of the annual review process.</p>	<p>(7.1) Implement a database that tracks the needs and support plans of all pupils with SEND, and make sure accurate and timely data is being provided from other services to manage the overall system;</p> <p>(7.2) Implement a new set of PIs and a data management system to effectively manage the delivery of transport and intervene where appropriate quickly</p>	<p>An improved data base and tracker is being put in place, which will be used to track needs and support plans, and to ensure that action is being taken in an efficient and timely manner. A SEND Performance Dashboard has also been put in place to improve performance monitoring and management. This will be reported to the new SEND and Well-being Programme Board, alongside a programme highlight report.</p> <p>A Home to School Transport Performance Dashboard has been put in place to improve performance monitoring and management. This is reported to the Home to School Improvement Programme Board, alongside a programme highlight report.</p> <p>Both the SEND and Well-being programme and the Home to School Transport programme will form part of the Inclusion, SEND and Well-being Portfolio Board, which drives improvement forward, and is chaired by the Assistant Director.</p>

Theme	Findings	Recommendation	Service Response
Governance and Controls	<p>In terms of current governance, there are monthly performance meetings with officers from commissioning, BCC finance, NEAT SLT and Travel Assist.</p> <p>As well as monthly meetings with budget holders, finance reporting is done to Education & Skills DMT, CLT, EMT and Scrutiny Committee and on a quarterly basis to the Council's Cabinet.</p> <p>There is an absence of a robust, tiered governance structure and associated operating and process controls for change management, without appropriate oversight and timely decision making from the programme sponsor / accountable lead.</p> <p>There is a lack of performance management in place for staff, guides and transport providers, with no penalties and fines being issued to the latter as a result of poor performance and in line with contractual remedies.</p>	<p>(8.1) Design effective governance that allows the transport service independence to deliver but also holds them accountable.</p>	<p>Improved governance and controls have been put in place, which reflect the Council's programme and project management tools and requirements. These include a clear governance structure for leading and directing the Inclusion, SEND and Well-being Portfolio and its underpinning Home to School Transport Programme and SEND and Well-being Programme. Portfolio, programme, workstreams and project plans are already in place for much of the activities driven by this, and final documents will be completed by the end of December.</p> <p>A Performance Dashboard has been put in place for Home to School Transport and is being developed for SEND and Well-being. These dashboards report on people and process performance, financial performance and risk. They bring together data from KPIs, service plans and financial reports to provide a visual high-level summary of performance and trends, which is underpinned by comprehensive data.</p>

4 Operating Model Options Considered and Recommended

- 4.1 To the deliver sustainable improvements to the service, consideration was given to implementing a new operating model for the service. The capability and change approach to deliver the required transformation, as well as the programme of activity to ensure this is delivered by start of the next school year in September 2021 were also considered.
- 4.2 This is as much about the way the Council works in providing the service to pupils, and should be viewed as a fundamental transformational change, not simply a reconfiguration of the existing teams.
- 4.3 The Inquiry Report identified three options for an improved or new operating model. The report assessed each of the potential options against a critical success factor framework and future state design principles to ensure alignment of the future state model to our strategic objectives.
- 4.3.1 ***Improve and Enhance the Current Operating Model:*** This option would continue with only the implementation of the immediate fixes plan. The transport provision would continue to run and be delivered in the current format with endeavours to integrate across our services and departments. This is currently going through an immediate fixes programme to ensure the service reaches an adequate standard. However, the Inquiry Report identified systemic root causes that need to be addressed to ensure this service meets the needs and expectations that children, and their parents and carers, expect and deserve. This option will not comprehensively address these systemic root causes and it is recommended that it be rejected.
- 4.3.2 ***Delegate the Transport Provision to Schools:*** We would continue to deliver the eligibility needs assessment and support planning functions. However, the delivery of the transport services, along with the required budgets, will be delegated to schools either in silos or through a shared service. Schools will also need to contract manage providers, monitor performance and undertake risk management related to the service. We will need to remain accountable for delivery and monitor compliance. It is recommended that this option be rejected as, at this point in time, schools do not have the required capability or experience to deliver a transport function. However, any new operating model will need to consider how it improves joint working and collaboration with them to deliver the required outcomes from the service.
- 4.3.3 ***Create a new Integrated Passenger Transport Unit (IPTU) for transport provision:*** IPTUs bring key transport functions, such as transport for adults and children, community transport and fleet, together in one place and more closely integrate commissioning, procurement and delivery functions. They are models of good practice and, typically, an IPTU will have strong commissioning and delivery plans, KPIs, unit cost data and clear performance management arrangements. This option is recommended as the most viable option for delivering the service going forwards. It would make the best use of existing

council fleet assets, and provide much needed knowledge, skills and capability to deliver a fit for purpose transport service. Delivery of this would more than likely sit outside of the E&S Department and careful consideration should be given to ensuring a continued alignment with SEND operational services, to ensure the provision of transport best meets the needs (and strengths) of children and promotes their independence, thus better equipping them for adulthood.

- 4.4 A proposed new structure has been developed for Home to School Transport to increase capacity and capability in the operational team to deliver a safe, reliable and effective service. This structure will be aligned to and support the creation of an Integrated Passenger Transport Unit. The introduction of a new structure is subject to funding approval and consultation.

Successfully Making the Changes

- 4.5 Delivering the type and scale of change required will need investment and focus across the City Council. The service has identified that they do not currently have sufficient capacity and capabilities to deliver the change. Insufficient resources are a high programme risk.
- 4.6 We have therefore decided to create a separate programme that will focus on transforming the SEND service over the next 12-months. By January 2020, there will be a programme definition document that will clearly set out the milestones and actions that we will take to implement and embed the changes and deliver an improved service for pupils. The table below summarises those recommendations that will be delivered through the current focus of the “Immediate Fixes” and those that will be part of the longer-term transformation and solution.

Operating Model Component	Recommendation	Immediate Fixes	Long Term Solution
Vision and Purpose	1.1 Codesign a new vision with parents and schools that focuses on the pupil and promotes independence		✓
Customers and Channels	2.1 Redesign the needs assessment and support planning engagement approach to focus parents, pupils and schools whilst appropriately managing demand		✓
	2.2 Implement a new approach to communicating changes to route information and real-time updates when routes are delayed or cancelled		✓
Service Delivery Model	3.1 Clarify roles and accountabilities of the strategic commissioning team	✓	
	3.2 Set up a new integrated approach to the provision of transport services		✓
	3.3 Clarify roles and accountabilities of the contract and commercial functions	✓	

People	4.1 Across all functions review the capacity and capability required and implement plans to increase as required	✓	
Functional Processes	5.1 Ensure that there is an overall process map that is designed from the view of a pupil. This should clearly show accountabilities across BCC, schools and suppliers. Challenge / assure the individual process maps (see below)		✓
	5.2 Develop detailed process maps for each step of the transport provision including how calls are handled, the transfer to pupils to home / schools and what to do in an emergency, and how the Council can receive assurance on the DBS checks of drivers	✓	✓
IT Infrastructure	6.1 Implement a route mapping system that allows routes to be effectively planned with suppliers and real-time communications dealt with (e.g., where is my bus?)	✓	
Data and Reporting	7.1 Implement a database that tracks the needs and support plans of all pupils with SEND, and make sure accurate and timely data is being provided from other services to manage the overall system	✓	
	7.2 Implement a new set of PIs and a data management system to effectively manage the delivery of transport and intervene where appropriate quickly		✓
Governance and Controls	8.1 Design effective governance that allows the transport service independence to deliver but also holds them accountable		✓

- 4.7 The delivery of the programme set out in the programme definition, will be led by a dedicated lead who would take forward the recommendations and the programme of improvements. This individual will be held accountable for continuing the initial improvements made since September and implementing and embedding the changes set out in this report.
- 4.8 Continued resources will be required to work alongside the dedicated lead, and to ensure the improvements made since September are maintained and built upon, within the context of the wider transformation programme. This is important to ensure that the level of service continues to improve, and that the data and information is collated to manage this and put in any corrective actions required.
- 4.9 Finally, additional resources will need to be commissioned to continue the wider SEND transformation programme and deliver and embed the required changes.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 As the plans for the service are developed, formal consultation and engagement will be undertaken including Parents, Carers and Schools.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 The programme will be overseen by the Corporate Programme Management Office (CPMO), which will receive regular updates and provide challenge to keep the programme on track. This will include managing the delivery of the benefits and especially whether the changes are being translated into improvements for pupils, parents / carers and schools. The Interim Chief Executive will continue to provide direct oversight and leadership to the programme through this framework and will provide cabinet, the leader and the portfolio holder with regular updates.

7 Compliance Issues

- 7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?
 - 7.1.1 The proposals within the policy support the delivery of the Council Priority "Birmingham is an entrepreneurial city to learn, work and invest in" as set out in the Birmingham City Council Plan 2018 – 2022.
- 7.2 Legal Implications
 - 7.2.1 The recommendations and improvements detailed in this report will ensure that the provision of home to school transport is delivered in accordance with the relevant statutory framework contained in the Education Act 1996, and the associated statutory guidance
- 7.3 Financial Implications
 - 7.3.1 The cost of the EY Review was funded from within existing budgets.
 - 7.3.2 It is anticipated that the cost of the changes will be funded from within existing budgets or will be a call upon the City Council's policy contingency fund. Further details will be set out within the programme documents and will be reported to Cabinet within periodic corporate budget monitoring statements.
- 7.4 Procurement Implications (if required)
 - 7.4.1 Not required. Procurement implications will be considered as the design of the new service is developed.
- 7.5 Human Resources Implications (if required)
 - 7.5.1 Refer to 2.1.8. Human Resource implications will be considered as the design of the new service is developed.
- 7.6 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 7.6.1 An initial equality assessment relating to the proposed changes to how the Travel Assist service will be delivered has been prepared. A full equality impact assessment full will be completed that considers the impact on all protected characteristics including all staff and service users who are part of the protected characteristics cohort once the detailed planning commences.
- 7.6.2 No specific issues have been identified that would adversely impact on our commitment to our duties under the Equality Act 2010. We will undertake a full assessment under the Equality Act 2010 as the plans for the redesign of the service are developed.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 No appendices

9 Background Documents

- 9.1 [Home to School Transport Inquiry](#)