

Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
19th May 2021

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to update Committee on progress in improving the Home to School Transport service, further to the Committee meeting on 6th January, when the Committee discussed the Call-In on Improving Home to School Transport, and to the Executive Response to Call-In provided on 11th January. Specifically, this report provides an update on:

- Implementation of the Immediate Fixes Plan, which was put in place to address key concerns;
- Current levels of performance in key areas including safeguarding, delivering the number of routes needed, transporting the number of children who need to travel, dealing with telephone calls and dealing with complaints;
- Progress in delivering the current service improvement plan priorities for: communication and engagement; safety and safeguarding; policy, and; developing an outline business case for an Integrated Transport Unit.
- How the service is engaging and co-designing services with stakeholders including parents, carers and schools, and working with the Parent Carer Forum and;
- Existing challenges, issues and risks that the service is working to address.

2. Introduction

2.1 Since the publication of the Review of SEND Home to School Transport in November 2020, the Service has worked to implement a wide range of improvements in relation to the delivery of Home to School transport. A number of improvements were made as part of the Immediate Fixes Plan, which was put in place to address key concerns and take forward recommendations from the independent enquiry. However, the nature and complexity of some issues identified within the service means that some improvements are being delivered over a longer timeframe. Both immediate and long-term improvements are reported below as part of this progress update and are presented for discussion.

2.2 The independent inquiry of SEND Home to School Transport was an independent, external enquiry commissioned by the then Chief Executive, following repeated concerns expressed by parents, schools and councillors, and valuable work undertaken by the Education and Children's Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee to comprehensively understand the service's failings and the impact this had on children and young people and their families.

2.3 Good deal of progress has been made since the independent inquiry was published in November 2020. An improvement project was quickly established, reporting to the Chief Executive, a new and experienced Service Manager has been recruited and an

Interim Education and Skills Transformation Director has now been recruited to oversee the project and support the service's leaders to drive forward the change.

- 2.4 A monthly Task and Finish Group chaired by the Leader of the Council has also been established, which brings together key stakeholders including parent and school representatives and SENDIASS to discuss progress in an open forum. Performance data is reviewed and attendees hold Officers to account for progress against key actions and are offered the chance to shape work as it is developed, e.g., this group contributed to the newly developed FAQ document that will be published by the end of May. A document encapsulating Vision and Strategic Priorities for the Service have also been discussed and agreed by this group and this is attached at Appendix A.

3. Immediate Fixes Plan

An Immediate Fixes Plan was put in place to address key concerns raised in the report and take forward those recommendations that needed to be addressed urgently. This plan has been successfully implemented and is attached at Appendix B.

4. Current Levels of Performance – Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Performance data has been improved and KPIs are measured, monitored and managed weekly by the Head of Service. KPIs are also reported weekly to the Assistant Director, Inclusion, SEND and Wellbeing through a SitRep Report. In addition, performance in delivering core KPIs is reported to the monthly Leaders Home to School Task and Finish Group where robust conversations about progress against KPIs are held.

Performance in delivering service KPIs as of 7 May, is set out at Appendix C.

5. Performance in Delivering Current Service Improvement Plan Priorities

A Service Improvement Plan was put in place to continue the service's improvement journey once the Immediate Fixes Plan had been delivered. Performance in delivering the plan is monitored at monthly Management Team meetings, in supervision and performance reviews that are regularly held with staff, and at Home to School Project Board meetings, where the improvement impacts upon project deliverables. An update is provided below on progress in delivering improvements in:

- Communication
- Safety
- Safeguarding Risk
- Reliability – impact on parents, families and schools
- Policy, Assessments and Appeals
- Parent Carer Forum, Parent Engagement and Co-Production
- Integrated Passenger Transport Unit
- Project Oversight and Planning

6. Progress Update: Communication

- 6.1 As the review identified, communication has been a major issue for a long period of time. Parents repeatedly raised the frustration they experienced on an ongoing basis in contacting the service including phones and emails not being answered. This is obviously especially stressful for parents with vulnerable children who need to be assured of their safety at all times.
- 6.2 The Service has identified improving communication as a key priority and Managers are working with all members of staff to embed an open and responsive culture. Responsiveness is monitored on a regular basis, with weekly meetings held where performance data is monitored for telephone calls and any issues are discussed and resolved. In line with Birmingham City Council Service standards, the service aims to answer 90% of calls within a reasonable time. In April, the average response across the month was 87% with some weeks falling short of the desired service level. Data therefore shows that there is still more work to do and this is a key area of focus for the Service. Potential ways to improve responsiveness are being explored currently.
- 6.3 The Service has committed to rolling out an IT solution - 365 Response - which has the capability to provide real time information to parents (and schools) on the location of their child's transport. This would be a national first in rolling out a Home to School transport system which links multiple service providers in a real time information scenario.
- 6.4 It is important to ensure that this launch is successful. The project is currently in an extended pilot phase and a review of the pilot is due to take place shortly so that Officers are able to learn from this before rolling out more widely. The Council is very keen to have 365 operational to form an integral part of its longer term improvements for home to school transport.
- 6.5 A key success driver for real time information is the full engagement of every operator so that all operator staff are fully compliant. The Council has therefore amended its terms and conditions to require all operators to be compliant with the system and have the appropriate ICT kit to facilitate this. These changes to terms and conditions are due to take effect from the start of the 2021/22 academic year.
- 6.6 It is likely that the pilot will be extended to recognise that changes to the terms and conditions of contract with contractors need to take effect to enable the most robust test of the system. It is essential that the system is thoroughly tested prior to rollout and project managers are reviewing timescales, with the likelihood that rollout will be phased over the autumn of 2021. Communication with parents about this will be prioritised from the start of term so they are clear what to expect.
- 6.7 In terms of more immediate fixes relating to call answering, the Service has reviewed the structure of its operational team on an interim basis to allow the team to flex staff

resources to respond to increased call and email volumes. Additional staffing resource has also been invested in this area on a temporary basis.

- 6.8 The Service has transferred to the Cirrus system, allowing calls waiting to be monitored to allow staff resources to be flexed accordingly, and providing management information to support the performance in this area. For example, call volumes increase on Mondays and following a school holiday so the service now ensures there is additional staff capacity on these days.
- 6.9 The Service is also reviewing the root cause of increased call volumes to allow a more proactive approach. For example, when correspondence is sent to a group of parents, a well written letter should provide sufficient information to answer most queries without the need for a follow-on phone call or email. Parents will soon also be able to access a Frequently Asked Questions document available through the Local Offer which should also help reduce phone traffic.
- 6.10 In addition, the SEND Service has recruited a Communications Lead who is supporting on more proactive regular communications with families and schools. Letters to be sent to families are now coordinated across Home to School Transport and SENAR to ensure messages are clear and consistent. This should also reduce phone traffic.
- 6.11 This overall review of Communications will lead to a Communications relaunch at the start of the new academic year. As part of this launch, families and schools will be provided with flowcharts demonstrating the communications strategy, clearly showing how the Council will communicate with families and the routes families and schools can use to feedback on any issues.
- 6.12 Complaints are regularly reviewed to ascertain both the number of complaints and also what complaints are covering so that the Service can learn from this. Information on numbers of complaints is included within the report at Appendix C. The Council is also launching a new complaints process and as part of this, teams will receive training in identifying all complaints so that everyone goes through the revised complaints procedure (including those issues which may be quickly resolved as routine business). This will allow scrutiny of the reasons for complaints and whilst initially this may capture more complaints, over time should lead to a reduction in complaints as repeat issues can be identified and dealt with.

7. Progress Update: Safety

- 7.1 Suitability and safety of vehicles: A compliance team was established in the Autumn of 2020, which has a well-established programme of checks and audits on operators providing home to school transport on behalf of the City Council. In addition, the Council has commissioned an external contractor to provide additional mechanical checks on the Council's behalf. Three contract managers have also recently been recruited to work alongside colleagues in Commissioning to provide robust contract management.

- 7.2 Suspension of service due to a child's behaviour whilst travelling: A number of improvements are being rolled out in relation to this area starting with working with schools to identify any risks in relation to pupil groupings proposed for home to school transport. In addition, the schools have been involved with providing any additional needs-based information prior to routes going out to tender ready for a September 2021 start date.
- 7.3 A risk assessment team is being recruited (with a Risk Assessment Lead already in post) to allow potential risks around behaviour and strategies to deal with these behavioural issues to be captured in advance of routes starting.
- 7.4 Whilst in some cases, there may remain a need to suspend transport for safety purposes, the occasions are limited, and the time taken to update risk assessments is quicker.
- 7.5 Suitability of guides and drivers: The rollout of the Passenger Assistant Training Scheme (PATS) ensures Guides are trained to a national standard in their field. This includes some training on managing health issues on transport. As at the start of May 2021, 247 Pupil Guides have successfully completed PATS training.
- 7.6 The Service has also liaised with special schools to develop needs specific training in relation to the pupils at their school and this is intended to be rolled out at the start of the academic year.
- 7.7 Other training including emergency aid and epilepsy training is also being explored to be rolled out across a similar timescale. Guides are provided in some cases now by service providers as well as by the Council. In these cases, the advantage is that the service is less likely to be interrupted by Guide shortages. The same training is provided to guides whether they are employed by BCC or a transport provider.
- 7.8 The Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) has a clear expectation on the providers that all members of their staff working on transport (including drivers) are trained and monitored to a high standard. The expectation of the drivers is in line with what is being required by the service and the policy. Additional guide capacity has also been put in place to increase capacity for covering sickness absence.

8. Progress Update: Safeguarding

- 8.1 In the previous Scrutiny report, it was noted that 'There is an extra vulnerability for children who are not in education'. In order to ensure home to school transport for eligible pupils is not a barrier to pupils remaining in education, the Service liaises with special schools on a daily and weekly basis to understand any lost hours of education due to transport and take the appropriate action. This has included contract management action with operators and contingency transport resource if required.

- 8.2 As at 5th May 2021, all stage 2 appeals were up to date following improvements to management reporting of outstanding appeals.
- 8.3 Safeguarding concerns are recorded as part of weekly management information – as at 5th May 2021, there were 2 safeguarding concerns recorded and these are being investigated and appropriate action being taken.
- 8.4 As well as the training improvements already referenced in this report, management information in relation to Driver and DBS checks is included in weekly situation reports on the service's overall operation. There is a revised process in place involving a HR led DBS weekly panel to review any more complex cases, and this has required a deed of variation with the Council's Legal team providing the relevant support. This management information provides reassurance on DBS checks being in place for all staff transporting pupils on home to school transport.
- 8.5 Subcontracting of the service is only permitted once approved by the Council and the appointment of the enhanced contract management team is intended to strengthen this review.
- 8.6 A Safeguarding Stocktake is taking place on 13th May 2021 with key members of staff who will take an overview of all processes to provide additional assurance that all processes are watertight.

9. Progress Update: Transport reliability and the impact on families

- 9.1 Whilst 365 Response is not fully rolled out, routes are currently reviewed daily to identify any issues and get to the root of those issues to prevent repetition. Where a route is operating at ten minutes either side of its scheduled school drop off time, it is recorded as 'on time'. Feedback from transport operators is triangulated with schools and parent information to identify and challenge any discrepancies. As a result, improvements have meant since 8th March that between 97 and 100% of routes are operating, and 'on time' as classified under the definition above.
- 9.2 The re-opening of schools following the second lockdown was a key test for the Home to School Transport Service which needed to mobilise an additional ten routes in order for this to happen successfully. The service also tendered for up to 30 contingency vehicles that could be used if there were problems with any of the routes. 12 of these were utilised. Except for issues with NEAT routes on Monday 8th March all routes ran effectively with these routes being covered with the contingency vehicles.
- 9.3 The recruitment of a contract management team currently underway, will reinforce what needs to be continuous review and improvement in this area.

10. Progress Update: Parent Carer Forum, Parental Engagement and Co-Production

- 10.1 The Head of Service for Home to School Transport has worked closely with the Parent Carer Forum to engage them in specific areas and their input has been much

appreciated by Home to School Transport. A co-produced 'Frequently Asked Questions' document is due to be published for parents and the Head of Service will continue to attend regular meetings with the Parent Carer Forum and other professionals. The Parent Carer Forum also attend the regular monthly Task and Finish Group chaired by the Leader of the Council where progress is examined.

- 10.2 A Parent Engagement Event chaired by the Leader of the Council is planned for next half term when parents will be given the opportunity to comment on service improvements and to hear about plans for next year and how this will impact on them.
- 10.3 The Education and Skills Transformation Director is working closely with the Parent Carer Forum to support them with recruitment to two key roles that will provide more capacity and enable the PCF to promote the Forum more widely and attract greater membership. Interviews are taking place next week for a Co-Production Officer and discussions are underway to support the recruitment of an Administrative Officer.

11. Integrated Passenger Transport Unit

- 11.1 The independent inquiry of SEND Home to School Transport recommended that the Council should consider implementing an Integrated Transport Unit (ITU). An Integrated Transport Unit is a service where different transport functions are brought together from across an organisation, or brought together from multiple organisations, and integrated to improve outcomes, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 11.2 ITUs can bring significant benefits, most importantly improved outcomes and more efficient, accessible and easy to navigate services for the people they serve and their families.
- 11.3 A project has been initiated to develop an outline business case for an Integrated Transport Unit, which will provide the basis on which a decision can be taken whether this is the preferred way forward and how this could operate. This project brings together Officers from across the council and is being overseen by Rob James, Director, Neighbourhoods.
- 11.4 Co-design is being built into this from the beginning and the Leader's Home to School Task and Finish Group has already taken part in a discussion about the scope of the project, the benefits that it should deliver and the risks that need to be managed. As a result of this co-design, the scope and timescales of the project are being reviewed and, subject to this detailed review, it is anticipated that the outline business case will be completed by September and will then be considered by the Executive.

12. Progress Update: Policy, Assessments and Appeals

12.1 Members had previously raised the issue that although the Travel Assistance Policy for 0-25 year olds in education policy was consulted on, it was felt it was not amended to adequately reflect feedback from the consultation. This included concerns about having a single policy for children with SEND and for those attending mainstream schools without SEND. Concerns were also raised about the way in which personal transport budgets had previously been used and the impact of transporting pupils in multiple vehicles rather than one single vehicle.

There were also concerns about the design of drop off points (sometimes passing pupil's actual addresses and how parents could more easily gain access to reasonable adjustments.

12.2 In order to review the concerns raised around policy, there is a need for a comprehensive review of the existing policy and any revisions would need to be subject to public consultation. To do this, it is planned to start such a process at the earliest, towards the end of 2021 as there would need to be adequate capacity to carry out this exercise effectively. This was discussed at the Task and Finish Group who agreed this approach. The Parent Engagement event planned for the Summer Term will also offer parents the opportunity to raise any ongoing concerns related to the Policy and/or its application.

12.3 An Eligibility Review Manager has also been agreed to be appointed to on an interim basis immediately both to review the overall eligibility and appeals process including timescales, resources and the suitability of the transport offer. As part of this, this will include the process by which families would be able to raise concerns should they be worried that the transport offered would not suitably meet their child's needs.

12.4 The Eligibility Review Manager will be tasked with redesigning and implementing a process whereby needs of the pupil will be considered at the earliest stage, allowing pupils who are likely to be eligible to have this confirmed without needing to go through an appeals process, with the appeals process being used for those cases only where sufficient evidence has not been available to take that decision, where families wish to challenge whether the policy has been applied correctly or where there are exceptional cases to consider.

12.5 A Mobilisation and Risk Assessment function is also in the process of being created within the service to look at all factors prior to the start of new routes for September. This would include appropriate pick up points.

13. Progress Update: Project Oversight

13.1 Following the Home to School Transport Review, a formal project was put in place to deliver the necessary short and medium-term fixes. This project has a formal reporting structure and a Project Board that meets weekly and oversees performance against Key Performance Indicators. An Interim Education and Skills Transformation Director was appointed in March 2021 to oversee successful delivery of improvements in this area. A monthly Programme Board has been chaired by the Chief Executive but

will now be chaired by the Transformation Director and will ensure delivery is on track. Regular oversight is also provided by the Task and Finish Group who regularly see and discuss performance metrics.

- 13.2 The current focus is on ensuring everything is in train to ensure a successful return to school in September. All risks are being closely monitored and escalated as appropriate with the absolute priority being that a reliable, safe, high-quality service is provided for all children.

14. Key Challenges

- 14.1 As stated previously this is a complex area of work for which there have been a combination of immediate improvements as well as improvement which are being delivered over a longer period. The issues that present have manifested over many years and whilst there are a large number of immediate fixes, other improvements and the establishment of skillsets to embed continuous improvement will take longer to embed.
- 14.2 Staff capacity has been a challenge and additional capacity has therefore been agreed on a temporary basis to continue to roll out service improvements between now and Autumn 2021 to ensure standards remain consistent and continue to improve. Additional permanent capacity will be required to sustain those improvements and this will be reflected in a permanent structure to be proposed beyond this period.
- 14.3 The impact of the Clean Air Zone will undoubtedly bring significant benefits to the health of the city's residents. Whilst the CAZ is being rolled out, there is a risk of traffic displacement impacting on journey times, and this also impacting at the start of September. As a result, operators will be looking at route times through trialling a dry run at the start of the scheme, starting routes early and communicating daily with the Council on any issues. In addition, parents will be receiving communications advising of the actions the Council is taking to monitor the impact. Plans are in place to ensure that parents, providers and schools are all prepared for potential impact and the Service has put in place all possible mitigations. A review of the impact of the CAZ on Home to School Transport will be conducted at the end of June.
- 14.4 The COVID Pandemic has obviously brought a new level of challenge in providing a safe service for children. Increased spend has been incurred due to the need to make transport 'Covid safe' and provide extra capacity where required due to staff absence. Officers have prioritised the safety of children during this period and taken all possible measures to ensure that travel is as COVID safe as possible. Routes have been increased from c600 to c900 to ensure bubbles and social distancing can be maintained, as well as employing contingency operators.
- 14.5 COVID funding – The Council has been in receipt of additional funding from the Department for Education (DfE) confirmed on a half term basis since September 2020. It is likely that this funding will end between June and September 2021 leading to a

potentially significant reduction of routes. A project has been set up to manage this transition and to communicate any changes in good time to operators and families. Retendering of routes – Around 40% of existing routes are provided by National Express Accessible Transport and all are out to tender this year. This is a large-scale project and is being overseen by the Assistant Director of Commissioning with regular reporting arrangements in place to ensure the project is on track. Any changes of operator will need careful planning and communicating to pupils and families. A mobilisation team has been set up to carry out this work.

- 14.6 Guide capacity – Guide capacity continues to be a challenge due to staff needing to self-isolate and agency staff have been put in place to support. A deed of variation has been enacted to increase supply via the Transport providers and continued support from agencies is available as required.
- 14.7 Issues with the Transition process this year have meant that a small number of pupils have still not had places confirmed for September 2021 or, in some cases, places have been confirmed but confirmation letters were delayed. This has a knock-on impact on Home to School Transport as staff cannot begin to put in place plans for travel arrangements until placements are confirmed and parents have been notified and requested travel. The risk of this impacting on a successful start to the Autumn Term is being managed as closely as possible and Home to School Transport Service is working closely with SENAR to address any issues and find solutions.

15. Key Priorities for the Next Six Months

- 15.1 Monitoring of the Service/Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – KPIs will continue to be monitored and delivered to identify the overall performance of the service.
- 15.2 Situation reporting will continue to monitor the operational performance on a weekly basis, as well as daily contact with operators to be able to deal with any issues at the earliest point. This will continue to include feedback from schools. An example of a recent report is attached at Appendix B for members to view and data from this is referred to throughout this report.
- 15.3 Schools have been briefed on the plan for recommissioning of routes for September and will be invited to be involved in evaluation of bids from potential suppliers (with particular focus on quality). Schools will also play a key role in managing any risk areas surrounding pupil groupings of these new routes and will be involved in route planning.
- 15.4 365 Response pilot will extend to allow terms and conditions changes to take effect, with a view to rolling out the system following robust testing, on a phased approach towards the end of 2021.
- 15.5 The contract management and compliance function will continue to work closely with operators to monitor quality and performance of routes.

15.6 The service will continue to work closely with the Parent Carer Forum through regular meetings to update and where possible work jointly on specific areas of work, as jointly agreed.

Background Reports:

Executive Response to Call In - Improving Home to School Transport. Executive Committee.
11th January 2021.

Home to School Vision and strategic priorities

Our vision: Safe, reliable travel options for eligible children and young people to arrive at school ready to learn



For Children and Young people

- A safe, reliable service for eligible children and young people 0-25 which is designed with the child/young person at its centre and promotes independence



In our city

- All partners; the council, guides, schools, operators and children and families, act with empathy, dignity and respect.



How we will work

- As a council we aim to deliver a quality service by building trust and effectiveness with our partners, which is underpinned by getting the foundations right
- As a council we are accountable for our actions and understand the importance of communication and understanding the child's need
- As a council we will ensure our policy, process, guidance and tools are clear for all those working with (and in) the service
- Staff are empowered and supported to ensure a safe, compliant, ethical service is delivered and there is a continuous learning environment

Eligible under the councils published transport policy

Immediate Fixes Plan – Safeguarding (1 of 2)

Improvement Measure	Immediate Fix	Progress Update	Progress
Safeguarding			
<p>A competent, capable, confident and well managed workforce:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides have the skills, capabilities and confidence to undertake their role effectively and in accordance with policies, procedures and processes • Guides are supported and effectively managed 	<p>Ensure a clear competency framework is in place for Guides, which is used to assess performance and identify training needs</p> <p>Ensure Guides are aware of BCC policies and procedures, including safeguarding, and key contact numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance and training • Provide an accessible user guide with key phone numbers to all Guides, which they can keep on their person – digitally or in hard copy <p>Recruitment - increase capacity of workforce to reduce reliance on agency guides through working with providers and utilising resource, alongside recruiting a guide on 'retainer/ call' as floating to manage absence and cancellations</p>	<p>Identified working group to commence work on the framework and pull together all other key tasks linked to guides, skills, support and competencies.</p> <p>Safeguarding guidance has been re-issued. Alongside all key guidance, updates and key phone numbers - link to Cirrus system.</p> <p>ACTION: Tracking to be undertaken regarding training completion so that those outstanding can be addressed. Longer Term Action - Create and issue user guide that brings all documents together in one easily accessible place</p>	COMPLETE
	<p>Member of compliance to be recruited and trained in order to roll out nationally recognised training programme for all Guides (PATS), which reflects the BCC competency framework</p>	<p>COMPLETE Due to commence in post from 05/10/20 Compliance Officer started 06/10/20 and is booked on Trainer course for 27-29/10/20 2 more in post from week commencing 26/10</p> <p>Note – training will be rolled out by the end of December</p>	
<p>Children and young people are transported to and from their setting safely</p>	<p>Ensure mobile phones are available and in use for Guides:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guides to use own mobile phones and service to keep an accessible database of these numbers 	<p>COMPLETE Comprehensive list in place. Measures being identified for those without mobile. Full list</p> <p>Procedure drafted regarding appropriate use of mobile phones. circulated</p>	COMPLETE
	<p>Cirrus implementation to provide solution for sickness management, arising HR matters and emergency contact for guides</p>	<p>COMPLETE - Roll out of cirrus week commencing 05/10/20 - completed Wednesday 7/10/20</p> <p>Longer Term - this links to 365 and distribution of suitable android phones to all guides as part of system implementation</p>	COMPLETE
	<p>Ensure Guides are aware of BCC policies and procedures, including safeguarding, and key contact numbers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide guidance and training • Provide an accessible user guide with key phone numbers to all Guides, which they can keep on their person – digitally or in hard copy 	<p>COMPLETE Mechanisms in place to share updates currently with guides. User guide to be developed in more detail as part of working group activity identified above in relation to framework. Cirrus system in place and procedures clear.</p>	COMPLETE

Immediate Fixes Plan – Safeguarding (2 of 2)

Improvement Measure	Immediate Fix	Progress Update	Progress
Safeguarding			
Children and young people are transported to and from their setting safely	Review of existing handover procedures with each special school	<p>COMPLETE Request made via weekly head teachers' meetings to gather procedures and undertake desk top review. All Special School received a Compliance Visit.</p> <p>Ongoing - Issues to be addressed by on-going risk-based compliance visits. To be drafted into revised risk assessment process.</p>	COMPLETE
	Scope, develop and implement passenger ID laminated sheets for all routes/ children with additional needs to be held by the guides	<p>UPDATE - business case developed inclusive of options to AD for student lanyards and colour coding of routes. Health and safety issues highlighted re safeguarding and COVID (detailed information on vulnerable children and Guides need to handle ID badges in order to see them). Alternative options being considered linked to Mobile Phones for Guides and digital information - linked to 365</p>	ONGOING
	Improve wayfinding for students by ensuring school name is clearly visible on vehicles	<p>COMPLETE Communication to be circulated to all providers requesting improved signage on vehicles</p> <p>Ongoing - Compliance officers to monitor as part of route/ site checks</p>	COMPLETE
Robust Contract management and compliance is in place that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effectively tracks and records information relating to safeguarding and DBS checks provides data analysis manages and mitigates against risk is coordinated and comprehensive 	Establish a risk-based approach to ongoing safeguarding compliance checks that allows for targeted monitoring	Scheduled programme of work that is flexible and allows for responsive, targeted checks	COMPLETE
	Undertake compliance visits to all Special Schools.	<p>COMPLETE - schedule of visits in place to ensure all Special schools have received a compliance visit by the end of the month Note – longer term full programme to be completed whereby service will undertake compliance audits of all provider DBS checks</p>	COMPLETE
Increased capacity and resource that is effectively managing safeguarding incident investigations and concerns in a timely manner	Source additional call off capacity to undertake safeguarding investigations	COMPLETE	COMPLETE

Immediate Fixes Plan – Service Delivery (1 of 4)

Improvement Measure	Immediate Fix	Progress Update	Progress
Service Delivery			
<p>A responsive service to customer and stakeholder communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communications- emails and call handling • Reduction in complaints • Reduction in call demand • Reduction in duplication • Coordinated communications <p>An appropriately resourced service that is able to manage demand and supports staff wellbeing</p>	<p>Improved telephone and email responsiveness through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring 6 phone lines are fully staffed • Emails are managed in a timely manner and duplication reduced 	<p>COMPLETE</p> <p>Additional steps/ actions:</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
		<p>Workload of existing staff has been reprioritised. staff to collate number of calls and reason.</p> <p>COMPLETE - Cirrus system in place to support monitoring</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
		<p>Additional staffing capacity requirements being identified to source temporary capacity to manage service demand and pressures</p> <p>COMPLETE Immediate capacity requirements identified - 4FTE. Once cirrus system embedded and applications for transport and bus passes being processed more timely, further capacity demand will be better understood and sought if required.</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
		<p>COMPLETE Additional business support capacity was provided to cross reference email enquiries and respond to generic enquiries.</p> <p>Additional capacity provided by new interim AD support role. Business support requirements being scoped to provide longer-term capacity.</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
		<p>COMPLETE Team email inbox analysis undertaken to understand nature of enquiry type – establish level of enquiries and complaints</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
		<p>COMPLETE Additional interim capacity recruited to.</p> <p>Delays in the provision of laptops and connectivity continue to be challenges</p> <p>Capacity and performance issues ongoing to deliver core service and also deal with a continuing high volume of information requests from service users and Members (many of which are asking the same questions of different people and/or multiple times).</p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>

Immediate Fixes Plan – Service Delivery (2 of 4)

Improvement Measure	Immediate Fix	Progress Update	Progress
Service Delivery			
<p>A responsive service to customer and stakeholder communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved communications- emails and call handling • Reduction in complaints • Reduction in call demand • Reduction in duplication • Coordinated communications <p>An appropriately resourced service that is able to manage demand and supports staff wellbeing</p>	<p>Cirrus to be introduced to ensure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved telephony, • Call handling • responsiveness • staff performance management • capacity and demand • effective resource management 	<p>COMPLETE: Testing and configuration completed; Training Completed; Go Live achieved as planned on 8 October. Detailed report commissioned and provided on 30/10/20 to investigate root causes of some performance issues, e.g., queue times and data quality issues re reporting percentages (which have had to be investigated and manually recalculated in recent days)</p>	COMPLETE
	<p>Increase Staff Capacity: Scope demand across telephony and other BAU activities and identify additional resource requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary/interim resources to provide a rapid response • Implications for future structure 	<p>Collation of call demand to be completed across a short period alongside business as usual duties – COMPLETE</p>	COMPLETE
	<p>Identify additional resource requirements to support data collation, analysis and project management activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary/interim resources to provide a rapid response • Implications for future structure 	<p>COMPLETE</p> <p>Delays in the provision of laptops and connectivity continue to be challenges</p> <p>Additional requirements scoped and provided until mid January 2021.</p> <p>However, resources need to be extended/secured from January – end March 2021. Need to be progressed through procurement and interim solutions.</p>	COMPLETE

Immediate Fixes Plan – Service Delivery (3 of 4)

Improvement Measure	Immediate Fix	Progress Update	Progress
Service Delivery			
Robust, effective contract management and compliance functions in place	Ensure collation of timely information daily and address arising provider issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone providers each day to collect data, determine performance and understand impacts • Ensure information regarding cancelled routes due to COVID 19 are submitted timely to 	Ensure receipt of Monthly MI returns due 15th of each month - completed but needs additional QA/assurance by programme. Approach being agreed and to be implemented in next plan period	COMPLETE
	Establish effective contract management arrangements:	COMPLETE Data submission and monitoring – daily (COMPLETE/ happening daily)	COMPLETE
	· Daily monitoring calls to providers (above)	COMPLETE – ongoing daily calls	COMPLETE
	· Compliance checks undertaken in line with a risk-based schedule	UPDATE - COMPLETE Current compliance checks being undertaken based on priority and any arising risks identified/ reported	COMPLETE
	· Weekly meetings with Heads of Special Schools to discuss COVID and transport performance	COMPLETE – attended by N Jones	COMPLETE
	· Monthly contract meetings with providers to manage contract performance	Meetings scheduled.	COMPLETE
	Improve evidence gathered and data validated to ensure penalty action taken and payments adjusted	Contractor meetings and evidence gathering improved but needs further improvement. Contract Manager, who is responsible for procurement and for contract is part of the Commissioning Team, reporting to another AD. Programme meetings with AD (Nigel) established to ensure interdependencies mapped and managed.	ONGOING

Immediate Fixes Plan – Service Delivery (4 of 4)

Improvement Measure	Immediate Fix	Progress Update	Progress
Service Delivery			
Robust, effective contract management and compliance functions in place	Appoint interim compliance officer to undertake site visits	<p>COMPLETE</p> <p>A further role of Compliance Officer (DBS) was identified and approved in December and will be recruited to over the next few weeks.</p>	COMPLETE
	Recommission routes at high risk of service failure	<p>Phase 1 – DPS call off procurement activity undertaken for 20 routes. Evaluation 23/09/20</p> <p>Mobilisation from 28/09/20 COMPLETE</p> <p>Phase 2 – procurement requirements have been mapped and to be mobilised should further under performance occur</p>	COMPLETE

Immediate Fixes Plan – Customer Voice and Communication

Improvement Measure	Immediate Fix	Progress Update	Progress
Customer Voice and Communication			
To have a robust and meaningful communications approach that provides assurances that families, schools and other stakeholders receive relevant, timely updates and information	Improve communication and co-ordination with schools:		
	· Review assurance processes that contractors advise parents and schools of changes/ cancellations via QA mechanism	COMPLETE: to be included in audit process as part of QA contract management function	COMPLETE
	· Designate an identified transport coordinator for each school	COMPLETE	COMPLETE
	· Introduce daily feedback mechanism via email	COMPLETE (ongoing action)	COMPLETE
	· Weekly meeting with special links to gain insight and feedback	COMPLETE (ongoing action)	COMPLETE
	· Feedback summary report (weekly) summary of issues to inform next steps and service improvement	COMPLETE (ongoing action)	COMPLETE
	Establish an emergency contact number for the service, which will be staffed on a rota basis by senior leaders, and made available to Head Teachers	COMPLETE - Cirrus provides solution as an option for the caller to be prioritised if selects safeguarding option.	COMPLETE
Monthly established Working group with Parent Carer Forum to agree key communications and address issues		COMPLETE (action on-going)	COMPLETE
		Long term solution – communications will be automated and 'pushed' via 365 IT system	ONGOING

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

KEY METRICS SUMMARY

(AS AT 4TH MAY 2021)



Safeguarding Performance

Key Metrics	KPI	1 April	9 April	16 April	23 April	30 April	RAG	Comments
No of New Safeguarding Incidents	N/A	2	1	0	0	2		
Total Number of ongoing Safeguarding Incidents	N/A	1	2	0	0	2		

- Safeguarding incidents reported are dealt with in line with the Council’s policy.
- Two incidents reported which are being investigated to determine any further action required.

Compliance Performance

Key Metrics	KPI	01 Apr	09 Apr	16 Apr	23 Apr	30 Apr	RAG	Comments
Routes Checked vs % planned	50	58 100%	12 100%	0	64 91.4%	43 86%		Reduction in checks due to additional work with booking PATS training. All issues found have been sent to the operators for feedback.
Audits vs % planned	100%	N/A	N/A	1	N/A	N/A		No Audits carried out this week reallocation of work to the ID card process
School visits vs % planned	100%	9 90%	N/A	N/A	9 100%	7 100%		All schools were visited including support requested for 2 complaints, daily report sent to Clive
Operators checks vs % planned	90%	9 90%	1 100%	2 100%	10 100%	7 100%		
Guide training undertaken vs % planned	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	31 79.5%	26 86%		30 guides had been booked 4 didn't attend
Guide training transportation	100%	N/A	N/A	N/A	30 100%	26 100%		
Operator meetings	Per month	2	N/A	N/A	1	N/A		
Send Travel Assessments	Completed	40	45	8	7	12		12 completed
Licences and Documentation checks	Completed	N/A	109	276	23	8		Licences and cleanliness checks completed due to DVSA visit and they were checking vehicles at 1 school
Mechanical checks completed	Completed	N/A	N/A	N/A	15	33		All issues found were reported to the operator and requested repairs completed

Additional work achieved

- Continue to support Operation Eagle lateral flow testing
- BCC ID badges issued to 10 operators (*drivers and guides*)
- Vehicle cleanliness & Covid cleaning protocols briefing note for operators (*relaying responsibilities*)
- Visit to Baskerville school following concerns raised by the school (*with attitudes of the drivers and cleanliness of the vehicles*)

Routes – Performance

Performance Metrics	KPI	1 April	9 April	16 April	23 April	30 April	RAG	Comments
Performance in delivering the routes that were needed to transport pupils to school	100%	99.97% (882)	0	100% (1)	99.98% (901)	99.96% (915)		1 route cancelled over the 5 days owing to Operator.
Performance in transporting the number of pupils that needed to travel to school	100%	99.96% (3356)	0	100% (3)	99.99% (3334)	99.98% (3474)		

Routes – Overview

- 915 routes running this week which amounts to 99.96% success rate. 1 route over the 5 day period cancelled owing to Operator failure.
- 3474 pupils transported this week which amounts to 99.98% of pupils we would expect to transport this week.
- 5 routes over the 5 day period ran late which represents a 99.44% success rate in terms of total routes operating.
- Lateness mainly due to traffic (roadworks around Dame Ellen Pinsent School caused delays this week), guide issues (regular guide not being available and substitute guide having to be provided) or vehicle issues (breakdown). *
- The Guide Team and the Guides have been reminded of the importance of advising Operators in good time (where feasible) when a cover guide is on the route to reduce lateness owing to Guide issues. *

Telephone Calls – Performance

Performance Metrics	KPI	1 April	8 April	15 April	23 April	30 April	RAG	Comments
Total calls received		374	167	304	819	406		
Calls answered	90%	91.4% (342)	90% (150)	89% (270)	85% (697)	80% (325)		See below
Average queue time for answered calls (in seconds)		87.8	88.33	113.4	1149	190.8		
Calls abandoned	10%	8.6% (32)	10% (17)	11% (34)	15% (122)	20% (81)		
Average length of phone calls (in seconds)		418.4	405	316	416.66	475		

Telephone – Overview

This information is showing for external phone calls only (Guides removed)

- Average telephone calls answered over the course of April is 87% with calls abandoned averaging 13%.
- We are reviewing staff arrangements to identify staff with a primary focus on call answering rather than roles with multiple competing demands. There is also an overarching review of call management and where the telephone calls should sit longer term.
- Ongoing capacity constraints are being addressed.
- NB: These figures demonstrate call answering performance from Monday to Friday



ANNEX – ADDITIONAL METRICS



DBS & Monthly MI

Key Metrics	KPI	01 Apr	09 Apr	16 Apr	23 Apr	30 Apr	Comments
Number and % of MI returned 19 operators (monthly received on time)	19 / 100%	N/A	2	18	19	N/A	Due on 15th of month - All data now received
Number and % of drivers with a clear DBS driving on Council H2S routes	TBC	1004 100%	129 100%	854 100%	1136 100%	1311 100%	All data now received
Number and % of drivers with positive DBS who have not been through the council's DBS Panel currently driving on Council H2S routes	0 / 0%	0	0	0	0	0	No drivers will drive on any route until they have been through the panel process see below for current suspended drivers
DBS panel: number of DBS satisfied through panel		3	1	1	0	0	New:(1). Awaiting further information: (1). Rejected: (0). Withdrawn: (0). Timed out: (0). Satisfied: (0). 10 drivers currently suspended (out of date or positive DBS)
Number of DBS concerns cleared (operator input error - action taken)		0	0	5	4	0	All concerns found were cleared by week ending 23/04/21.
Number and % of total DBS due to expire within next 3 months		67 6.67%	83 8.27%	51 5.97%	71 6.25%	71 5.4%	All that are due to expire have applied for their DBS, confirmed by Operator
Temp HTST ID cards issued to support all operators filling the gap from commencement to issue of permanent HTST ID card	N/A	0	0	0	35	10	Various operators have been issued to minimise disruption to the service while we wait for the ID cards to arrive, currently working on a 5-day turnaround.

Complaints – Performance

Key Metrics	KPI	1 April	9 April	16 April	23 April	30 April	RAG	Comments
No of Complaints – yellow letters overdue	Complaints responded to within 10 working days	0	0	0	0	0		
No of ICASE overdue	Complaints responded to within 10 working days	0	0	0	0	0		

- 1 new ICASE –
- Complaint re transport - late running of transport

- 2 new Yellow letters –
- Request for a walking guide to be allocated to a pupil
- Appeal request

Routes – Performance

Performance Metrics	KPI	1 April	9 April	16 April	23 April	30 April	RAG	Comments
KEY KPIS								
Performance in delivering the routes that were needed to transport pupils to school	100%	99.97% (882)	0	100% (1)	99.98% (901)	99.96% (914)	↓	This relates to the total routes originally planned less those routes cancelled by the school or cancelled by the pupil as transport was not needed today
Performance in transporting the number of pupils that needed to travel to school	100%	99.96% (3356)	0	100% (3)	99.99% (3334)	99.98% (3474)	↓	This relates to the total number of pupils originally due to travel less the travel that was cancelled by the school or by the pupil as the pupil did not need to travel today
SUMMARY METRICS								
Total daily Routes	N/A	882	0	1	901	914	↑	
No of Cancelled Routes	N/A	35	0	0	14	8	↑	
No of Cancelled Routes due to COVID	N/A	22	0	0	0	1	↓	
No of cancelled Routes – Guides	N/A	0	0	0	0.2	0	→	
No of Cancelled Non-COVID Routes – Pupil/ school	N/A	13	0	0	14	6	↑	Pupil sickness or non-attendance (not Covid)
No of Cancelled Routes – Provider/ driver	N/A	0	0	0	0	1	↓	
No / % of Routes running on time	100%	876 99.30%	0	0	894 99.27%	909 99.44%	↓	Average no of routes over the week running on time
No of children transported – total daily Vs actual	N/A	3356 Vs 3487	Vs	3 Vs 3	3334 Vs 3373	3474 Vs 3492	↑	