

Update Report – Safety on School Transport

SUMMARY

- 1.1 At its meeting on 17 April 2012, Council Cabinet approved the following recommendations from the Neighbourhoods Commission arising as a result of the Safety on School Transport Topic Review:

Recommendation 1

The City Council should amend appropriate transport policy and guidance for schools to include a requirement for vehicles with seatbelts to be used in the transportation of children on transport provided for school trips or educational visits, with the exclusion of public transport services, such as trains or buses.

Recommendation 2

The City Council should amend appropriate home to school transport policy and guidance to include a recommendation that children do not sit in the rear facing seats in taxis where these seats do not have seatbelts.

Recommendation 3

The City Council should include a requirement for all vehicles used on the swimming transport contract to be fitted with seatbelts when this is sent out to tender in late 2012/early 2013.

Recommendation 4

The City Council should commence negotiations with the current swimming transport contractor to enable a trial of using vehicles with seatbelts to assess the timescales for getting children to and from swimming lessons.

- 1.2 Recommendation 4 was an outcome from the Neighbourhoods Commission meeting on 6th March 2012, where it was recommended that a trial be undertaken to assess the impact on journey times arising from seat belts being provided on vehicles contracted to transport children to and from swimming lessons.
- 1.3 This report provides a detailed update of the trial using vehicles fitted with seat belts and summarises the progress to date relating to the other policy recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report.
- 2.2 To support the approval of the re-tender of the swimming transport to Moorways and Queen Street baths in late November 2012 and to specify that all vehicles are to be fitted with seat belts

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To inform members of the progress made to date in implementing the recommendations of Council Cabinet on 17 April 2012 relating to safety on school transport.
- 3.2 The proposed introduction of seat belts on contracted vehicles taking children to and from swimming lessons will help achieve the Commission's objective of improving safety on school transport.
- 3.3 Requiring the contractor to define the size and number of vehicles required to meet demand will ensure that the service is best tailored to the need we identify and may result in cost savings.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Transport policy and guidance for schools is in the process of being amended to include a requirement for vehicles with seatbelts to be used in the transportation of children on transport provided for school trips or educational visits, with the exclusion of public transport services, such as trains or buses.
- 4.2 Home to school transport policy and guidance has been amended to include a recommendation that children do not sit in the rear facing seats in taxis where these seats do not have seatbelts.
- 4.3 At its meeting on 6th March 2012, the Neighbourhoods Commission recommended that a trial be undertaken to assess the impact on journey times arising from seat belts being provided on vehicles contracted to transport children to and from swimming lessons.
- 4.4 With the cooperation of the contractor, Notts and Derby Motor Traction Company Limited, the trial was introduced and ran for two weeks - between Monday 18 June 2012 and Friday 29 June 2012. During this trial period, all vehicles undertaking transport to and from schools to either Queens Leisure Centre or Moorways were fitted with seat belts suitable for all passengers.

- 4.5 It was noted during the trial that, on average, the loading/unloading process took two or three minutes longer than normal, due to the need to ensure that children wore seat belts. Within the current contractual arrangements, Notts & Derby were able to accommodate these additional requirements but this was mainly because there are currently breaks in the timetable where schools have opted out of the transport we provide.
- 4.6 The trial indicates that the use of seat belts can increase journey times, but not significantly so. Within the current arrangements, and subject to the number of schools participating, it is clear that the use of seat belts would not require the introduction of additional vehicles and hence would not be expected to significantly increase costs.
- 4.7 Paperwork for Sold Services goes out to schools quite early, with their responses needed before the end of the calendar year (December 2012.) The tender process will not be complete by this time, and so we will not know how many schools will opt in for our contracted transport (once they know that we will be using seat belted vehicles) until January 2013. We therefore propose that any tender must be flexible, rather than specifically setting out the number and size of vehicles required.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Not Applicable

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer	N/A
Financial officer	Russell Sexton (Neighbourhoods), Jason Coupland (Children and Young People)
Human Resources officer	N/A

Service Director(s) Other(s)	N/A David Gartside
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For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	David Dowbenko 01332 641754 dave.dowbenko@derby.gov.uk Council Cabinet – Minutes 17 August 2012 Council Cabinet Reports 17 April 2012: Item 06 - Safety to School Transport Topic Review. Appendix 1 – Implications
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IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 There are potential financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in this report.
- 1.2 Costs associated with the home to school service are funded through the General Fund. Restriction of the use of drop-down seats without seatbelts in hackney carriage vehicles has required changes to a total of 6 pupil journeys per school week. This equates to a potential additional cost of £18,126 for a full year. This does impact further on the ability to achieve existing £400,000 12-13 savings targets within Home to School Transport.
- 1.3 Costs associated with school swimming transport are funded by the individual school and therefore any additional costs arising in this area would have to be covered within school budgets.

Legal

- 2.1 None

Personnel

- 3.1 None

Equalities Impact

- 4.1 None

Health and Safety

- 5.1 There are potential health and safety implications due to a proposed recommendation for the provision of seatbelts on vehicles used to transport children. This could contribute to improved health and safety for school children whilst being transported under the Council's care.

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.1 None directly arising from this report

Asset Management

7.1 None.

Risk Management

8.1 There are potential positive risk management implications due to a proposed recommendation for the provision of seatbelts on vehicles used to transport children.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

9.1 The proposed changes could contribute to the 'being safe and feeling safe' through the potential for less injuries and harm to children.