

# Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council

## Post 16 Transport Policy Consultation – April 2024

### 1 About this document

This document explains how Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council's arrangements for post 16 transport (to education or training) will change from September 2024 onwards. This will affect some young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who are aged 16,17 and 18.

**This policy change will not affect the following age groups.** Provision of transport services to these young people is subject to different legislation.

- Young people who are receiving transport services to access secondary education, (those who are aged 16 and in Year 11).
- Young people with SEND aged 19 – 25 who are receiving transport services to access education.

This document should be read alongside our draft Post 16 Transport Policy Statement which explains who is eligible for support, and the services that should be considered first before making an application to the Council for post 16 transport. You can view the Policy Statement on the Council's current consultations page [here](#).

### 2 Why is post 16 transport changing?

Currently, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council fully fund, or provide transport for, eligible 16 – 18 year olds with an EHCP travelling to further education or training. However, there is no legal duty for Councils to provide this service. Responsibility for making, and covering the cost of, appropriate transport arrangements rests with the student and/or their parent/carer.

Because there is no legal duty to provide transport for 16, 17 and 18 year olds, unfortunately it is not sustainable for the Council to continue offering this service for free. This is because of the financial pressures that most Councils in England are facing. Due to inflation, reduced government funding, the increased costs of goods and services and unprecedented demand for our services, particularly social care, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council must make budget savings to continue delivering vital statutory services to local residents.

Implementing a charge has been a difficult decision for Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and we appreciate that this presents families with an additional cost. As a Council we strive to support children and young people in education, therefore, rather than charging for post 16 transport in full, we propose to provide a subsidised service which young people and their families can purchase for a contributory fee.

### 3 What has informed our policy change?

#### 3.1 Determining the contributory fee

Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council have considered implementing a charge for Post 16 Transport. To inform our thinking we have asked other councils about their post 16 transport and how they are

charging local residents. In October 2023 we worked with other local authorities to undertake a survey of their post 16 transport arrangements.

- 74 councils responded to the survey, 43 (69%) told us they charged for post 16 transport.

**Among the 43 councils that charge:**

- The lowest fee was £315 and the highest fee was £1554
- The average charge for the academic year 23/24 was around £650

We have considered the information shared by other councils and have determined that a fee of £745 per annum<sup>1</sup> would be appropriate for Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council. This is a mid-range amount in comparison to other areas and takes account of our local situation and budget commitments. This fee was agreed by Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 as part of the Council’s annual fees and charges review.

Based on the 127 students who are currently receiving free post 16 transport this will generate a contribution of £94,615 representing 25% of the £380,000 total cost of delivering the service.

## **2.2 Low Income Households**

**Among the 43 councils that charge:**

Some councils (53%) provide a discount for low income households, the number of councils categorised by the discount percentage that they apply is shown in the table below.

<b>Discount %</b>	<b>Number of Councils</b>
<b>No reduction (full charge)</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>100% reduction (no charge)</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>75% reduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>50% reduction</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>33% reduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Total Councils</b>	<b>43</b>

To develop this consultation Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council have met with representatives from SEND Family Voice (the parent carer forum in Redcar & Cleveland). They have raised concerns about the impact of the fee on low income households, as such we are proposing a reduced cost for low income households and questions about this form part of the consultation.

A low income discount would involve a means testing process. Because all post 16 transport applicants live in the borough we propose that, if the student’s household receives Council Tax Support, this will be taken as evidence of low income. Council Tax Support is a means tested benefit and this will avoid duplication of a financial assessment process.

To be eligible applicants will need to provide details of their household’s council tax account and give their consent to check the Council Tax database to confirm that they are in receipt of Council Tax Support, this will be included in the application form for post 16 transport.

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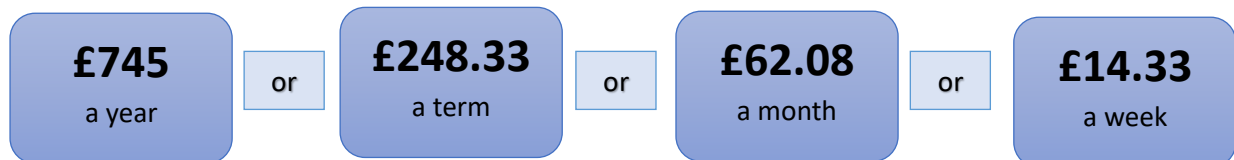
<sup>1</sup> As per all other Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council fees and charges this will be subject to annual increases to reflect inflation and increased service delivery costs.

### 3 What is the proposed charge?

From September 2024 we will introduce a flat fee of £745 for those who access post 16 transport. Everyone will be charged the same amount, regardless of how far they travel and what type of transport support they receive.

The cost of post 16 transport per student is £2992 on average, £745 represents a 25% contribution to this cost.

The annual contributory fee can be paid in instalments. Over the course of the calendar year it equates to:



(monthly and weekly costs are based on 12 months/52 weeks rather than term time only)

### 4 How to respond to the consultation

The post 16 transport policy consultation seeks the views of local residents on the draft policy and the implementation of a £745 contributory fee from September 2024.

The consultation will run for 4 weeks from Wednesday 10th April – Sunday 12th May 2024. To share your views please complete a short online survey.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WD93QDB>



Findings from the consultation will be collated in May 2024 and will be shared at the Children & Families Directorate Management Team meeting where your feedback will be considered before a final decision is made. This will inform how the new policy is implemented. Following this decision, information will be shared with families, young people and education/training providers by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024.