

OFFICER DECISION RECORD

For staff restructures, please also complete an RA1 form to update the HR Portal. This is attached at Annex 2.

Decision Ref. No:

1819028

Box 1

DIRECTORATE: Learning and Opportunities;
Children and Young People

DATE: 31/08/2018

Contact Name: Jordan Wilson

Tel. No.: 01302 737214

Subject Matter: Repurposing of Service Transformation Funding for Independent Travel Training.

Box 2

DECISION TAKEN:

An investment of up to £175,000 was granted from the Service Transformation Fund on an invest-to-save basis to fund an initial two-year project to deliver an Independent Travel Training (ITT) Scheme. This was to cover the recruitment of a fixed-term ITT Coordinator (Grade 8) to 31 March 2019 to deliver and evaluate a scheme, with a view to this becoming permanent if outcomes were achieved.

In December 2017, Doncaster Council awarded a contract to KEYFORT Group Ltd to become the recruiter for 'travel buddies'; accredited members of staff that would deliver practical independent travel training to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) who currently receive assisted transport from Doncaster Council. This has not materialised. Failure from KEYFORT to communicate in a sufficient manner and also failure to recruit 'travel buddies' has led to KEYFORT being in default of their contractual obligations.

At a meeting with KEYFORT in June, it was agreed that KEYFORT would be given until 10th July 2018 (two weeks) to come up with an action plan outlining their intentions going forward. On Monday 9th July 2018, KEYFORT made the decision to walk away from the contract; stating that they felt it would not be viable for them to continue until May 2019 (the agreed end date of the contract).

These meetings, the failure to recruit and subsequent actions have led to Doncaster Council reviewing the original options outlined when securing the funding and reconsidering bringing the service 'in-house' rather than being tendered out to an external contractor.

In order to bring the service 'in-house', the remainder of the Service Transformation Fund would need be utilised to hire another coordinator to provide additional management support and supervisory duties as well as the recruitment of 5 internal Travel Buddies.

Box 3

REASON FOR THE DECISION:

There is a continued focus for travel training in England. The Department for Transport's latest 2018 consultation on accessible transport has shown that the government is still looking to identify and support travel training, mentoring and buddying schemes¹. The SEND Code of Practice (2015), also states that education and training should include help to develop skills for work, including independent travel training².

The benefits of independent travel training are numerous. In the Government Good Practice Guide, Norman Baker MP states that “[Independent travel training] assists in overcoming challenges, removes barriers to independent travel and gives people greater access to jobs, services and social networks. It empowers people to take greater control in their lives, enabling them to learn new skills and take advantage of opportunities in their communities”³.

For Doncaster, the development of a coordinated Independent Travel Training scheme has been shaped by four key drivers:

1. Delivers greater outcomes for individuals

- Increased independence; increased access to education and employment opportunities; reduced need for home visits and reliance on carers and improvement in life skills such as handling money, personal mobility and road safety skills.
 - More young people are equipped to access employment, training and higher educations (Corporate Plan 2018-2019)
 - More people are supported to take up opportunities to get involved in community life (Corporate Plan 2018-2019)
 - Support more people with disabilities into work (Corporate Plan 2018-2019)

2. Potential savings

- ITT schemes in other local authorities (Leeds and Nottingham) have been shown to deliver savings in transport budgets in the long term (typically after year 2)
- All savings will come from the reduced use of private hire taxis.
- The table below sets out the forecast of what could be achieved over the next 5 years following the successfully delivery of the Phase One (Years 1 and 2)

1

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638404/accessibility-action-plan-consultation.pdf

2

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

3

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/705469/guidance.pdf

Costings					
	Yr1 2017/18	Yr2 2018/19	Yr3 2019/20	Yr4 2020/21	Yr5 2021/22
ITT Coordinator					
ITT Lead Grade 9 Salary (With On Cost) – Estimated start Nov 2018		16,408	42,569	43,420	44,288
ITT Coordinator/Assessor Grade 8 Salary (With On Cost)	23,420	32,131	35,018	35,719	36,433
Other costs including: Printing/Stationary/Scheme Promotion/Consultancy/Training	1,930	7,500	1,000	1,000	1,000
Co-ordinator Total	25,350	56,039	78,587	80,139	81,721
Travel Buddies					
No of Full Time Buddies recruited to deliver training	0	5	5	5	5
Trainer Salary Living Wage (With On Cost) – Estimated start Nov 2018	0	5178	12,675	12,928	13,186
Training Course @ £300	0	300			
Annual Bus Pass @ £693 (£63.00*11 Months)	0	693	693	693	693
Sub Total	0	6,171	13,368	13,621	13,879
Total Trainer Costs	25,350	30,855	66,840	68,105	69,395
A Total Costs	25,350	86,894	145,427	148,244	151,116
Savings					
Reduced Transport Costs					
Ave transport cost before training	3500	3,850	3,850	3,850	3,850
Ave transport cost after training (estimated 50% have Disability Pass for 2018/19 onwards. 100% had passes in 2017/18)	0	350	350	350	350
Savings per trainee per annum	3500	3500.00	3500.00	3500.00	3500.00
No of trainees	4	8	25	25	25
No of trainees from previous 2 years	0	4	12	33	50
B Total Gross Savings - Tsfr from CS000)	0	14,000	42,000	115,500	175,000
Total Net Savings (B-A)	-29190.07	-72,894	-103,427	-32,744	23,884
Service Transformation Fund	175,000				

	ITT Budget	Remainder
	175,000	175,000
Less Yr 1 (2017/18)	-25,350	149,650
Less Yr2 (2018/19)	-72,894	76,756
Less Yr 3 (2019/20)	-103,427	-26,671
Shortfall in Yr 3		-26,671

The shortfall does not take into account any in year savings. There is potential to offset the budget shortfall with these savings depending upon when students are trained during the year.

3. Increased demand

- More SEND students are accessing mainstream courses with individual timetables so students can be travelling on different days and times. Some taxi runs are doing 4 runs a day.
- We are now seeing young people in their early 20's still at college.

4. Coordination of existing activity

- Some schools, voluntary sector organisations and internal teams within Doncaster Council are already delivering training, but on an ad-hoc basis. A centrally co-ordinated scheme would build upon existing practice and allow more individuals to benefit.
- There is also potential for care-leavers to train as Travel Trainers (Travel Buddies) in order to gain valuable work experience. This could be in the form of temporary jobs during the summer months when training levels might peak.
- There could also be scope to incorporate the use of internships/graduates in the future for young people looking to further their skills base. As a requirement to become a trainer for Doncaster, all candidates will be sent on a Level 2 Accredited course in Travel Training (currently only delivered by Leeds City Council). This could provide our apprentices with an opportunity for front-line delivery of a service, working with some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

Box 4

OPTIONS CONSIDERED & REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION:

The options below are discussed further in the Independent Travel Training Options paper.

Option One: Cease Independent Travel Training

To cease the project at this stage without adequately assessing the benefits could deny individuals the opportunity to live more independent lives as outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. Ceasing ITT would also deny students the opportunity for growth and hinder their preparation for adulthood. From a financial point of view, there are increasing numbers of individuals requiring transport, more SEND students accessing mainstream courses and ongoing budget pressures in Pupil Transport to reduce costs where necessary. Therefore, ceasing the option of independent travel would be detrimental to both the Council and SEND students alike.

Option Two: Continue with Contracted out Management of Buddies

The option to contract out has been tried by Doncaster Council and the results have been unsuccessful. After a moderate turnout at a market engagement event, there were only two tendered bids received – highlighting how few firms have the capacity and capability to run a successful ITT scheme.

One of the bids was from a firm without experience in this area and the winning bid was confirmed from an experienced provider. In light of the failure of this company to perform there is a need to explore other options.

Option Three: Bring ITT 'In-House'

By bringing the service 'in-house', Doncaster Council can make its own mark on independent travel training and achieving outcomes for some of its most vulnerable young people. This option would see Doncaster Council have complete control of the service and would allow the coordinators to work more closely with other teams within the Council to take a more holistic view of the child. The service being 'in-house' means that ITT can become a service that promotes inclusion and integration for children and young people with SEND. There could also be scope in the longer term, to use some of our clients as ambassadors or in a teaching role within educational settings.

This option does increase the amount of management needed by a coordinator, so hiring another coordinator would be beneficial to divide with line management duties, as well as promotion and assessment aspects of the position. Both coordinators would be line-managers dealing with HR Tasks; discipline and PDR's, together with production of KPI and management data originally delegated to the Contractor.

Recommendation: Option Three is recommended.

In view of the experience of contracting out via a tendered bid – and the trouble in recruitment that ensued, moving the service in-house, recruiting to the Council as a well-regarded employer and the control this will provide makes this the recommended option.

An initial period of 18 months to March 2020 is proposed, with a view to becoming a permanent offer. By giving a two-year window, it would give an opportunity to fully assess if the scheme is viable and if the proposed outcomes can be attained.

It has been agreed by Senior Leadership Team to re-purpose the Service Transformation Fund as an investment in our people to get the ITT service up and running. This document records the decision taken.

Box 5

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

The service has consulted with Legal and Democratic Services regarding the contract with KEYFORT and if the recommended option is adopted, the Council is advised to vary the current contract and for the parties to agree to its termination with indemnity provisions to protect the Council for any liabilities of the Company in relation to any staff/buddies they have had discussions with.

In relation to taking the service back in house the value of the Service would need to be estimated taking into account the initial period of 18 months and once the value is assessed the Council's Contract Procedure Rules would need to be followed. For the purposes of the Public Contract Regulations this would be a "Light Touch" service.

Name: Debra Buckingham Signature: [REDACTED] Date: 05.09.18
Signature of Assistant Director of Legal and Democratic Services (or representative)

Box 6

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The decision to allocate £175k of Service Transformation Funding (STF) to Independent Travel Training was approved in ODR RE17 0031 by the Chief Financial Officer and the Mayor in April 2017.

The proposal outlined in this ODR is to repurpose how the STF is used by bringing the service "In House" to deliver the same outcomes that were agreed in the original ODR.

The costings outlined in the body of the report show that £25k of the £175k allocation was drawn down in financial year 2017/18, estimated funding of £73k is required in 2018/19 and estimated funding of £103k is required in 2019/20. This would leave a funding shortfall of £26k in 2019/20 which will be funded from either in year savings depending upon when students are trained during the year or will be managed within the existing Transport budgets.

An initial period of 18 months to March 2020 is proposed for this scheme, with a view to becoming a permanent offer. This gives an opportunity to fully assess if the scheme is viable and if the proposed outcomes can be attained.

Name: Aaron Bathgate **Signature:** [REDACTED] **Date:** 06/09/18
Signature of Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
(or representative)

Box 7
HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The proposals involve an intention to amend the staffing structure to the extent that the current holder of the grade 8 ITT Coordinator post is proposed to be regraded to grade 9 and redesignated as 'Lead Coordinator', with an extension applied to the post holder's fixed-term employment contract to 31st March 2020. A new post of ITT Coordinator is proposed to be established, at grade 8, with a fixed-term end-date of 31st March 2020. These proposals are subject to confirmation through the job evaluation process. The travel buddy posts (which are yet to be recruited to) have already been evaluated at the Council's living wage rate. Any employee whose employment is due to end by reason of redundancy where at least 12 months' service has been accrued with the Council is entitled to be considered for alternative employment under the Council's procedures. Any employee whose employment does end due to redundancy is entitled to a redundancy payment where at least 2 years' continuous local government service has been accrued.

Name: Alan Green **Signature:** [REDACTED] **Date:** 10th September 2018
Signature of Assistant Director of Human Resources and Communications (or representative)

Box 8
PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS:

There is no procurement implications associated with the recommended option.

Name: Shaun Ferron **Signature:** [REDACTED] **Date:** 24.09.18
Signature of Assistant Director of Finance & Performance
(or representative)

Box 9
ICT IMPLICATIONS:

There are no ICT implications associated with this decision.

Name: Peter Ward (Technology Governance & Support Manager)
Signature: [REDACTED] **Date:** 31/08/18

Signature of Assistant Director of Customers, Digital & ICT (or representative)

Box 10**ASSET IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this Officer Decision Record that impact on the use of DMBC assets beyond the possible need for physical desk space to accommodate the post holders as identified. If this is the case, liaison will be required with the Councils Work Smart officer to ensure appropriate space is available and that the post holders are suitably assessed for agile working practices.

Name: Gillian Fairbrother (Principal Property Surveyor)

Signature: [REDACTED] **Date:** 10th September, 2018

**Signature of Assistant Director of Trading & Property Services
(Or representative)**

Box 11**RISK IMPLICATIONS:**

To be completed by the report author

Risk	Mitigation
Concerns about existing transport arrangements expressed by parents/carers	Engagement plan to address concerns, development of safe havens, driver training, consultation, parents/carers included in assessment, invited to take part in the training, identify case studies and champions.
Public transport infrastructure in Doncaster does not support school journeys easily or within reasonable timescales.	Initial focus is on journeys to College through the Bus Station Hub. Work with Pupil Transport Service, existing trainers and SYPTE Journey Planning tool to identify feasible journeys.
1:1 support model requires too much time/too many resources	Thorough assessment processes identify those most likely to be successful. Close links with schools to provide group training in advance.
Concern about young people's safety or behaviour	Identified through individual risk assessment. Formal sign off of individual's ability to travel independently. Awareness training for bus drivers. Development and promotion of safe place scheme including shops and other premises.

(Explain the impact of not taking this decision and in the case of capital schemes, any risks associated with the delivery of the project)

Box 12

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS:

Our aim is to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives, visits or works in Doncaster, through promoting inclusion and diversity, tackling inequalities and removing barriers which may prevent people from fulfilling their true potential. (*Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objective summary 2018-2021, Year One*)

ITT would bring equality of opportunity to vulnerable individuals who are currently restricted and prohibited from accessing universal services due to their dependence on transport provision. For those more capable young people, ITT would allow them travel in the same way as their peers, which would reduce discrimination which can arise from being perceived as 'different'.

There are less people with learning disabilities in paid employment and more people with learning disabilities in residential care (compared to Yorkshire and Humber), (*Equality, Diversity and Inclusion objective summary 2018-2021, Year One*)

Without the ability to travel independently, it is highly unlikely that young people with disabilities will be able to access employment and volunteering opportunities. ITT would be a crucial enabler to help young people get into work and make a meaningful contribution to their local community and the local economy.

There will be more local support to enable people to be more independent.

The Education and Skills Commission recommended focusing on a wider set of outcomes, including the essential life skills – such as handling money, road safety – which ITT provides. ITT highlights the potential that young people with SEND have to grow and succeed, rather than narrowly focusing upon the barriers and difficulties associated with their disabilities.

The service will be attentive to service users' needs and rights and delivered in a non-discriminatory way. The service will be required to provide evidence of the equality measures in place and their progress in meeting these.

Name: Jordan Wilson Signature:  Date: 18/10/2018
(Report author)

**Box 13
CONSULTATION**

Officers

(In addition to Finance, Legal and Human Resource implications and Procurement implications where necessary, please list below any other teams consulted on this decision, together with their comments)


Members

Under the Scheme of delegation, officers are responsible for day to day operational matters as well as implementing decisions that have been taken by Council, Cabinet, Committee or individual Cabinet members. Further consultation with Members is not ordinarily required. However, where an ODR relates to a matter which has significant policy, service or operational implications or is known to be politically sensitive, the officer shall first consult with the appropriate Cabinet Member before exercising the delegated powers. In appropriate cases, officers will also need to consult with the Chair of Council, Committee Chairs or the Chair of an Overview and Scrutiny Panel as required. Officers shall also ensure that local Members are kept informed of matters affecting their Wards.

Please list any comments from Members below:

**Box 14
INFORMATION NOT FOR PUBLICATION:**

It is in the public's interest to be aware of this decision record under Freedom of Information Act 2000, therefore this decision will be published in full, redacting only signatures.

Name: Jordan Wilson Signature:  Date: 08/10/18
Signature of FOI Lead Officer for service area where ODR originates

Box 15

Signed: _____ **Date:** 08/10/2018
Damian Allen
Director of People

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Additional Signature of Chief Financial Officer or nominated
representative for Capital decisions (if required)

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____
Signature of Mayor or relevant Cabinet Member consulted on the above
decision (if required).

- This decision can be implemented immediately unless it relates to a Capital Scheme that requires the approval of Cabinet. All Cabinet decisions are subject to call in.
- A record of this decision should be kept by the relevant Director's PA for accountability and published on the Council's website.
- A copy of this decision should be sent to the originating Directorate's FOI Lead Officer to consider 'information not for publication' prior to being published on the Council's website.
- A PDF copy of the signed decision record should be e-mailed to the LA Democratic Services mailbox