

Travel Assistance for Post-16 Learners with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Consultation



Summary of the online consultation survey responses.

Background

Leeds City Council is currently reviewing travel assistance funding for learners with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). As part of this review, four proposals are under consideration. This consultation was carried out to understand the views and experiences of learners, parents, carers, education staff, members of the public and other stakeholders.

The consultation ran from the 24th June to the 22nd July 2024 and was available to complete online, via a web link or QR code. Promotion of the consultation was carried out via social media, parent/carer channels and by email to parents/carers, educational staff and Leeds City Council staff.

Overall, 306 people responded to the survey, with 283 people responding via the web link and 23 via the QR code. This report contains analysis of the responses.

Demographics

Respondents were asked to provide demographic information as part of their response. This was optional, however most respondents answered some or all of the questions.

The figures below show the demographics of respondents.

		Survey Respondents	% Respondents
Age / years	Under 16	1	0.4%
	16-18	3	1%
	18 - 29	14	5%
	30 - 44	91	35%
	45 - 64	142	55%
	65+	6	2%
Sex	Female	228	90%
	Male	26	10%
	Non-binary	0	0%
	Other	0	0%
Gender identity the same as the sex you were registered at birth?	Yes	243	99.6%
	No	1	0.4%
Sexuality	Heterosexual / Straight	217	93%
	LGBT+/Other	16	7%
Ethnicity	White:British	226	92%
	Asian or Asian British	5	2%
	Black or Black British	3	1%
	Mixed Ethnicity	6	2%
	Other	7	3%
Religion	No religion or belief	94	49%
	Christian	91	47%
	Other religion or belief	8	4%
Disability	Yes	41	17%
	No	207	83%

Post Codes

Respondents were asked to provide the first part of their postcode. The percentages shown are calculated on the total number of respondents for this question (230 people).

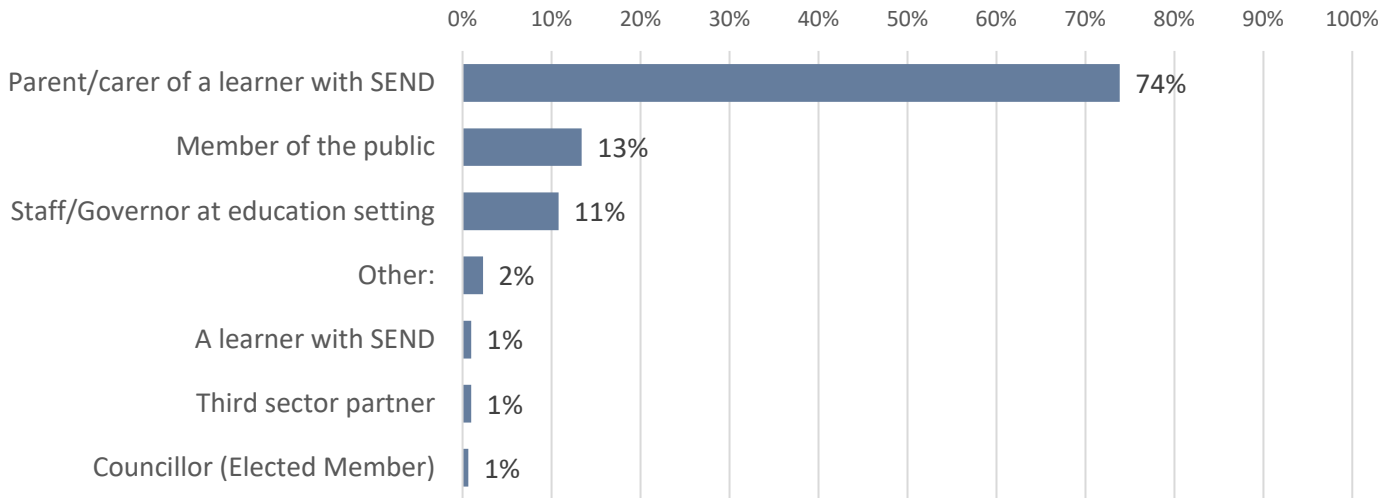
LS Postcodes	%	Other	%
LS15	10%	WF3	4%
LS16	10%	BD11	3%
LS25	7%	WF10	1%
LS13	5%	BD3	0.4%
LS14	5%	HD4	0.4%
LS8	5%	WF4	0.4%
LS27	5%		
LS26	4%		
LS12	4%		
LS10	3%		
LS17	3%		
LS18	3%		
LS28	3%		
LS6	3%		
LS7	3%		
LS11	3%		
LS21	2%		
LS20	2%		
LS22	2%		
LS29	2%		
LS23	1%		
LS5	1%		
LS9	1%		
LS19	1%		
LS18	0.4%		
LS24	0.4%		
LS3	0.4%		

Survey Questions

1) Please tell us who you are:

Respondents could choose more than one option. The percentages shown are calculated on the total number of respondents.

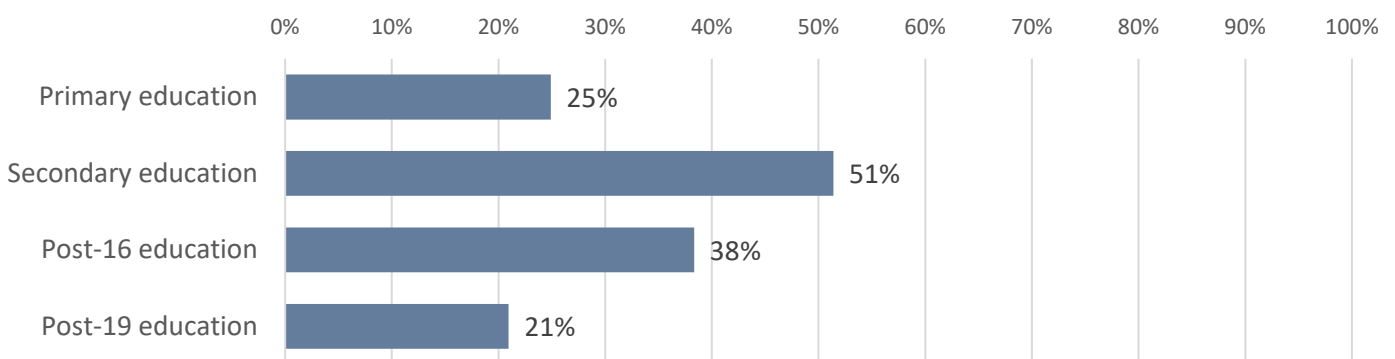
Three quarters of respondents (74%) stated they are the parent/carer of a learner with SEND.



2) Which education settings are currently relevant to you as a parent, learner, staff member or governor?

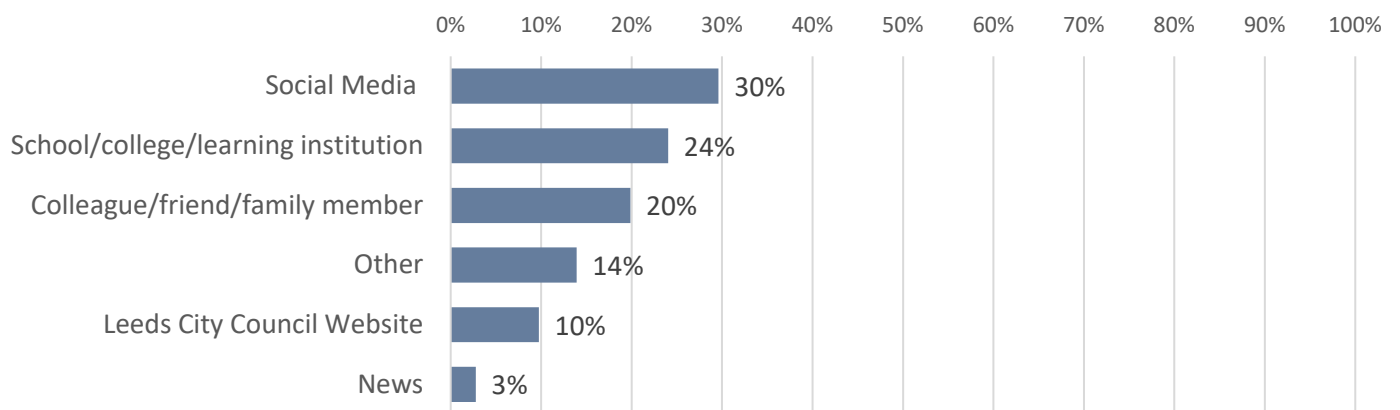
Learners, parent/carers of learners with SEND, and educational staff members/Governors were asked a follow up question. Respondents could choose more than one option. The percentages shown are calculated on the total number of respondents for this question (253 respondents).

Half of respondents to this question (51%) stated they Secondary Education was currently relevant to them.



3) How did you find out about this consultation?

Altogether, 30% of respondents found out about the consultation on social media, followed by school/college/learning institution (24%).



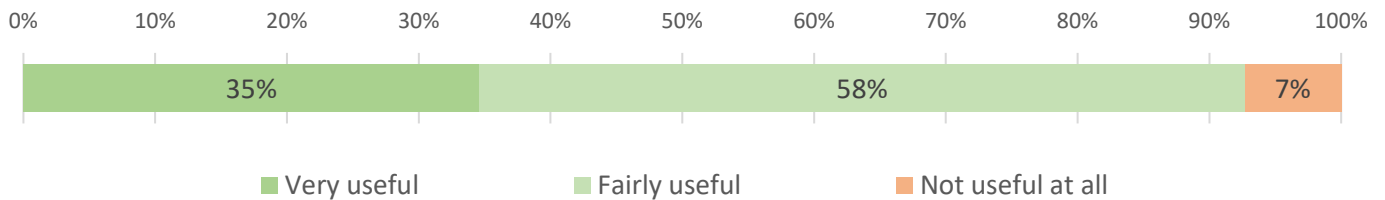
14% of respondents selected 'Other' and provided further detail:

Other:	Count
Email	20
Leeds PCF	2
Leeds Local Offer	2
Carers leeds website	1
Charity	1
Council meeting	1
Council tax payer	1
Event	1
Labour Party meeting	1
Leeds carers.	1
Little Hiccups	1
Not need	1
Parent Carer Forum	1
Sen support group	1
SEND event	1
Send website/ sgo team	1
Social Worker	1
Tom Riordan's weekly newsletter to council employees.	1

4) How useful was the information we provided to you in this public consultation?

Learners, parent/carers, and educational staff members/Governors were asked a follow up question. Respondents could choose more than one option. The percentages shown are calculated on the total number of respondents

The majority of respondents (93%) found the information provided very or fairly useful, whilst only 7% found the information not at all useful.



Comments on how useful the information was:

Respondents were asked to provide open text comments about their experience of completing this consultation. In total, 64 left a comment. The comments were analysed and categorised into themes. The table below shows the common themes:

Theme	Count	% of comments	Example comment
Opposition to proposals	28	44%	So many families will struggle if you put extra pressure on families with SEN and financial support is removed for SEN learning
Distribution/publicity of the survey	8	13%	Very comprehensive on line survey. However I do not think this has reached all the stake holders - SEND Schools/ Carers etc.
Easy to understand/ complete	7	11%	It was easy to complete and easy to understand the information
Thanks for providing survey/consulting	5	8%	Excellent opportunity for professionals to give our voice - thank you.
Error on form	4	6%	I completed this on a mobile and it wouldn't let you go back to review what you had written within the box
Didn't understand proposal /s/ information	4	6%	
Decision already made	4	6%	
Miscellaneous	3	5%	
Unfair/biased consultation	3	5%	
Didn't like the format/design	2	3%	

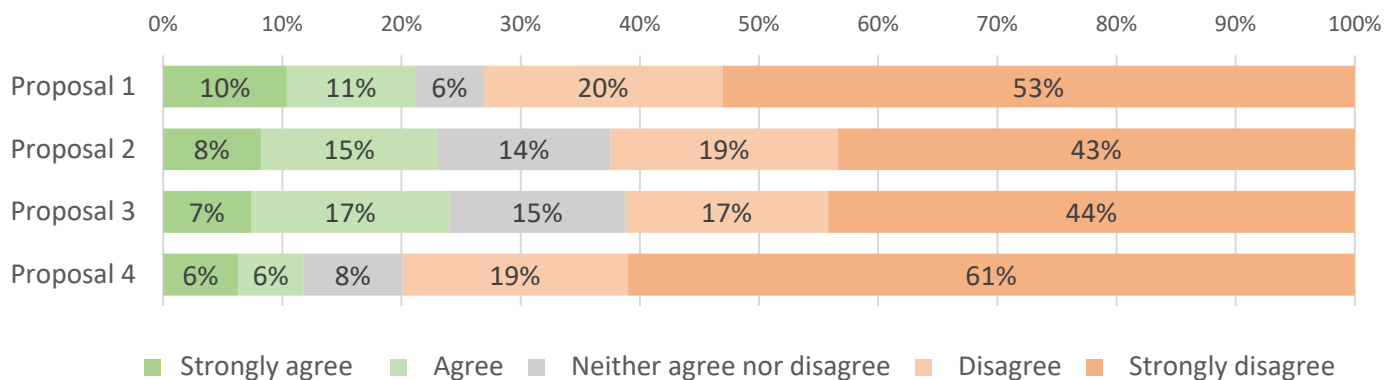
Proposals - Overall

Participants were provided with information about the following four proposals:

- Proposal 1: Limiting post-16 transport assistance for post-16 learners to those living 3 or more miles from their education setting.
- Proposal 2: Offer of a Personal Transport Allowance for eligible post-16 learners with SEND.
- Proposal 3: Introduce a charge as a contribution towards the high cost of council-organised transport arrangements for post-16 learners, excluding post-19, with SEND.
- Proposal 4: Transport assistance is limited to post-16 learners only, with eligibility for post-19 learners removed.

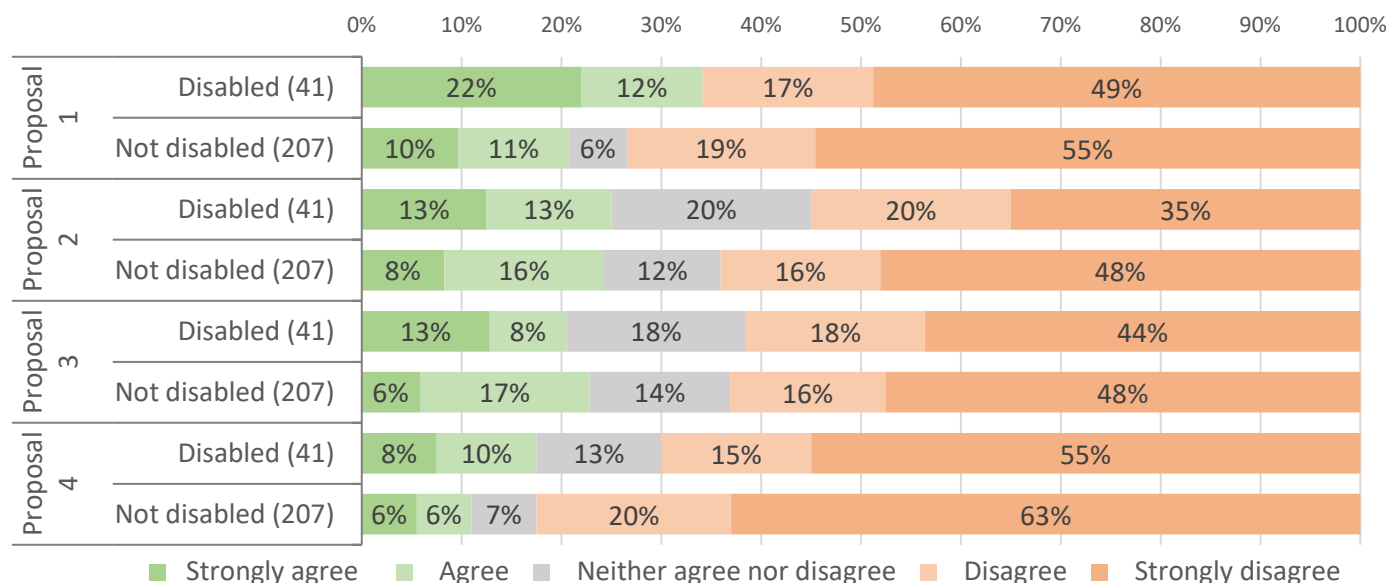
5) Respondents were then asked how much they agree or disagree with each of the proposals:

Overall, Proposal 3 had the highest level of agreement, with a quarter of respondents (24%) agreeing with the proposal and 61% disagreeing. Proposal 4 had the lowest level of agreement, with 12% of respondents agreeing with the proposal and 80% disagreeing.



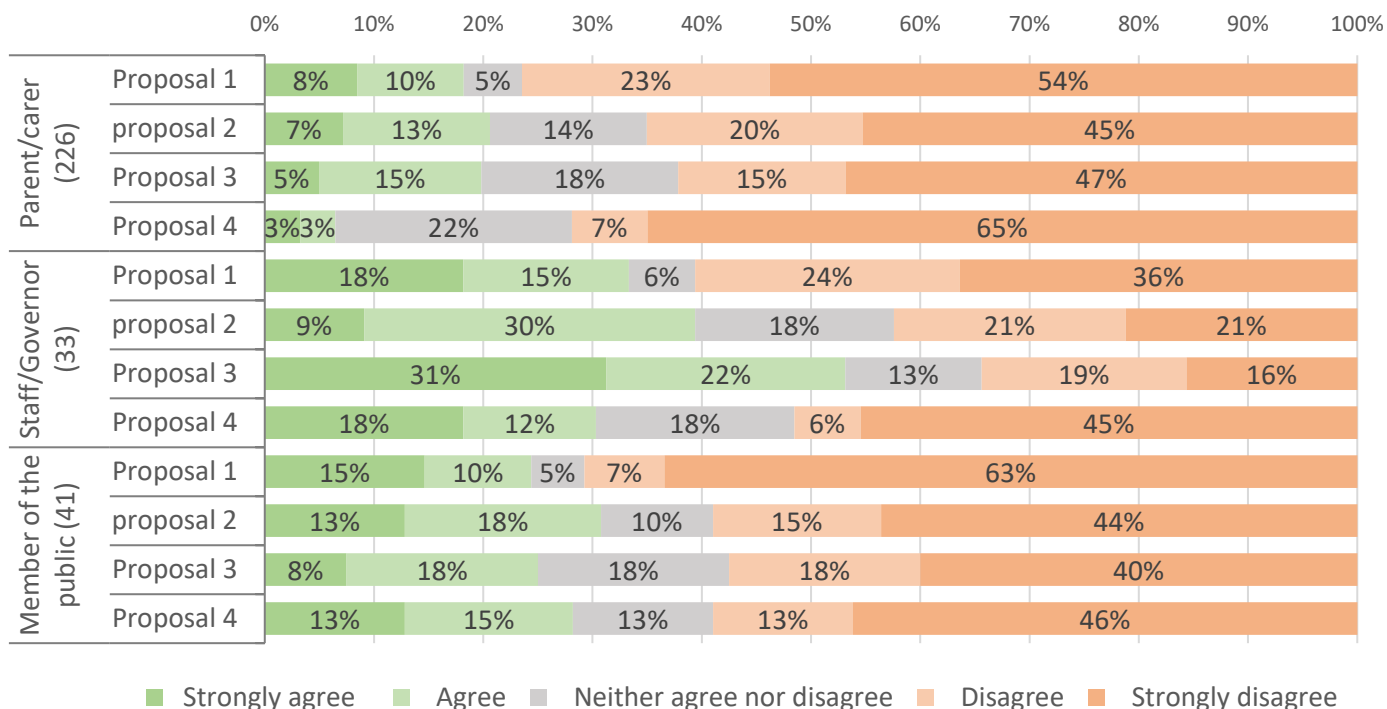
6) 'How much do you agree or disagree with the proposals?' by 'Do you consider yourself disabled?'

Overall, disabled respondents were less likely to disagree with all the proposals compared to respondents with no disability. In particular, disabled respondents were less likely to disagree with Proposal 4 (70%) compared to respondents with no disability (83%).



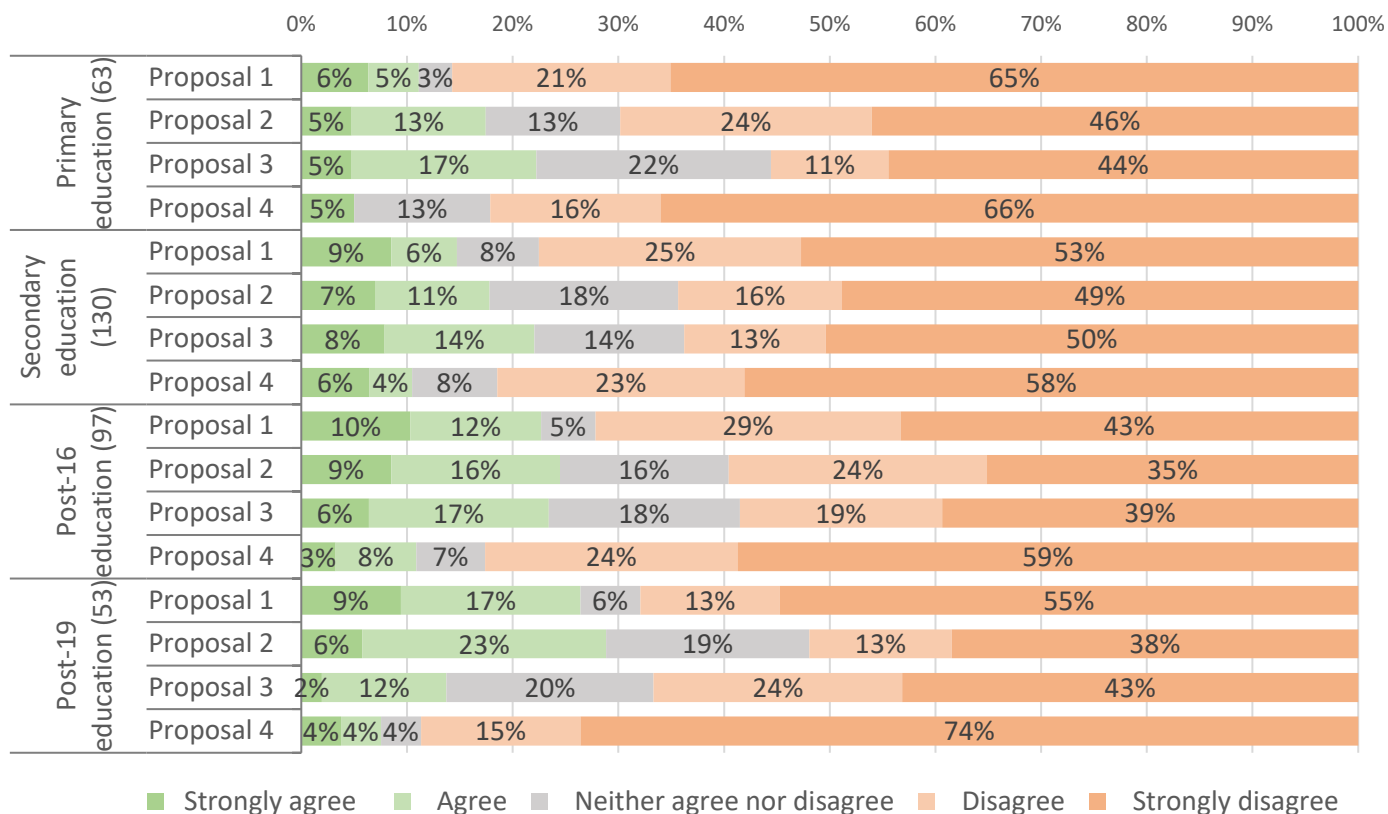
7) 'How much do you agree or disagree with the proposals?' by 'Who you are'

The chart below shows the level of agreement/disagreement with all four proposals by the three biggest groups of respondents. Of the three main groups, parents/carers of learners with SEND were least likely to agree with all four proposals, whilst educational staff/governors were more likely to agree.



8) 'How much do you agree or disagree with the proposals?' by 'Education setting'

The chart below shows the level of agreement/disagreement with all four proposals by the relevant education setting. All educational settings were least likely to agree with Proposal 4, compared to the other proposals.



9) Do you have any different proposals we could consider, other than those raised in this consultation?

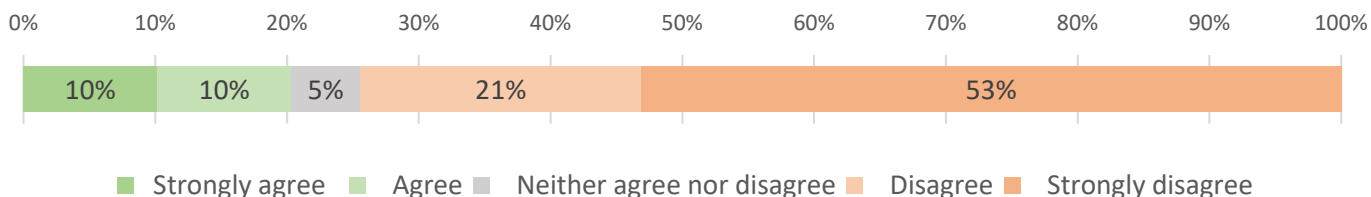
In total, 133 respondents left a comment. The comments were analysed and categorised into themes. The table below shows the common themes:

Theme/suggestion	Count	% of comments	Example comment
Fund from elsewhere in LCC budget	34	26%	I feel things should stay the same and the council should find other ways to cut back on costs
Opposition to proposals	32	24%	The idea that taking away much needed transport to plug a hole that is many times the savings made is obscene.
Prioritise/assess individual cases	20	15%	Individually assess the needs. Pay more to those who need personal assistants, and less to those who just need taxis. Don't have a blanket policy that affects everyone in the same way.
More SEN settings/places needed	11	8%	If Leeds provided an educational setting that met my son's needs within 3 miles of our home I would happily send him there. We should not be financially punished that there are no educational placements that meet my child needs.
Miscellaneous	10	8%	To make autism and SEND assessment to easily accessible and quicker.
Review legal/ statutory moral/ responsibility	8	6%	
LCC should run in-house transport	8	6%	
Means test support	8	6%	
Independent travel training	7	5%	
No suggestion	6	5%	
Sharing transport e.g. carpool, taxis, etc.	6	5%	
Support for changes	5	4%	
Encourage parents with mileage/wear & tear payments	4	3%	
Parents/carers should use PIP/benefits	3	2%	
Combination of the proposals	4	3%	
Schools should run own transport	2	2%	

Proposal 1

10) How much do you agree or disagree with the proposal to limit post-16 transport assistance to learners with SEND, living 3 or more miles from their education setting?

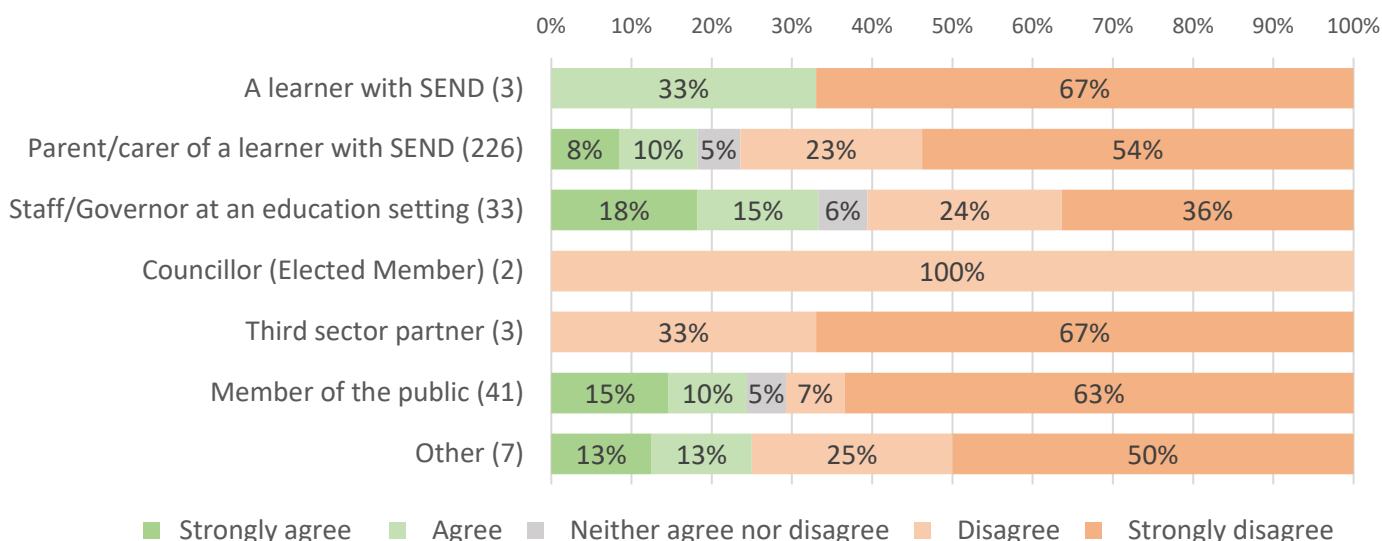
Overall, 20% of respondents were in agreement with Proposal 1, whilst three quarters of respondents disagreed (74%).



11) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 1?' by 'Who you are'

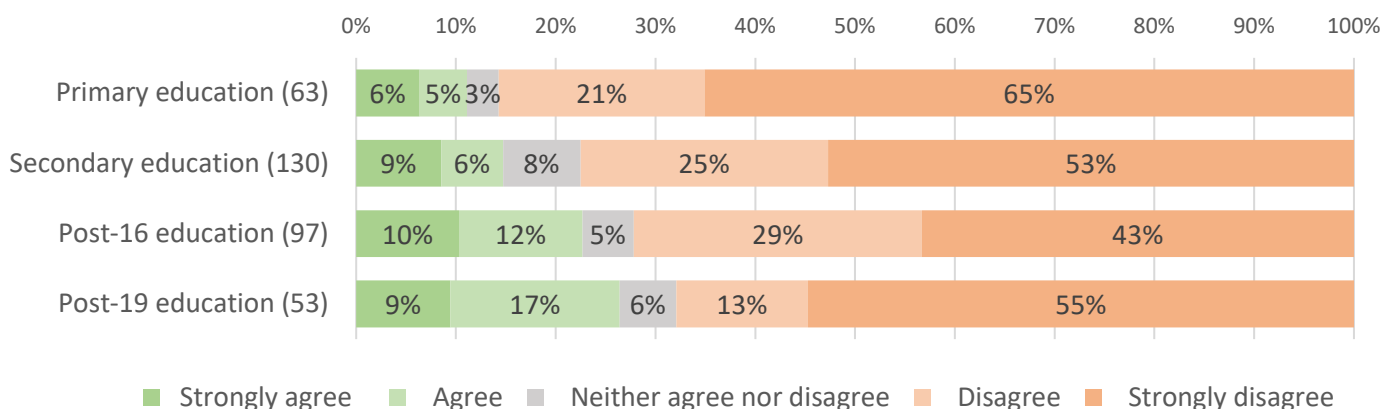
Please note the figures in brackets next to the axis, which indicate the number of respondents within that group, as they are very low for some groups.

Staff/Governors were less likely to disagree with Proposal 1 (60%), compared to parents/carers of learners with SEND and members of the public (77% and 70% respectively).



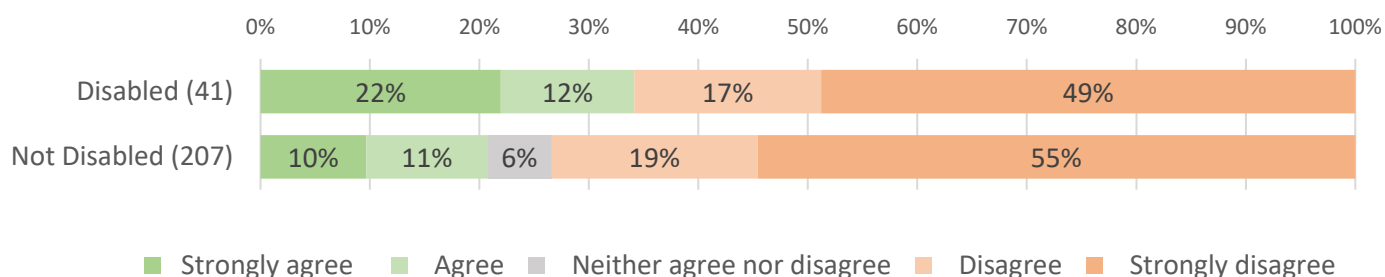
12) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 1?' by 'Education setting'

Overall, the trend shows that the level of agreement with Proposal 1 increases as the level of education setting gets higher.



13) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 1?' by 'Do you consider yourself to be disabled?'

Disabled respondents were more likely to agree with Proposal 1 (34%) compared to respondents with no disability (21%).



Comments on Proposal 1:

Respondents were asked to provide open text comments explaining the reasons for their level of agreement/disagreement. In total, 205 left a comment.

The comments were analysed and categorised into themes. The table below shows the common themes. Themes highlighted in green were from respondents who agreed with the the proposal, whilst those in red were from respondents who disagreed with the proposal.

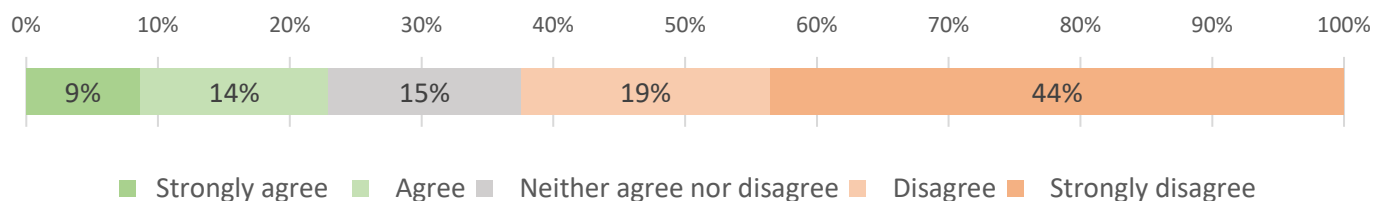
Theme	Count	% of comments	Example comment
Many SEN learners cannot travel themselves	48	23%	My child has learning disability's which stops them from been able to plan and make a journey to their education setting they need this to keep them in education
Impact on working parents/carers	38	19%	The impact to working families is massive. It would take around 30 minutes each way to take our child to school.
Negative impact on learners education/attendance	32	16%	Without funded transport I would have been unable to complete my university degree to better myself and break the cycle of being labelled 'the girl with additional needs who won't leave school with any qualifications or be able to hold a secure job'.
General opposition to proposal	23	11%	Because these young people are ALWAYS last on the list with any funding either in school or transport !!! And I as a parent are absolutely furious !!
Proposal is unfair/discriminatory	23	11%	It is discriminatory as SEND children cannot necessarily independently travel like mainstream children. Lack of provision also means they are forced to travel.
Prioritise/asses each case individually	16	8%	
Financial burden/ hardship	15	7%	
Families with multiple SEN children	14	7%	
Danger/safety risk	14	7%	
Not enough SEN settings	12	6%	
Will cause upset/stress for learner	11	5%	
Important to encourage independence	8	4%	

Miscellaneous	8	4%	
3 miles is a reasonable distance to walk, taxi etc	7	3%	
Responsibility on parents/carers e.g. can use benefits/other funding	5	2%	
Acknowledge need for LCC to save money	5	2%	
Each case should be assessed individually/ support prioritised	5	2%	
Miscellaneous	4	2%	
Proposal is fair/reasonable	4	2%	

Proposal 2

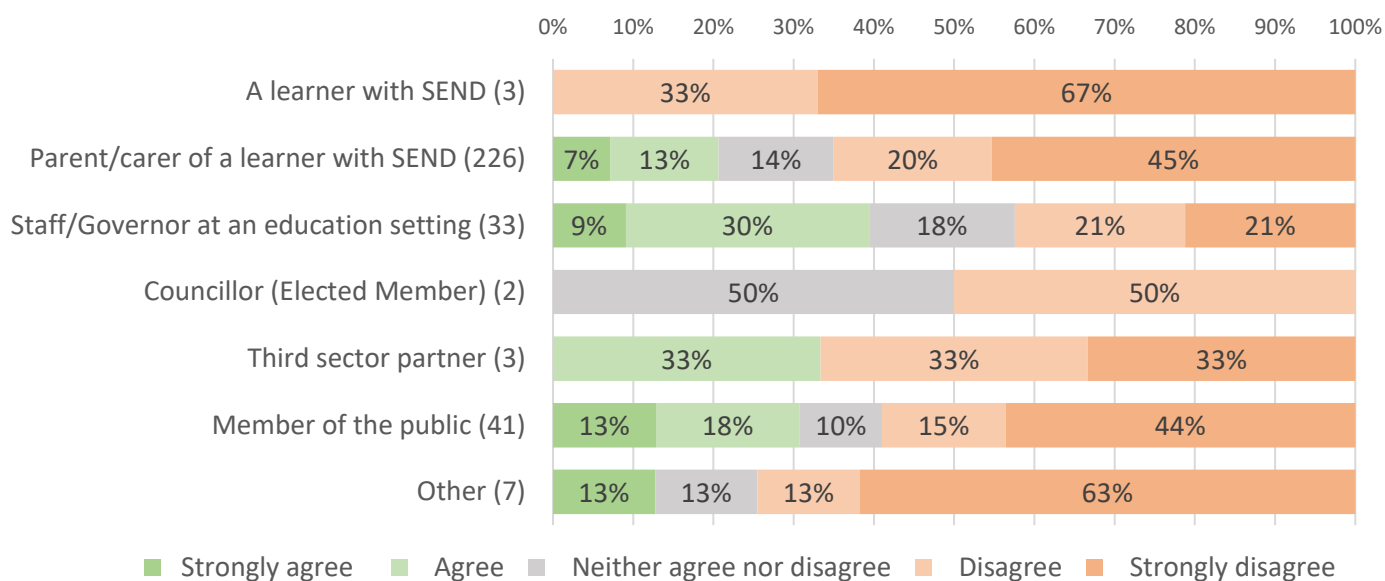
14) How much do you agree or disagree with the proposal to offer a Personal Transport Allowance for eligible post-16 learners with SEND?

Overall, almost a quarter of respondents (23%) of respondents were in agreement with Proposal 2, whilst 63% disagreed.



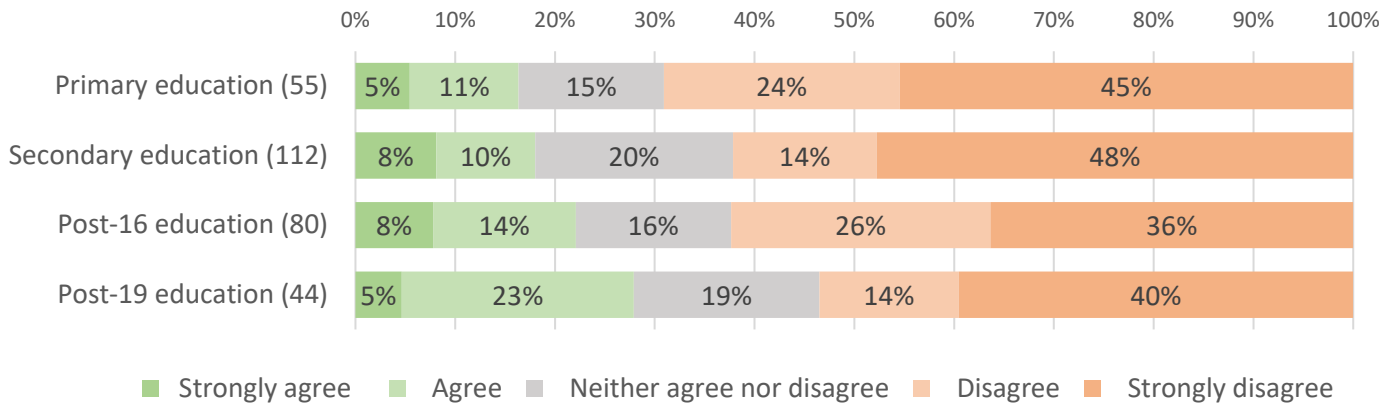
15) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 2' by 'Who you are'

Staff/Governors were less likely to disagree with Proposal 2 (42%), compared to parents/carers and members of the public, 65% and 59% respectively.



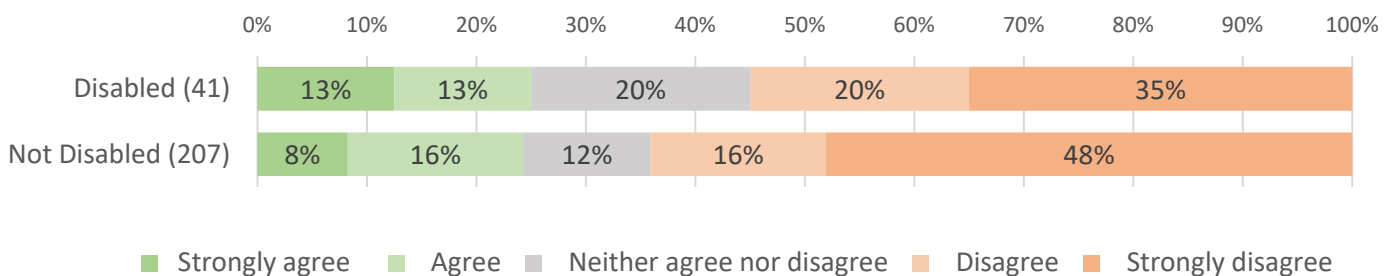
16) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 2' by 'Education setting'

Overall, the trend shows that the level of agreement with Proposal 2 increases as the level of education setting gets higher.



17) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 2?' by 'Do you consider yourself to be disabled?'

Disabled respondents were less likely to disagree with Proposal 2 (55%) compared to respondents with no disability (64%).



Comments on Proposal 2:

Respondents were asked to provide open text comments explaining the reasons for their level of agreement/disagreement. In total, 174 left a comment.

The comments were analysed and categorised into themes. The table below shows the common themes. Themes highlighted in green were from respondents who agreed with the the proposal, whilst those in red were from respondents who disagreed with the proposal.

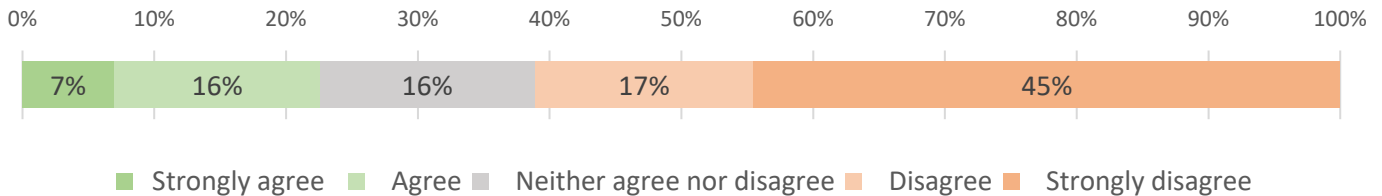
Theme	Count	% of comments	Example comment
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PTA amount won't be enough	35	20%	The amount you are offering is negligible and wouldn't even begin to support a young person travelling to and therefore attending a provision that best meets need.
Impact on working parents/carers	31	18%	If there was no transport in place this would mean parents not being able to work.
Financial burden/ hardship	23	13%	If you bring this proposal in you will isolate an already vulnerable group of people further and increase the likelihood of that family living in poverty.
Many SEN learners cannot travel themselves	21	12%	My son has complex needs and it would not be safe for him to make his own way to school on public transport over 12 miles away.
Danger/ safety risk	19	11%	The concern would be the reliability and safety of this option. Students with SEND are vulnerable and this wouldn't be suitable - certainly not for my child
Public transport/staff not suitable/trained for severe needs	16	9%	
General disruption for families/families with more than one child	14	8%	
Proposal is fair/reasonable	13	7%	
Negative impact on learners education/ attendance	12	7%	
Taxis/public transport unreliable	11	6%	
Will provide more flexibility/independence	11	6%	
Not all parents drive	9	5%	
Miscellaneous	7	4%	
General opposition to proposal	7	4%	
PTA hard to manage for parents/carers	7	4%	
Each case should be assessed individually/ support prioritised	6	3%	
Proposal is fair provided the transport is appropriate and safe	6	3%	
Proposal is unfair/discriminatory	5	3%	
Have enough to deal with already	5	3%	
Prioritise/asses each case individually	5	3%	
LCC/Government legal/statutory/moral responsibility for SEN	5	3%	
Will cause upset/stress for learner	5	3%	
Acknowledge need for LCC to save money	4	2%	

Proposal 3

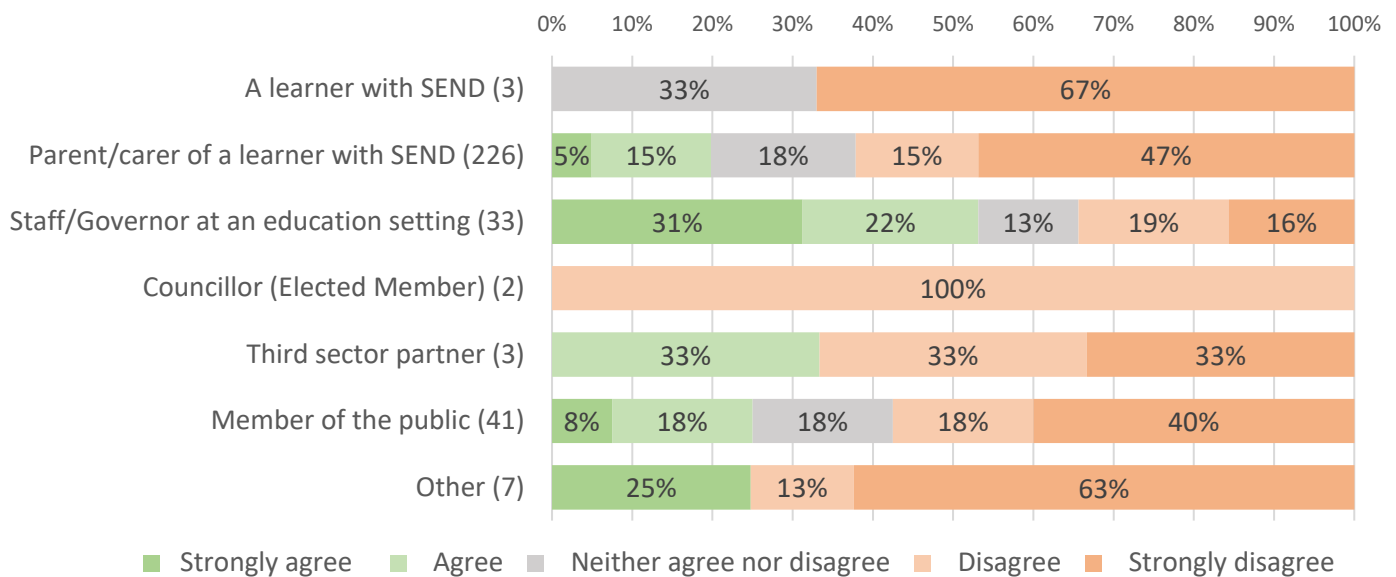
18) How much do you agree or disagree with the proposal to introduce a charge as a contribution towards the high cost of council-organised transport arrangements (for post-16 learners, excluding post-19, with SEND)?

Overall, 23% of respondents were in agreement with Proposal 3, whilst 62% of respondents disagreed.



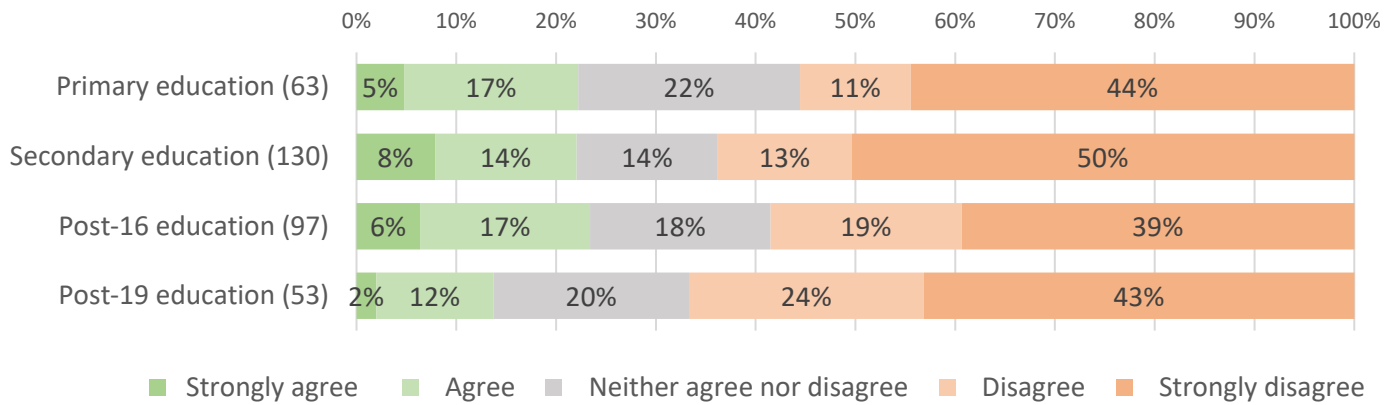
19) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 3' by 'Who you are'

Staff/Governors were significantly more likely to agree with Proposal 3 (53%), compared to parents/carers of learners with SEND and members of the public (20% and 26% respectively).



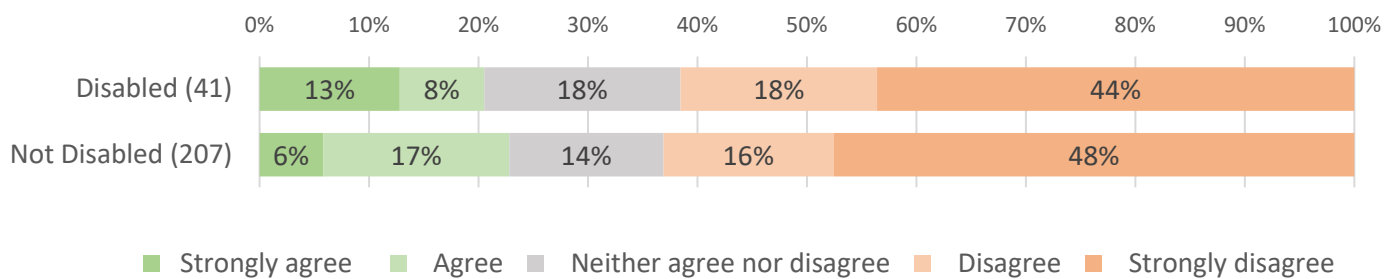
20) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 3' by 'Education setting'

Overall, respondents associated with post-19 education were most likely to disagree with Proposal 3 (67%), whilst those associated with primary education were least likely to disagree (55%).



21) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 3?' by 'Do you consider yourself to be disabled?'

Disabled respondents were slightly less likely to agree with Proposal 3 (21%) compared to respondents with no disability (23%), though the margin was very small.



Comments on Proposal 3:

Respondents were asked to provide open text comments explaining the reasons for their level of agreement/disagreement. In total, 51 left a comment.

The comments were analysed and categorised into themes. The table below shows the common themes. Themes highlighted in green were from respondents who agreed with the the proposal, whilst those in red were from respondents who disagreed with the proposal.

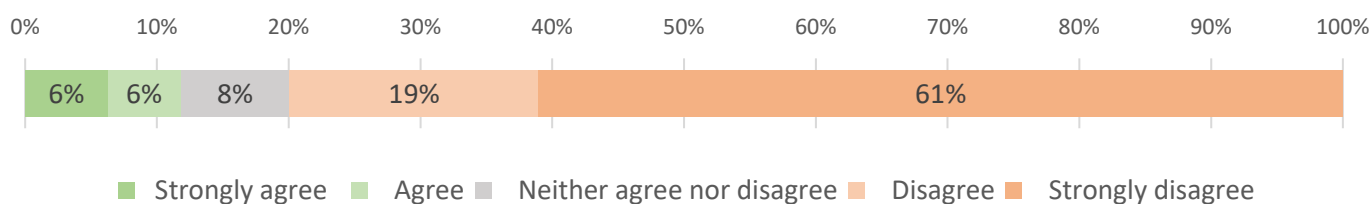
Theme	Count	% of comments	Example comment
Financial burden/ hardship	70	42%	Families with disabled children struggle as it is money wise, without this being added to the mix
Proposal is fair/ reasonable	32	19%	This seems sensible as those with greatest need would be in effect getting better value than those with less needs. Also this may discourage those that no longer need the service to use it, freeing it up for those in highest need. My only concern is how parents on low/no income would pay.
Proposal is unfair/discriminatory	18	11%	Completely unfair. Families of children with additional needs already have to pay over the average in life. Discrimination at its finest for supposedly child friendly leeds but only if you don't need extra support or cost too much.
Negative impact on learners education/ attendance	16	10%	Again, a proposal that will limit some from accessing education post 16. An Anti-aspirational measure.

LCC/Government legal/statutory/moral responsibility for SEN	13	8%	It would be totally wrong to ask one age group to pay and not the other. It should be no one or everyone! There needs to a change of Statute by central government to put this in line
Working parents/ carers	11	7%	
Adds to family burden/stress	11	7%	
Low income families	10	6%	
Limited number of/ Long distance to SEN settings	7	4%	
Considered in the context of additional funding support/PIP	7	4%	
Each case should be assessed individually/ support prioritised	6	4%	
Many SEN learners cannot travel themselves	5	3%	
Misc	5	3%	
Miscellaneous	4	2%	
Instalments/payment plan	4	2%	
Rather pay than lose the service	4	2%	
General opposition to proposal	3	2%	
Families with multiple SEN children	3	2%	
Danger/ safety risk	3	2%	
Not all families have a car	3	2%	
Charge better than no service	3	2%	

Proposal 4

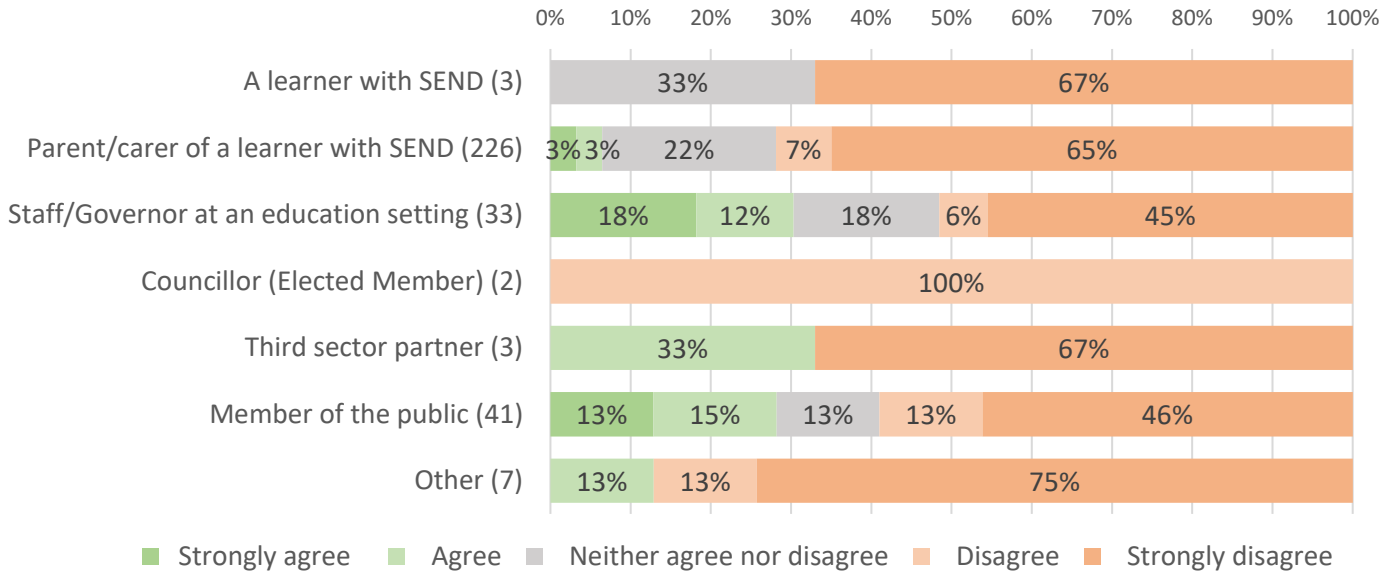
22) How much do you agree or disagree with the proposal for transport assistance to be limited to post-16 learners only, with eligibility for post-19 learners removed?

Overall, 12% of respondents were in agreement with Proposal 4, whilst 80% of respondents disagreed.



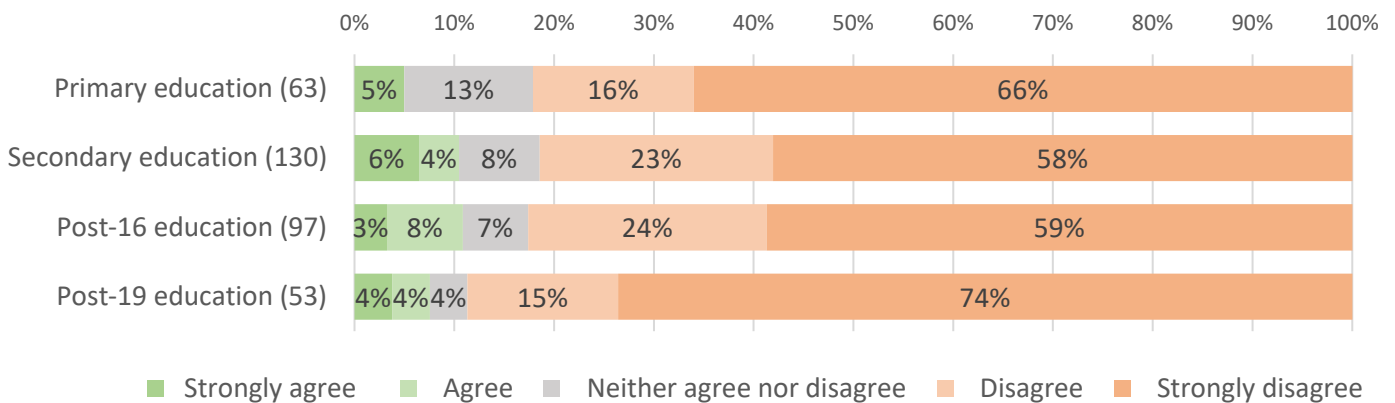
23) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 4' by 'Who you are'

Parent/carers of a learner with SEND were less likely to agree with Proposal 4 (6%), compared to staff/Governors and members of the public (30% and 28% respectively).



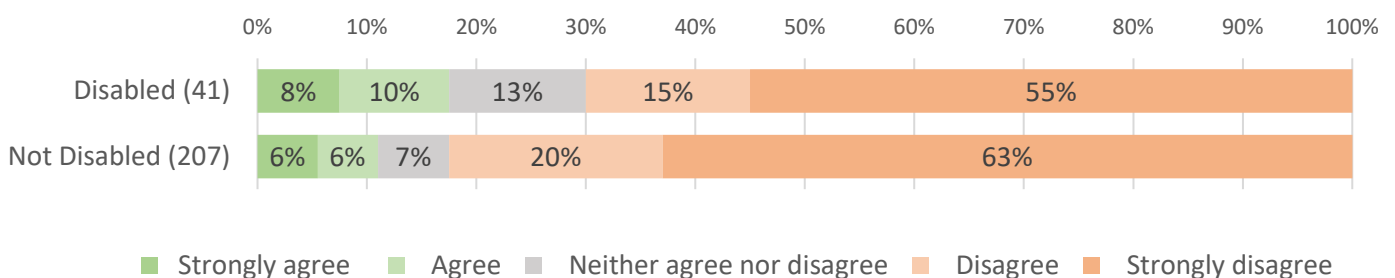
24) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 4' by 'Education setting'

Overall, respondents associated with post-19 education were most likely to disagree with Proposal 4 (89%).



25) 'How much do you agree or disagree with Proposal 4?' by 'Do you consider yourself to be disabled?'

Respondents with no disability were more likely to disagree with Proposal 4 (83%) compared to respondents with a disability (70%).



Comments on Proposal 4:

Respondents were asked to provide open text comments explaining the reasons for their level of agreement/disagreement.

In total, 165 left a comment. The comments were analysed and categorised into themes. The table below shows the common themes. Themes highlighted in green were from respondents who agreed with the the proposal, whilst those in red were from respondents who disagreed with the proposal.

Theme	Count	% of comments	Example comment
Negative impact on learners education/ attendance	64	39%	They would have no way of getting there independently so would result in less people in education and less chances of future employment
Still need support/EHCP post 19	39	24%	Disabilities don't disappear post 19. The transition into adult services is shockingly bad as it is without taking away their rights to an education
Penalises/ disadvantages post 19 SEN learners	32	19%	YP over 16 with SEND are heavily disadvantaged, this will make it worse
Impact on working parents/ carers	16	10%	
Affects future/ employment chances	15	9%	
General opposition to proposal	14	8%	
Proposal is unfair/discriminatory	14	8%	
Adds to family burden/ stress	14	8%	
Limited SEN setting choices	13	8%	
Moving the burden e.g.social care/ benefits	12	7%	
Prioritise/asses each case individually	11	7%	
Financial burden/ hardship	9	5%	
Many SEN learners cannot travel themselves	8	5%	
LCC/Government legal/statutory/moral responsibility for SEN	7	4%	
Impact on learners independence	5	3%	
Save money elsewhere in LCC	4	2%	
Post 19 learners should be financially responsible e.g receive benefits	4	2%	

Proposal is fair/reasonable	3	2%	
Transfer support responsibility to Social Care	3	2%	

Children & Young People's Feedback



Feedback from engagement sessions held at education settings during the consultation period.

Education Setting 1:

Number of Young People 10

Ages: 14-19

How do you travel to school?

By taxi/mini bus with passenger assistance (10)

What are the best things about your transport?

Passenger assistant on a taxi or minibus: "Safety, reassurance, help, rely on people for all our needs including medical."

What is most important about the journey to school?

Feeling safe (10)

Travelling with people I know and trust (10)

Education Setting 2:

Number of Young People: 9

Ages: 15-18

How do you travel to school?

Taxi/mini bus with passenger assistance (5)

Parent/carer takes you in the car (1)

Walk on your own (1)

By taxi (2)

What are the best/worst things about your transport?

Minibus: "The view, extra sleep time, talking to friends" but "Harder to get through traffic."

Taxi: "Faster, less people."

Walking: "Walk at own speed" but "Rain/bad weather"

What is most important about the journey to school?

Feeling safe (2)

Travelling with/around people who are friendly, helpful and nice to me (2)

Travelling with people I know and trust (3)

Being on time (4)

Journey time is short (2)

Travelling at the same time / route every day (2)

Feeling confident to travel on my own (3)

Education Setting 3:

Number of Young People: 6

Ages: ?

How do you travel to school?

Taxi/mini bus with passenger assistance (5)

Parent/carer takes you in the car (1)

What are the best/worst things about your transport?

Public bus: "Travel to town, bus lanes" but "Busy, noisy"

Minibus: "Feel safe" but "very quiet"

Taxi: "Faster, comfortable"

Passenger assistant on a taxi or minibus: "Trust the driver / people"

ITT with a travel buddy: "Learning how to travel"

Parents/carers take you: "Quiet and calm, feel safe, I like it."

What is most important about the journey to school?

Feeling safe (4)

Being on time (3)

Travelling with/around people who are friendly, helpful and nice to me (2)

Travelling with people I know and trust (1)

Education Setting 4:

Number of Young People: 10

Ages: 17-19

How do you travel to school?

Mini bus with escort/personal assistants (9)

By taxi (1)

What are the best/worst things about your transport?

Minibus: "Convenience of door to door pick up" but "Very loud, pressure to be on time even if using the toilet, risk of being left behind" and "some escorts don't knock on the door".

Taxi: "Friendly driver"

ITT with travel buddy: "Friendly buddy, I remember the route" but "cold weather"

What is most important about the journey to school?

Travelling with/around people who are friendly, helpful and nice to me (6)

Feeling safe (5)

Being on time (3)

Travelling with people I know and trust (2)

Education Setting 5:

Key themes:

- Impact of transport on wellbeing
- Impact of transport on social opportunities and friendships
- Many young people cannot manage the journey independently

Key summaries:

- **Feeling safe** is the key priority for learners with regards to transport
- **Social opportunities and friendships** made through travel assistance are important to the learners

Analysis of feedback received via email during the consultation period.

Email Response 1

Summary:

- Distance is irrelevant for complex need
- PTA must meet needs of learner
- Transport must be appropriate and well equipped
- Removing transport increases adult social care demand and LCC tribunals costs
- Huge impact on wellbeing and financial capacity of working parents/carers
- Provision should be needs based and not undermine wellbeing of learner and parents/carers

- **Comments on Option 1:**
 - “Distance is irrelevant if the child is vulnerable or has complex needs”
 - “3 miles might as well be 30”
 - Problematic for parents with more than 1 child who attend different schools. How are parents supposed to get all children to school on time?
- **Comments on Option 2:**
 - This option could be a valid option given:
 - “It truly meets the need of some families”
 - “The allowance meets the actual cost of travel”
 - “Council-provided transport is not abolished”
- **Comments on Option 3:**
 - This is “acceptable, providing the contribution was set at a reasonable level”
 - Also relies on the assurance that provided transport is equipped and suitable to transport learners with complex needs, for example being able to transport wheelchairs.
- **Comments on Option 4:**
 - None
- **Additional Comments**
 - Concerns on the impact on the adult social care budget if vulnerable learners are unable to attend their settings
 - Concerns that the overwhelming pressure of having a vulnerable young adult at home all the time could force parents into giving up care of their children to adult social care, increasing costs for the LA
 - The stress and added pressure the removal of transport could have on the family/working parents could cause complete breakdowns of the caring role
 - Also raised concerns about the costs involved in hearing appeals if preferred transport arrangements were denied and appeals went to LCC tribunals
- **Respondent Conclusion:**
 - “Consultation with the young people involved is vital”
 - “Any outcomes have to be consistent with the local authority’s duty to promote their well-being”
 - “The proposal should not undermine the needs of parent carers, their necessity to work and to grow and develop”

- “While there might be a case for personal travel plans, they need to be truly appropriate and negotiated rather than imposed, and the financial assistance needs to actually cover the real costs.”
- “Realistic contributions to an annual bus pass could be considered”

Email Response 2

Summary:

- Distance is irrelevant for complex needs
- Charges for transport during a financial crisis could have major impacts on family poverty
- Increased pressure on families from cuts to transport risk families being forced to surrender care of their young people to the council.
- Important social networks for the young people will be disrupted.
- There is a moral argument against these proposals, both in terms of creating barriers for SEND young people, as well as negatively impacting the wellbeing of both the young people and their parents/carers.
- **Comments on Option 1:**
 - “If a SEND learner has complex needs and equipment, then the distance is irrelevant.”
- **Comments on Option 2:**
 - None
- **Comments on Option 3:**
 - “Charging for school transport could impose costs on to families who have few financial resources, especially at a time of a cost-of-living crisis. LCC needs to avoid increasing family poverty – or even destitution – in situations where income is already very low.”
- **Comments on Option 4:**
 - None
- **Additional Comments**
 - “If cuts to school transport cause extra stress for families, there is a danger that the cost to them is coping with more pressure to the point where the continued care of their children becomes unsustainable and the council is asked to take over that care.”
 - The proposals cannot be “morally justified”.
 - “There is a concern that young people lose contact with people who they have traditionally travelled to school with and important social networks are disrupted.”
 - Mentioned the impact on working parents, and those who may need to give up employment which is an “unacceptable” scenario.
 - Pressure on families with children that go to different schools, and education settings that are “beyond the boundaries of Leeds”.
 - “[This] could result in extra pressure for parents, job losses or a reduction in working hours. The emotional and financial cost in these circumstances, therefore, is simply unacceptable.”
 - Moral arguments:
 - “There is a strong moral – as opposed to legal - argument that a group of learners who clearly need the community’s support should continue to be prioritised and that current levels of service are not cut, even at a time of financial constraint.”

- “The restriction of choice implied in the post-16 transport proposals potentially and actually creates barriers for the post-16 group of SEND learners.”
- “Nor is it clear to us whether there are specific plans in place to consult young people themselves.”

Email Response 3

- A union-led report based on a survey undertaken with professionals working in specialist provisions and parents/carers of children and young people with SEND. The report included stakeholder feedback on the provision of transport services by the local authority in comparison to the private sector.

Email Response 4

Summary:

- Generally support independent travel arrangements on the understanding that provision will still be needs based
- Reducing access to transport assistance will result in an increase in NEET young people as they do not have access to sufficient travel arrangements
- With a large majority of SEND families coming from more deprived areas of the city, a contribution to travel would negatively impact lower-income families.
- The impact of removing post-19 transport would be “devastating for the life chances of post-19 learners as a result of not being able to access the education, training and preparation for adult life outcomes identified”

- **Comments on Option 1:**

- **Neither Agree or Disagree**
- “We are generally supportive of promoting independent travel arrangements for post-16 students with SEND. However, there needs to be adequate eligibility criteria in place so special circumstances and flexibilities can be applied to retain travel assistance for certain post-16 SEND learners inside a 3-mile radius.”
- “It is unclear whether the proposal would also include the flexibility on offer to pupils aged 8 to 16 that meet certain criteria but that live within a 3-mile radius of their education setting. The Children’s Transport Policy does, for instance, enable transport assistance for children “with a statement of special educational needs (SEN) or an Education Health and Care (EHC) plan”.”
- “Ensuring travel arrangements are accessible for learners within a 3-mile radius for whom independent travel is out of reach should be a priority if this proposal is pursued.”

- **Comments on Option 2:**

- **Disagree**
- “A personal transport allowance could offer support to some young people in accessing educational provision. However, as with Proposal 1, it is critical that transport assistance is retained for those learners with the most complex needs at post-16 and post-19, for whom independent travel is out of reach.”
- “While the current proposal does indicate that a certain level of flexibility would be explored for post-16 learners with the most complex needs, we would be more inclined to be supportive of this proposal if post-16 and post-19 students in specialist provision types retained their current level of transport provision.”
- “With centrally coordinated transport, economies of scale can be achieved by sharing transport where appropriate and applying strategic software to calculate journeys.”

- “There is a strong chance that increased numbers of post-16 students with the highest level of need will become NEET, as a result of an inability to either source or maintain travel arrangements.”

- **Comments on Option 3:**

- **Neither Agree or Disagree**

- “At [REDACTED], we host [REDACTED] high needs learners, of which a significant 78% utilise the transport arrangements provided by Leeds City Council.”
- “The vast majority of families too come from deprived areas of the city and the introduction of a charge as a contribution would simply serve to exclude many of our most complex learners from education, resulting in them becoming NEET if current transport arrangements are not retained.”
- “Parents of young people in specialist provision already face significant burdens, whether it be on their time or finances. Increasing these burdens through implementing a transport arrangement charge seems the incorrect outcome and could worsen the learner’s home environment.”
- “If this proposal were to be pursued, it would be vital that the Council establish a scheme that allows lower-income families to either access retained free transport arrangements for their children or to pay the charge at a significantly reduced rate.”

- **Comments on Option 4:**

- **Strongly Disagree**

- “The majority of the [REDACTED] high needs learners attending our [REDACTED] [REDACTED] are post-19.”
- “[REDACTED] 88% of [REDACTED] learners at [REDACTED] relied on the council’s transport assistance to and from college last year. A large proportion of learners at this specialist setting have significant disabilities requiring significant adaptations around transport. The council’s transport assistance is therefore paramount to being able to support these needs.”
- “If all transport assistance was removed for post-19 learners with SEND, provision at [REDACTED] would likely either be significantly reduced in impact, unable to proceed entirely, or be only accessible to post-19 learners with SEND who were fortunate enough to have parents that could either directly support or fund their travel to and from the setting.”
- “The impact would be devastating for the life chances of post-19 learners as a result of not being able to access the education, training and preparation for adult life outcomes identified.”
- “There would be exponential costs to the adult social care bill in the city as a result of tinkering with transport provision for post-19 learners as expensive social care placements would be an only option.”
- “We would be very happy to provide powerful case studies demonstrating the strong reliance on transport assistance for post-19 learners at [REDACTED] if required.”

- **Additional Comments**
 - “Defined flexibilities should be in place for post-16 students with SEND for whom independent travel is impractical, unachievable or unsafe.”
 - “A distinction should be made between post-16 SEND learners in mainstream provision and post-16 SEND learners in specialist provision. Extremely high percentages of those in specialist provision require significantly more support than their peers in mainstream settings. Retaining travel assistance for students in specialist provision should form a dimension in any proposal pursued.”
 - “Parents of young people in specialist provision are already under significant burdens, whether on their time or finances. Increasing these burdens as a result of removing post-16 travel assistance for these learners would not be the correct approach.”
 - “Where suitable, encouraging independent travel arrangements is an approach that we support.”
 - “Post-16 learners with SEND who attend a specialist setting should retain the current level of travel assistance from the council. Without this, we risk increasing numbers of high needs post-16 learners with SEND becoming NEET.”

Email Response 5

Summary:

- Distance is irrelevant
- The burden on the family/working parents is hugely increased
- Many families of SEND are already stretched financially so a contribution isn't feasible
- Removing post-19 is a breach of the rights of young adults to “access meaningful daytime activities, and to be able to access them independently as young adults without being reliant on family”
- Removing transport assistance will prevent learners from attending appropriate settings, will increase social isolation and will increase their “barriers to an ordinary life”
- **Comments on Option 1:**
 - “Whether these young people live 3 miles or 30 miles from college should be irrelevant - they are very vulnerable young adults and are unable to travel independently.”
 - “This would put the burden on parents and carers to get the young people to and from college, again taking away the young persons independence.”
 - “Many of the parents will be needing to get to work themselves and would then have to factor in getting their young people to and from college at 9am and 3pm.”
- **Comments on Option 2:**
 - “This feels very wrong to put the burden on the family and totally takes away the young persons independence to get to college and services without relying on family, surely the families do enough without having to provide transport as well?”
- **Comments on Option 3:**
 - “This will be impossible for many families, they already pay quite significantly towards their Commissioned Services and additional costs will just stop people from attending college and services.”
- **Comments on Option 4:**
 - “This is shocking and would prevent learners from attending college and prevent them from attending Commissioned Services once they've left college.”

- “The commissioned services would then maybe have to close due to lack of customers.”
- “It is surely a human right for these young people to be able to access meaningful daytime activities, and to be able to access them independently as young adults without being reliant on family to get them there and back?”
- **Additional Comments**
 - “I am very concerned that the proposed changes can only result in these young people becoming socially isolated and unable to have any independence from their families, in line with their mainstream peers, while the burden on the families will be increased.”
 - “I think it's inevitable that a number of these young people will simply become unable to attend college and day services.”
 - “The House of Lords Joint Committee on the Human Rights of Adults with Learning Disabilities Report (2008) includes the necessity/obligation of government to 'support (adults with learning disabilities) to participate in the local community' in order to remove 'barriers to an ordinary life'. I am very concerned the proposed changes to transport arrangements are contrary to this obligation.”

Email Response 6

Summary:

- This would be a retrograde step and detrimental to the young people.
- Without organised transport from Leeds City Council we would need to find a way to get ■■■ to school without impacting our ability to work and make money.
- I do not accept any of the options they have given and strongly advocate for the preservation of the existing service.
- This just seems like a low blow picking on the most vulnerable in society.
- As it happens we live slightly over 3 miles away but my opinion is that distance is irrelevant.