

Home to School Transport

05 February 2020

Members wished to make the following comments and conclusions:	Response/Comments	RAG Status
<p>Members felt that if the current mileage rate is currently at 47p per mile then consideration should be given to lowering the rate to the HMRC level of 45p. Members further asked for clarification whether this figure was for the whole council, or just school staff.</p>	<p>The view of the Committee will be passed onto Human Resources and Finance for consideration. The Independent Strategic Review of Transport did not consider the expenses of school staff as part of its analysis.</p> <p>HR - The rate of 47p was agreed as part of Single Status Collective Agreement in 2013. This rate covers all employees on NJC Terms and Conditions, including support staff in schools.</p> <p>Any changes to this would involve formal consultation with the recognised trade unions.</p>	Yellow
<p>Members felt that it was not possible to make recommendations until they had sight of the results of the public consultation, as there may be issues raised that were not addressed by the review, <u>however Members wished to make the following comments for consideration and request for further information:</u></p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p>	Green
<p>Members sought clarification that only those taking their own children to school would receive a cash lump sum and sought assurance how this would be monitored? As a result of this, Members recognised this could potentially increase car usage on the roads and asked if any environmental research had been carried out?</p>	<p>By agreement, some parents, predominantly of those children with additional learning needs, already receive mileage payments to take their children to school, even though the local authority has a statutory duty to provide free home-to-school transport. There will likely be an increased administrative burden if this arrangement is expanded more widely and this will therefore need to be factored into any future arrangement, if agreed as a way forward.</p>	Yellow
<p>Members believed that further work needs to be done to maximise the use of social services transport vehicles.</p>	<p>None of the recommendations or findings in the Independent Strategic Review of Transport have been verified by officers. Further analysis of the findings and of the practicalities and feasibility of utilising social services vehicles will be needed prior to any decision to progress this recommendation.</p>	Yellow
<p>Members sought further clarification in respect of the Authority's Fleet Car Policy.</p>	<p>The local authority recommends the use of a fleet services hire vehicle for officers where the journey taken is over 150 miles.</p>	Yellow
<p>Members felt that the Authority should encourage healthy routes to school, where available, through greater communication with parents and children.</p>	<p>The local authority's active travel responsibilities are covered by the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2014. As part of schools' travel and transport planning processes, schools are encouraged to share the details of their travel arrangements with parents and carers. The local authority works with schools to promote alternative forms of travel and will endeavour to strengthen this communication in the future.</p>	Yellow

<p>Members felt that the potential for public transport would need to be explored and asked that the scheduled report include cost comparisons, so parents can make an informed choice.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	
<p>Members asked that the scheduled report include feedback from operators about potential changes to contracts e.g. removal of pupil escorts.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	
<p>Members recognised that given the choice between no offer of transport or paid offer of transport, some may prefer the latter. Members asked that the scheduled report include feedback on how parents feel about contributing, as a third option.</p>	<p>The public consultation did not include the option of parents to pay for transport as a dedicated option. There are a large number of possible alternative options to those that were taken forward to consultation. The impact of the most relevant alternative options will be detailed for Cabinet to consider as part of its decision making process on the current policy proposals.</p>	
<p>Members expressed concern of the potential for judicial review in respect of Post 16 Education and asked that the scheduled report include risk tables.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>	
<p>In relation to Post 16 transport, Members raised concern that protected status would be given to Welsh Medium and Faith Schools, thereby discriminating English Medium Schools, particularly affecting those within the Garw and Ogmore Valleys.</p>	<p>This is acknowledged and will be highlighted for Cabinet.</p>	
<p>Members further raised concern that this in turn could have a potential negative impact on Sixth Form attendance.</p>	<p>This is acknowledged and will be highlighted for Cabinet.</p>	
<p>Members would welcome a briefing on the benefits of a tracking system for pupils on school transport, including costings and the benefits for monitoring lone workers.</p>	<p>This is acknowledged and further details will follow once officers have concluded their preliminary investigations into the various systems available and the benefits of each.</p>	
<p>The Committee requested that a Combined Meeting of SOSC1 and SOSC2 be held on 9 March to consider the report upon Learner Travel and Post-16 Education, post consultation and pre-Cabinet Decision in April.</p>	<p>Agreed and arrangements have been made.</p>	