

Julie James AS/MS
Y Weinidog Newid Hinsawdd
Minister for Climate Change



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref AW / ML
Ein cyf/Our ref LW/02994/23

Councillor Alex Williams
Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Bridgend CBC

scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

14 December 2023

Dear Cllr Williams,

Thank you for your letter of 14 November to the Deputy Minister for Climate Change on behalf of the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee, highlighting the Committee's concerns around Home to School Transport budgets in Bridgend County Borough Council (BCB). I am responding as the Deputy Minister is unwell.

As you are aware, the legislative framework for Learner Transport in Wales is underpinned by the Learner Travel (Wales) Measure and much has changed since the Learner Travel Measure came into force in 2008. Home to school transport now accounts for a quarter of all local authority direct spending on education, which as your letter outlines is a growing cost.

Following an initial review of the Learner Travel Measure published in 2022 a further internal evaluation and analysis exercise has been undertaken by my officials between February - September this year.

As part of the most recent piece of work we reviewed all 22 local authority home to school transport and received survey responses from 14 local authorities who provided information on the costs, delivery models, issues and barriers associated with home to school transport in relation to the Measure and associated guidance. The Deputy Minister and I would like to pass on our sincere thanks to officers in Bridgend County Borough Council for their engagement on this piece of work.

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Rydym yn croesawu derbyn gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg. Byddwn yn ateb gohebiaeth a dderbynnir yn Gymraeg yn Gymraeg ac ni fydd gohebu yn Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.

We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

We are currently reviewing the recommendations report with the Minister for Education & Welsh Language and we hope to be able to publish it shortly. As the Minister for Education & Welsh Language outlined in the Senedd on 27 September 2023 we do not foresee an opportunity, in the short term, to amend the legislation itself. We will, however, be looking to update the statutory guidance documents to align with policy and legislative developments that have taken place since their publication and to reflect the feedback received by local authorities and other key stakeholders, including children and young people, in the work that has taken place thus far.

Once our review of the report has completed, we will publish its recommendations on the Welsh Government website, and we will update local authorities accordingly.

I hope this letter provides you with the reassurances required at this time by your committee.

Yours sincerely,



Julie James AS/MS
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