

Baugh, Ben

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 January 2014 22:00
To: Baugh, Ben
Subject: General overview and scrutiny committee school transport Herefordshire

Mr Baugh,

As a parent of a child attending John Masefield High School from Cradley I wish the following questions to be considered by the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee concerning the provision of school transport.

1. A consultation process took place prior to a decision being made. Were the details of this consultation process utilised in the decision making process. The details of this consultation have not been put into the public domain and I would ask for a full break down to be made available for public view rather than having to rely on a Freedom of Information application.
2. At the time of writing, the Herefordshire website informs readers that "following the consultation process a decision will be made in December" There is no mention that a decision was made on 19 December and that members of the public, parents, children or prospective parents and children have an opportunity to make comments at the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Why?
3. What form of cost analysis has been undertaken to approve the notion that £250,000 would be saved by removing the provision by the Local Authority of Transport to our excellent Schools. I am aware that our bus provider has not even been consulted. By changing the goal posts and saying that our children from Cradley will now receive transport to their nearest school means that herefordshire would still have to fund buses to Worcestershire saving maybe 2 miles on the route. However this would be over The Malvern Hills and I would imagine would use far more fuel. Not only would these children have to be transported out of County but children in years 10 and 11 would still be transported to John Masefield. In other words two buses rather than the current one. I understand that the same would be replicated in Colwall and other villages and towns across the County.
4. What consideration has been given to the most important people who will be affected by this cut, the children. In the case of my daughter, she has just settled into secondary school, which she loves. She has made new friends and has settled into her studies. To force her to move to another school would be detrimental to her both educationally and undoubtedly psychologically as well. If we were a wealthy family maybe we could incur the cost of transporting her. This therefore goes against the governments philosophy of being able to choose a good school for your children. It is also tantamount to discriminating against those being less well off being able to choose a school for their children as they would have to opt for where the transport went.
5. What provisions will be given to children who have Special Educational needs and require transportation.
6. Herefordshire has spent a vast amount of money on the children and Young Persons "Yes we can" plan. Multi agency working to make things better for children in Herefordshire.

Have this team been part of the consultation process?

7. As part of the consultation process, what other authorities/ organisations have been consulted with to share best practice and best value.

8. Current parents of children in year 6 were not informed of this proposed change and have therefore made their preferences for secondary education based on inaccurate data. If the changes go ahead how will they rectify their choices.

9. Do Herefordshire Council appreciate that by forcing children to be educated outside of County they will be discouraging younger families from locating to the area, forcing families to leave or move closer to towns and therefore leave the rural villages. This must be discrimination!

10. What thought has been given to Green Issues. More cars transporting children to school. Greater congestion in towns. Increased environmental damage and road repairs.

I would encourage this committee to overturn a decision which I feel may have been made in haste rather than taking into account the full facts. I would appreciate an update as to the progress of this decision making process. Hopefully the local electorate and media will be kept fully apprised of this matter.

Please pass all my questions to the General Overview and Scrutiny Committee and I look forward to reading the responses in the minutes.

Kind Regards

