

Post 16 SEN Transport Consultation

Outcomes

A total of 39 completed response forms were received online, by email and by post.

The summary of these responses is:

- Q1 Do you think in the current financial climate the LA should provide transport in excess of the statutory minimum?
35 said Yes and 4 said No. Of those who said Yes, 28 (80%) are parents and 20 of these (57%) in receipt of free transport. Of those who said No, 3 (75%) are parents and none of them are in receipt of free transport.
- Q2 If no, who should fund this extra provision? 19 answered (but only 4 said No) as follows:
Make savings elsewhere e.g.:
- Merge/close small schools with too few pupils;
 - Get rid of local councillors;
 - Stop wasting money on projects like the refurbishment of the Masters House in Leominster at £2.92m;
 - Cut back on councillors expenses;
 - Reduce the Chief Executives salary to £45,000;
 - Raise council tax to fund the cost of provision;
 - Parents/guardians to make contributions.
- Q3 Please give us your views on the proposals. The main issues for those against the proposals are:
- The proposed cost of paying for a seat - £660 per annum – is much too expensive.
 - Single parent families will struggle financially
 - It will cause greater financial trouble especially in the current climate
 - Post 16 education is now mandatory and parents will be forced to pay
 - Most SEN pupils require specialist transport and it is therefore wrong to make parents find alternative transport if they can't pay the proposed level of contribution

Those in favour of the proposals cited discrimination against those without special needs already paying a contribution and another said that extra benefits are already provided to those families with extra needs.

- Q4 If the proposals are implemented will they affect you and your family, your school or your organisation?
30 (81%) said Yes and 7 (19%) said No.

If Yes please let us know how:

- The financial cost of paying for school transport was the main issue;
- Will have to give up work/reduce hours to provide own transport;
- Mobility and independence of pupils will be compromised if transport not available.

Q5 Please give us your views about the timing of introducing the revised policy, if it is agreed. These ranged from “never” to “April or September 2014 at the earliest”. The majority believing that the raising of the statutory school leaving age should be taken into account (the Raising of the Participation Age is clearly widely misunderstood).

Analysis of respondents:

The majority of the respondents are Herefordshire citizens (95%).

56% have a child/children who currently receive free transport to school.

65% of respondents have a child or children who will be affected by the proposals.

16% of respondents are members of staff or governors of schools.

Proposal options:

1. Maintain status quo – find savings from somewhere else
2. Implement proposed change in entitlement
3. Implement proposals from:
 - a. April 2014 for all pupils;
 - b. September 2014 for pupils;
 - c. September 2014 for all new entrants at schools i.e. maintain status quo for all those currently in receipt of free Post 16 SEN transport;
 - d. Some other date.