

Time commenced - 5.30pm
Time finished - 8.10pm

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING.
17 JULY 2007**

Present: Councillor Poulter (In the Chair)
Councillors Allen, Bayliss, Higginbottom, Rawson,
Willoughby.

Co-opted Members: Mr J. Honey - Roman Catholic Diocese Representative

13/07 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ginns.

14/07 Late Items

There were no late items.

15/07 Declarations of Interest

Name	Type of interest	Reason
Mr J.Honey	Personal	Roman Catholic Diocese Representative

16/07 Matters Referred to the Commission by Council Cabinet.

Home to School Transport.

The Commission considered a report on home to school transport referred by the Council Cabinet at its meeting on 3 July 2007. Present by invite as witnesses were the Council Cabinet Member and Director for Children and Young People, the Senior Head of Finance from that Department, the Assistant Director from the Regeneration and Community Department plus a head teacher and a parent from Roman Catholic schools and two representatives from Arriva who operate some of the local school services. As well as the policy desirability of the proposals, Commission members had regard to the principles of decision making in Article 13 of the Constitution.

Aspect 1. The amount of increased fares from September 2007 and September 2008.

The proposal is to increase the fares for both primary and secondary pupils in a staggered increment. Some of the concerns related to this subject were as follows.

Could the charges be brought in at a steadier increase to help ease the burden on the parents? This was answered by stating that the Council had treated the situation as fairly as possible, as there would still be a budget shortfall even if it was implemented as it stands. It was also noted that there were discounts given to families with more than one child.

It was asked as to whether the cost of an administrator been taken into account? A member responded that the cost of someone to administer this service had been taken into account in the figures.

The Arriva representatives were asked what their thoughts were on the subject. He mentioned that he had come from London where he had previously been working for Arriva, and they had recently scrapped charging for school pupils which had led to a massive increase in bus usage as a result

Recommendation:

The Commission members' recommendation is to review a) the number of children in a family to which the charges will apply and b) the maximum amount payable for each household by looking at the possibility of a maximum cap payable by each household. It was also recommended that the Council look at comparable authorities to draw comparisons and ideas from.

Aspect 2. The proposed requirement for payment in advance and the Impact on low income households.

Recommendation:

The Commission recommended that further consideration be given to a) how the burden of finance can be kept to a minimum, for low income families b) spreading the payments out over a greater number of instalments and c) the methods people can actually pay.

Aspect 3. The impact on faith schools and their present and potential pupils.

The Commission concluded that it was not possible to predict the impact. The monitoring proposed at Aspect 5, below, should however provide data about the actual effects.

Aspect 4. Pupils admitted in September 2007 being required to pay for school transport from September 2008.

Recommendation:

The Commission considered that the information supplied to the parents of the 2007 intake period was insufficiently clear to warrant the payment of charges by the parents of that year group.

Aspect 5. Environmental impact of potential modal shift.

Recommendation:

To monitor the impact by checking the application system, which should help to give an idea of the possible impact on the environment.

MINUTES END

The evidence-gathering part of the meeting was web-cast and can be viewed at: <http://clients.westminster-digital.co.uk/dcc/player.aspx?EventID=951>