

APPENDIX H

HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

1.0 Background

1.1 This Appendix sets out the requirements in respect of an appropriate home to school transport system to meet the needs of the proposed primary and secondary school organisation.

1.2 During both the period of informal consultation from January to March 2008 and in the period of formal consultation from the 23 June to 10 October 2008 the issue of transport has been a key concern of parents. In particular the following specific transports issues have been raised:

- home to school transport of primary age children (4-11 year olds);
- the potential or the new system of school organisation to increase the need for transport;
- the impact of the siting of the new schools in respect to safe routes to school and the possible increase of transport needs;
- the transport provision to support a more collaborative 14-19 curriculum and fair access for all young people.

1.3 An effective and efficient school transport system will be a key demand by parents and a key factor, particularly for the primary age range, in ensuring their confidence in the proposed school organisation. For all engaged in the process it is paramount that the child and their safety in travel from home to school, and at 14-19 from course centre to course centre, whether a school, the Isle of Wight College or Work Based Learning Provider, comes first.

1.4 To this end the Authority has already engaged in a number of activities which have and still are informing the transport needs of the proposed primary and secondary school organisation. In particular the following activities have sought to both inform and answer questions.

- Safe routes survey and impact in respect of the proposed new secondary schools and primary schools which may be let by competition. This will inform the competition specifications.
- Officers, as authorised from the Cabinet meeting of 3 June 2008 are undertaking a feasibility study into the most effective and efficient means to provide transport for the new school organisation, including the provision of a dedicated 'yellow bus' type service.
- Notice has been served on the current school transport lift with the Southern Vectis Omnibus Company (SVOC) which will allow the Council to let a new contract for the school lift, either in respect to the current school system or, subject to Cabinet approval, the proposed system of school organisation.

A detailed paper covering the above and meeting the outline transport needs set out in this Appendix will be brought to the March 2009 meeting of the Cabinet. This paper will make appropriate recommendations for Cabinet decision. The outcome of Cabinet decisions in March 2009 will then be

incorporated in the publication of the statutory notices for each school in September 2009 as set out in Appendix P.

- 1.5 The costs of provision should be able to be met from the current funding sources for school transport. Overall the volume of school lift is unlikely to exceed that of the current provision. However, there will need to be some reallocation of resources within the current budget to meet the needs of a primary and secondary school organisation. The Authority will need to assess the merit of the current resource allocation with reference to the proposed change in structure, particularly in areas of discretionary support.

2.0 Provision of the School Lift

Safe routes to school

- 2.1 Under the Education Act 1996 (s.508B), the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the 2006 Admissions Code there is a duty upon the Local Authority to ensure suitable home to school travel arrangements are made where necessary to facilitate a child's attendance at school, to assess the safety of the routes children use to travel to a school and carry out an impact study of transport upon the safety of the school entrance. Where the routes to a school are declared unsafe the Authority has a duty to undertake appropriate infrastructure development to bring the routes used to a safe standard or provide transport until such time as the route is declared safe.
- 2.2 Where the required development is related to the school entrance the cost is part of the DCSF school capital grant which the Authority receives. However, where it is related to the highway it is part of the Council's capital funding. Infrastructure development can be the provision of a crossing patrol, footpath or similar. The Authority must make a decision on the most effective manner to achieve a safe route; setting out a timescale and detailing the transport provision to be provided until this is achieved.
- 2.3 Currently the Authority has undertaken the appropriate surveys in respect of schools which may be let by competition and, subject to Cabinet approval, this information, and the action to be taken, will form a detailed aspect of the specifications for these schools to be published in January 2009 (ref. Appendix O). Subject to the Cabinet approval to proceed with the proposals for school organisation the remaining surveys will be carried out between December 2008 and March 2009 to allow for a full report, with recommendations, to Cabinet in March 2009. The decision of Cabinet will then form a detailed part of the proposed statutory notice for each school in September 2009.

Primary School Transport

- 2.4 In transporting children of the 4-11 age range the Authority has a duty to provide a transport service with appropriate adult escort. In setting out the structure for such a service it is proposed that the escort ratio of children to an adult will be 15 (children) to 1 (adult). The escorts will be part of the receiving primary school support staff. In this way the escorts will provide continuity for parents and children from the pick up point to schools and from school to the dropping off point at the end of the day. However the service is provided, all drivers and escorts will be required to have a current Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check.

2.5 A number of respondents in the consultation have indicated that they feel the proposed system of school organisation will increase the need for transport and movement of children across the Island. The Authority is challenged that this will increase cost and negates the Council's own Eco-Island objectives and desire to reduce carbon emissions. The table below sets out the indicative transport needs in respect of the proposals for primary school provision consulted upon from 23 June 2008 to 10 October 2008.

School	Transport Need	Comment
Newport Area		
Arreton CE VC Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Barton Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Carisbrooke CE VC Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Chillerton & Rookley Primary	Initially no increased need for transport. Once the new Godshill school is built new transport need.	Transport provision needed from the opening of the new Godshill site.
Hunnyhill Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Newport CE VA Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Nine Acres Primary	No increased need for transport.	
St. Thomas of Canterbury RC VA primary	No increased need for transport.	
Summerfields	No increased need for transport.	
New Primary School (Downside Middle site)	No increased need for transport.	Provision subject to Pan re-generation development.
Cowes Area		
Cowes Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Gurnard Primary	Some current lift into the school. Possible need for additional lift on transfer to the Solent middle site.	This may be reduced by appropriate cycle way and footpath development.
Love Lane Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Northwood Primary	No increased need for transport.	
East Cowes Area		
Holy Cross RC VA Primary	Some current lift into the school. This may need some increase if the school moves to the Whippingham primary site.	
New Primary Osborne middle site.	Once the new school is established there will be a need for some lift from the town area and Whippingham.	If Holy Cross moves to the Whippingham site a combined lift will cover both schools.
Ryde Area		
Binstead Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Dover Park Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Haylands Primary	Some possible lift need when the school moves to the	

School	Transport Need	Comment
	Swanmore middle site.	
Greenmount Primary	Some possible lift need when the school moves to the Swanmore middle site.	
Oakfield CE VA Primary	No increased need for transport.	
St. Mary's RC VA primary	No increased need for transport.	
Wootton Primary	No increased need for transport.	
East Wight Area		
Bembridge CE VA Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Brading CE VC Primary	Subject to the decision in respect of St. Helen's Primary School there will be a need for new lift between these schools.	The timescale for any new lift will depend on the cessation of site use in respect to any of these schools.
Nettlestone Primary		
St. Helen's Primary		
Sandown/Shanklin Area		
Broadlea Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Gatten & Lake Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Newchurch Primary	Some existing lift. No new transport need.	
New amalgamated school (Sandown CE VC & St. John's CE VC Primaries)	No increased need for transport.	
Shanklin CE VC Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Ventnor/South Wight Area		
Chale CE VC Primary	The proposed school closure will require new lift to either or both of Godshill or Niton Primaries.	Probable requirement from September 2010.
Godshill Primary	Initially no new lift. Once the new school is built there will be a need for a lift from Chale, Chillerton & Rookley.	This could be a single route. Probable requirement from September 2010.
Niton Primary	Initially no new lift. Possibility of an eventual lift from Chale.	Probable requirement from September 2010.
New amalgamated school (St. Boniface CE VC, St. Margaret's CE VC & St. Wilfrid's RC VA Primaries)	Initially no new lift. Once the new school opens on the Ventnor middle site there is a requirement for a lower to upper Ventnor lift and return.	
Wroxall Primary	No increased need for transport.	
West Wight Area		
All Saints CE VC Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Brighstone CE VC Primary	No increased need for transport.	
New Primary School (Freshwater)	Possible new lift from the Totland area on the opening of the new school.	
New amalgamated school (Shalfleet CE VC & Yarmouth CE VA primaries)	Initially no new lift. New lift requirement when the new school moves to a single site.	

School	Transport Need	Comment
St. Saviour's RC VA Primary	No increased need for transport.	
Weston Primary	The proposed school closure will require a new lift to the new Freshwater primary school, when open.	

- 2.6 Due to the relatively small change in the location of primary provision contained within the proposals, the need to transport children where this change does occur, is offset against the considerable reduction in existing movement of children to middle schools in years 5 and 6 (10-11 year olds). Currently these cohorts travel to 14 schools across the Island; the proposals would increase this to 37 schools, with the resultant reduction in the distance to a child's nearest school. A key advantage of the proposed move to a primary and secondary school organisation is that children can remain much closer to their immediate communities for another two years of their education. In the proposed new school organisation most primary aged children will be within reasonable walking distance of their schools.
- 2.7 The change to the proposed primary and secondary school organisation will also remove the high level of unfilled places within the current provision. This will mean that most children will in the future attend schools within the priority area of where they live. This change in itself will significantly reduce the current levels of cross Island travel for example travel from the Cowes area to the South Wight area.

Secondary School Transport

- 2.8 The school lift for the five proposed community secondary schools and Christ the King College will require a volume not dissimilar to that currently used for the Year 7 and 8 middle school lift and that of the current high school lift. The Authority will require from any provider that the lift is a dedicated service and not made up of normal service buses. All drivers will be required to be CRB checked. Consideration may be given to some escort provision to ensure appropriate behaviour and reduce incidents of bullying.
- 2.9 To support the collaboration of curriculum between the schools, the Isle of Wight College and the Work Based Learning Providers there will be a need for some daily transport provision between the providers.