

Wiltshire Council

Cabinet

13 September 2011

**Public Participation
Item No. 6 - Denominational Home to School Transport**

Question from Jayne Keogh

Last week I came across the following response by a parent to an article in the Guardian newspaper entitled:

"Cuts to school buses force pupils onto roads".

"My children have transport provided (by Wilts council) to their catchment comprehensive school, 5 miles away as do most of the rural pupils. The school and town would be in chaos if every parent had to drive the children to school.

This village has been allocated a taxi for the 7 resident pupils as the council deem it too dangerous to walk up 1.5 miles up a country lane to the bus-stop (unlit, no footpaths, no speed limit) and the lanes are too small to take a bus. I am quite happy to walk the lane, as it is so narrow that drivers have to go slowly, and are easy to avoid. My children have walked it alone (in daylight) since the age of 8 to the village primary.

I was expecting the taxi to be pulled this year, but it continues - Wiltshire are targetting denominational transport instead. I think I get my money's worth from my council tax bill."

Can the council please explain to parents of pupils attending denominational schools how it can continue to pay 100% of the cost of a taxi fare to transport 7 rural pupils to a bus stop when it is seeking to make 100% cuts to denominational funding? Is the welfare, safety and continuity of education of the pupils who receive the denominational transport subsidy deemed by the council to be less important than that of pupils attending other state schools?

Thanks for your help.

Regards

Jayne Keogh